Ovid, Death and Transfiguration

Edited by

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Mnemosyne Supplements

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Introduction: Ovid, Death and Transfiguration

This collection of essays was inspired by the 2000th anniversary of Ovid's death in about 17 CE. Of course, this is a conventional reckoning, based on the fact that nothing in Ovid's poetry can be securely dated after that year. It is therefore not impossible that the many conferences held in honor of the bimillennium, including the one held in Rome in March 2017, where most of the papers in this collection were originally given, were premature, and that this volume is appearing unexpectedly in the year of the true anniversary, assuming it does not even anticipate it. Fittingly, both the individual contributions and the plan of the volume as a whole have undergone changes during the interval between conference and publication.[1] All of this seems appropriate to the volume's main purpose, which is to explore and to celebrate the theme of change in Ovid's poetry and in his posthumous *fortuna*, not excluding the element of surprise.

Since we have no external evidence about when Ovid died, the concept of "transfiguration" usefully alludes both to this and to other uncertainties regarding death and posthumous fame as a theme in Ovid's poetry. The collection's title is taken, of course, from Richard Strauss's masterpiece *Tod und Verklärung* (op. 24, 1888–1889), a tone poem that represents the experience of an elderly artist who, in the throes of death, struggles for and ultimately achieves transcendence of his earthly existence. The piece is closely associated with a poem of the same title by Strauss's good friend Alexander Ritter, in which the dying artist reviews his entire life and career in preparation for this transcendence. The relevance of these motifs to Ovid's life and work are obvious; but, in addition, the conventional English title of Strauss's masterpiece speaks even more directly than the original German to Ovid's own experience. "Verklärung" is related to "klar," and while the word's meaning is different from those of "Klärung" or "Klarstellung," it nevertheless denotes a process that is akin to clarification. In contrast, "transfiguration" is a latinate equivalent of "metamorphosis," and so is related to the Greek title of Ovid's Latin masterpiece, in which bodily transformation is such a dominant theme. More than this, it signals the protean quality of Ovid's poetic achievement as a whole and in its parts.

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1 For a full summary of the conference see Marcucci 2017. All of the papers included here have been revised, some extensively. Francesco Ursini's contribution to the conference had already been promised, and has now been published elsewhere (Ursini 2017); he has instead contributed a different paper to this volume as chapter 12, which is summarized below. See also Oliensis 2020, vi.

Change in every sense of the word is a Leitmotiv of Ovid's career and a hall-mark of his work. From the beginning of the *Amores* to the end of the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid's poetic program, his authorial persona, his subject matter, his characters, and virtually every other aspect of his poetry are in constant flux.[2] This observation in itself is hardly groundbreaking, nor does this volume mark the first time that the theme of change, particularly as it is explored in the *Metamorphoses*, but not only there, has been put into dialogue with that of death. In fact, these themes and the relationships between them have been acknowledged in a basic way for a long time.[3] But a lot has happened in Ovidian criticism over the last two or three decades, and these themes are now ripe for reconsideration. The exile poetry is probably the portion of the Ovidian corpus in which the most significant progress has been made, especially where the linkage between change and death, including the death of the author, is concerned.[4] By comparison, the erotic and erotodidactic works have received less attention, and many episodes even of the *Metamorphoses*, to say nothing of the *Fasti*, remain underexplored from this point of view. The same is true of connections among the various components of Ovid's work, especially if one takes seriously a point often raised by critics of the *Metamorphoses*, which is that transformation—quite apart from the question of whether it is a form of death or a substitute for it, a punishment or a reward—often reveals an abiding sameness beneath an altered surface.[5] It is also true that critics have continued to find imaginative ways of interrogating Ovid, ways that might seem at first outlandish but that quickly prove surprisingly apt, often because they take their inspiration from Ovid's own occasional outlandishness.[6] Finally, while recep-

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2   On the development of elegy as love poetry, see Conte 1994, 35–66; Sharrock 1994; Kennedy 1984, 2002; Miller 2004; Thorsen 2014; Oliensis 2019; on both the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* as simultaneously departures from and continuations of this process, see especially Knox 1986; Hinds 1987; Labate 2010. On the exile poetry in relation to Ovid's earlier work see Davisson 1983; Williams 1994; Gibson 1999; Tissol 2005; Schiesaro 2011; Myers 2014; Blanco Mayor 2017.

3   On Ovid's representation of his life and career, see Holzberg 1997; Harrison 2002; Feldherr 2002; Farrell 2004, 2009; Martelli 2013; Beck 2014.

4   Nagle 1980; Evans 1983; Williams 1994, 2002. Relevant here are Ovid's efforts in the exile poetry proper to invite the reader to reconsider his entire career from the perspective of his relegation (on which see Martelli 2013, 145–229; Myers 2014), not to mention the vexed question of whether and to what extent he continued working on and revising the *Metamorphoses* while in Tomis (Kovacs 1987), as he clearly did the *Fasti* (Fantham 1985; Williams 2002, 244–245; Martelli 2013, 104–144; Heyworth 2019, 5–13).

5   See, variously, Galinsky 1975; Barkan 1986, 19–93; Solodow 1988; Anderson 1989; Schmidt 1991; Galland-Hallyn 1994; Sharrock 1996; Hardie 1997; Feldherr 2002, 2010, 15–122; Nelis 2009; Vial 2010; Dinter 2019.

6   A topic approached, variously again, by Hinds 1987 and Janan 1994.

tion studies have now become an indispensable part of the classicist's toolkit, the area encompassed by Ovidian reception is so vast that even some of the most familiar districts that lie within it have not yet been adequately explored.[7] These were the aspects that the organizers of the original conference wished to emphasize. All of the contributors grasped this idea beautifully, so that the organizers, now acting as editors of this volume, have been able to "reshape" the conference program into a coherent survey of the relevant themes consisting of eighteen chapters divided into four highly focused sections.

The four sections follow a loosely chronological order, in that earlier sections introduce themes that begin to be prominent in Ovid's first works and then continue throughout his career, while each later section centers on a theme that becomes prominent in successively later works and then in reception. Further, each of the four sections is organized around the motif of death as a metaphor or symbol of some crucial aspect of Ovid's poetry. Thus the eighteen chapters as a whole are arranged according to a clear chronological arc, while specific themes are anticipated and recalled across the four different sections.

Part 1, "Death and the Lover," examines the elegiac and Freudian dyad of love and death. As a love poet in the earliest phase of his career, perhaps Ovid does not initially share the often morbid fascination with death that characterizes his elegiac predecessors, Tibullus and Propertius. He nevertheless inherits from them a keen awareness of the genre's funereal etymology, with the result that themes of death and lamentation form important parts of Ovid's poetic DNA, in every genre. For the poet of "epic," aetiological, and exilic themes in his later career, death takes different forms, including bodily metamorphosis, literary canonization or obscurity, political disfavor, and social banishment.

In chapter 1, "Death, Lament, and 'Elegiac Aetiology' in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," **Anke Walter** confronts several of these themes directly. Many have speculated on the relationship between death and transformation in Ovid's masterpiece, the *Metamorphoses*.[8] For Walter, too, "Dying itself is ... the ultimate metamorphosis." Walter's approach focuses not on death as metamorphosis, however, but on the survivor's grief in response to the death of a loved one as itself transformative. Walter gives to this phenomenon the name "elegiac

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7   In this case, it is the sheer magnitude of the topic, not lack of interest, that is the limiting factor. Important contributions include Pearcy 1984; Barkan 1986; Hexter 1986; Martindale 1986; Bate 1993; Stapleton 1996, 2014; Cheney 1997; Brown 1999; Hardie 2002; Wheeler 2002, 2005; Hinds 2007; Knox 2009; Filippetti 2014; Miller and Newlands 2014; Moss 2014; Goddard 2015; Fielding 2017; Rosati 1917; Ursini and Ossola 2017; Bessone 2018; Consolino 2018; Goldschmidt 2019.

8   See Skulsky 1981, esp. 25, cited by Walter, n. 9.

aetiology," a kind of transformation rooted not directly in death itself, but in the consummately and even etymologically elegiac emotion of grief.[9] This is not a restorative grief cured by mourning for a limited time, but a literally transformative grief that changes the mourner into something new and unprecedented that is also a permanent reminder of what has been lost. Walter's test case for this elegiac aetiology begins with Phaethon's death, which is not itself figured as a transformation. Instead, grief transforms his sisters and his cousin Cygnus, giving rise to a new species of tree, the poplar, and of bird, the swan. The boy's death sets the process in motion, but grief for his death is the proximate cause of his mourners' transfigurations. Further, Phaethon's wild ride in the Sun's chariot causes a temporal disruption that is manifested in the transfigured condition of his survivors. Trapped in a continuous present that looks ever back upon the past in bereavement, they become new species, each in its way perpetually commemorating their grief. At the same time, the tears shed by Phaethon's grieving sisters in their post-metamorphic state look to the future when they are transformed by the Sun into drops of amber, which will become adornments for Latin brides on their wedding day. In this way Phaethon's sisters celebrate, and grieve for, the wedding days that none of them will have. By the same token, a bit of cunningly ambiguous phrasing leaves it open whether Cygnus' preference, as he becomes a swan, for avoiding the air and keeping to watery places, is *like that* of one who remembered his beloved cousin's fate or one who was *actually* motivated by it. The possibility is thus raised that Cygnus' swan descendants, in some sense, remember the aetion of their existence. (Ovid's implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, analytical approach to the details involved in his transformations is a topic that will return from time to time throughout the volume.) In this way, Walter enlists the reader's imagination in contemplating the extent to which Ovid's metamorphic world is inextricably tied to memory, grief, and lamentation.

Next, in chapter 2, "*Duo moriemur*: Death and Doubling in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," **Florence Klein** focuses on the question of individual identity by considering the extent to which either the uniqueness or else the representative quality of an Ovidian character is either overwhelmed or most fully expressed by the circumstances of his or her death. In her analysis, the uniqueness of Narcissus' tragic demise, brought on by his desire for his own insubstantial image, is complicated by similarities between his fate and that of Orpheus and Eurydice. These are, as Klein points out, the only two stories in the *Meta-*

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9   On elegy as poetry of lamentation see Hinds 1987, 103–104 with 160 nn. 13–14; Farrell 2012, 15–16.

morphoses in which a lover loses his beloved and is thus caused to fantasize about a shared death.[10] By tracing patterns of detailed repetition between the two, Klein suggests that the fate of Orpheus and Eurydice can be regarded as doubling that of Narcissus. In the first place, then, this intertextual repetition comments on Narcissus' death and transfiguration: his afterlife is transformed, within the *Metamorphoses*, into Orpheus' double harrowing of hell, together with his double sundering from and ultimate reunion with Eurydice. Then, taking account of repetitions and revisions of Vergil's Orpheus episode in the *Georgics*, Klein argues that Ovid's Narcissus was always already an intertextual Orpheus, and that the Vergilian Orpheus experiences a double afterlife, as do both Ovidian heroes. The paper thus opens up a perspective on the poetic intertext as a kind of Underworld, perhaps offering Vergil's shade an afterlife in Ovid's poem that anticipates Dante, while reserving for Ovid himself the kind of Ennian and Pythagorean series of endless rebirths that the poet, at the end of the *Metamorphoses*, claims will be his posthumous reward.[11]

These aspects, which are implicit in Klein's argument, are made more explicit by **Thea S. Thorsen** in chapter 3, "Ovid's Artistic Transfiguration, Procris and Cephalus." Thorsen's analysis turns on a comparison of the relationship between two Ovidian lovers to that between Ovid and his posthumous readers. The argument begins with Ovid's claim to poetic immortality, just mentioned above, focusing on the physical mechanism that is the basis of the poet's quasi-Pythagorean afterlife. That consists in the phrase *ore legar populi*, "I shall be picked up (and/or) read in the mouth of the people" (*Met.* 15.878). The phrase refers to the Roman custom by which a survivor tries to catch the dying breath of a loved one, elaborating Ennius' boast in his epitaph that he continues to "live flying about on the lips of men" (*volito vivus per ora virum*).[12] In this conceit, the poet lives on as pure utterance that moves from one body to another, as if in a never-ending recitation. Quite apart from the effect of the appropriation of Ennius' boast, however, Thorsen observes that the end of the *Metamorphoses* stands in pointed contrast to the virtual living death to which Ovid consigns himself in the exile poetry. To explore further the irony of this self-contradiction, Thorsen focuses on the enactment of the *ore legar* motif in the

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10   Klein acknowledges as almost parallel the situation of Pyramus and Thisbe, which is treated from a different point of view by Jacqueline Fabre-Serris in chapter 4.

11   On the Underworld as a repository of literary history, see Hardie 1993, 59–65, 96–97, 104–105. On Ennius and Ovid, see the following note.

12   *Epigram* 2.10, trans. Goldberg and Manuwald 2018, 232–233. From the vast literature on Ovid's appropriation of this Ennian conceit see the works cited by Thorsen in her n. 15.

story of Cephalus and Procris. This is one of those stories that Ovid tells at some length in more than one poem, something he never does without making provocative alterations to delight the reader. For the most part, though, these have to do with the manner of the narration, and not with the facts of the story itself. The case of Cephalus and Procris is something of an exception. Crucially, Ovid's "first" version of the story is told by the narrator of the *Ars amatoria*; the second is told in the *Metamorphoses* by Cephalus himself. Discrepancies between the two versions reveal the importance of treating Cephalus as an unreliable narrator and expose the possibility that his commemoration of Procris' tragic death is culpably self-serving. In relation to the *ore legar* motif, Thorsen makes a case for regarding Procris' afterlife as not spiritual but ghostly, or even like that of a zombie, a dead body subject to distortion and mutilation as well as ghastly reanimation. The implications of this insight for Ovid's representation of his own afterlife are in part immediately obvious, but they will be made more explicit later in this volume.

Thorsen's analysis of transfiguration as misrepresentation sounds a skeptical note in discussing a poem that seems generally to imagine death as merely a transition to a more permanent and, if not a more exalted state, then often at least a less vulnerable one. In Chapter 4, **Jacqueline Fabre-Serris** offers another skeptical perspective on the meaning and value of death across Ovid's poetic corpus. Her title, "Suicides for Love, Phyllis, Pyramus and Thisbe: Critical Variations on a Famous Motif of Erotic Poetry?" frames the issue in terms of literary history, proceeding from the fact that the theme of erotically inspired suicide is valorized in the Latin love poetry written during the generation that preceded Ovid. Moreover, the pattern of appearances strongly suggests that the motif occupied a significant place in the lost *Amores* of Cornelius Gallus, a work that was foundational for Latin love elegy and influential on many other genres, as well. With such antecedents in mind, a reader might well approach Ovid's poetry, above all the *Metamorphoses*, with the expectation of finding a similar valorization of suicide for love as a heroic act. And indeed, the story of Pyramus and Thisbe ends in a double suicide for love (as Klein discusses in chapter 2) that has been interpreted by many critics—influenced, no doubt, by the reception of the tale by Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet*—not only in a positive light, but even as an ideal romance in a tragic key. In contrast, Fabre-Serris argues that in the *Heroides, Ars amatoria*, and *Remedia amoris* Ovid deplores suicide, boasting that, if a tragic heroine such as Phyllis had only enjoyed the benefit of his teaching, she would never have ended her life in desperate and mistaken reaction to the behavior of her negligent lover, Demophoon. After analyzing Ovid's apparently heterodox treatment of this motif in his earlier work, Fabre-Serris moves on to Pyramus and Thisbe in the *Metamorphoses* to suggest that

the episode is much better read not with romantic approval of its deadly out-come, but as a cautionary tale—and as one that reflects especially poorly on the misguided young lover, Pyramus, but not on Thisbe, in whom one finds "the 'ideal' elegiac *puella*."

Chapter 5 rounds out the first part of the volume with **Laurel Fulkerson**'s study of "Ovidian Pathology, in Love and in Exile." The general theme of this first part, "death and the lover," informs Fulkerson's perspective on Ovid's career as more or less one long terminal disease. The trajectory of the disease, however, is not simple. As a love poet, Ovid inherited an ancient tradition that regarded desire as a kind of illness, and this trope had become codified as a constitutive element of first-person erotic elegy in the preceding generation.[13] In the ear-liest phase of his career, Ovid handled this theme sure-handedly and with his usual wit, "debilitated" only in a metaphorical sense by the symptoms of his "disease." Then, by the time he began to approach the height of his powers in his erotodidactic works, he claimed to have mastered love to the extent that he could teach others not only how to endure this malady but actually to exploit its effect on others and to cure oneself of it if need be. Little did he know at the time that his disease had not run its full course. The brief period of seem-ing recovery was merely a prelude to its second, and ultimately fatal stage. As Ovid himself never tires of repeating, it was his most important poem of this transitional period, the *Ars amatoria* itself, that caused him to take a turn for the worse. Relegated to Pontus because of it, Ovid remained a lover, but the object of his desire shifted, from the bounteous supply of *puellae* who pop-ulated Venus' city, to the city itself. Lovesickness became homesickness, but sickness of whatever kind remained a basic condition of the poet's life. Even the symptoms, as Fulkerson shows, remained largely the same. What mainly changed was any sense of gaining control over one's fate. By enduring the dis-ease of exile, all one learns that can be taught to others is that some ailments really have no remedy. For the poet, even "the act of writing," as Fulkerson puts it, "may exacerbate his condition, rather than mitigating it." It is of course a tantalizing irony that we have no definite information about the cause or even, as was noted above, the precise date of Ovid's death. We have his own poetic record of a gradual demise, but no record of the moment of transition to what continues to be a fascinating afterlife.

The pattern established in Part 1 is followed in the subsequent sections, which develop more fully the various themes broached by the first five chap-ters. One of these themes, on which several of the earlier chapters make tren-

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13   See e.g. Conte 1994, 43–44.

chant observations, is the relationship between the lover and the poet. Part 2, "Death and the Artist," moves this theme very much to the fore, with the first two chapters of this section exploring Ovid's exile poetry as depicting an imaginary landscape of death. In the first of these, chapter 6, **Alison Keith** examines the relation between "Frigid Landscapes and Literary Frigidity in Ovid's Exile Poetry." Death in this case means freezing to death as a familiar, conventional metaphor in Keith's reading of Ovid's repeated laments in *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* about losing his poetic ability and even his command of proper Latin. With reference to Ovid's parallel complaint about the chilly climate of Tomis, his place of relegation, Keith argues that the poet's putative loss of his former powers can be explained as deriving from ethnographic descriptions of wintery Scythia dating back through Vergil to Herodotus—traditions that tell us little, of course, about actual conditions in Tomis—by way of the literary-critical concept of "frigidity"—what a modern critic might call "flatness"—as we know it from ancient rhetorical treatises. The authors of these treatises regard frigidity as the product of a failed straining for some greater effect, whether the "sublime" as defined in the treatise on that quality that has come down to us under the name of Longinus, or just correct Latinity in the opinion of those self-styled Atticist orators and rhetoricians who criticized Cicero himself for faults ranging from bombast and extravagance to misplaced wit and preciosity.[14] These of course are charges that were leveled against Ovid, as well, and not only, or even principally, in his exile poetry.[15] In this sense, Keith's analysis, which focuses on *Tristia* 3, implicitly parallels Fulkerson's account of "disease" across Ovid's career: as lovesickness mutates into homesickness, so does the poet's excessive "love" of his own talent (a Leitmotiv of Ovidian reception in antiquity[16]) reveal itself in the exile poetry as a source of frigidity that puts the poet and his work in unhappy sympathy with his surroundings, at last.

As was noted above, Ovid's love poetry, unlike that of Tibullus and Propertius (and evidently Gallus, as well), is not overtly haunted by premonitions of death, but the poet is well aware of his predecessors' preoccupation with this theme. In chapter 7, **Luigi Galasso** examines Ovid's reception of earlier elegy first in the *Amores* and then in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. In much the same way that Laurel Fulkerson sees the motif of love as disease mutating into

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14   On this topic see Bishop 2019, 173–217.

15   The summary by Sussman 1978, 60–61 of the Elder Seneca's comments on Ovid as a declaimer represents the traditional point of view.

16   Keith quotes Quintilian's well-known diagnosis that Ovid was *nimium amator ingenii sui*, "too much a lover—of cleverness, (especially) his own!" (*IO* 10.1.88).

that of exile as a terminal ailment, so does Galasso find that Ovid's character-istically clever handling of the earlier elegists' brooding transforms itself into the idea of exile as a living death. In this sense, Ovid's relegation is not so much a terminal disease as, effectively, a form of execution virtually carried out the moment he set foot in Tomis. Far from conflicting with the notion that home-sickness is not in fact an immediate death sentence, however, Galasso shows that the exile poet, in a strange way, not only is already dead, virtually at any rate, from the moment of his arrival, but that he continues to find himself more and more firmly *in digitis mortis* as "life" in Tomis slowly passes away. As Ovid gives expression to this predicament, he returns to the morbid ruminations of the previous generation of elegists, together with their own evocations of ear-lier treatments of the theme of the poet's death. In the process, as one finds in, again, Fulkerson's chapter and also in Keith's, an aspect of Ovid's early poetry, whether it be lovesickness, *cacozelia*, or a merely frivolous attitude to elegy's generic preoccupation with mortality, comes into its own at last only in the exile poetry.

The final two chapters of this section conclude the first half of the volume by turning from the highly poeticized and mythologized literary landscapes of Ovid's amatory poetry, his exile poetry, and especially the *Metamorphoses*, to a number of broadly analogous, but conceptually distinct representations in the visual arts. Specifically, the material discussed is, in the first of these chapters, Pompeian wall painting and, in the second, the recent and exciting discovery of an ancient Roman sculpture garden. Of course, a certain affinity between Ovid's poetry and the visual arts is widely acknowledged, even celebrated.[17] That said, it is probably not wrong to suppose that, for the majority of literary scholars, the relationship mainly has to do with Ovid's influence on the visual arts, primarily in the post-antique epoch. During Ovid's own lifetime, how-ever, the situation was much more complex. All artists, whether their medium was literature, painting, or sculpture, shared a mythological repertoire that was broad, thematically diverse, and multiform. In most cases, and in contrast to the situation that is familiar from the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, it is not a question of visual artists illustrating tales as known from any canonical literary treatment. On the other hand, one certainly does have to reckon with the likelihood that Ovid's myths would have been very familiar to his readers from frequent representation in the visual arts. There is also the fact that dif-ferent media created meaning in accordance with conventions specific to each

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17   See especially Rosati 1993; Solodow 1988, 203–232; Hinds 2002; Barolsky 2007, 2014; Feld-
        herr 2010, 243–341; Scioli 2015.

of them, even as they all drew on interpretive practices that facilitated explorations of dialogical relationships both within particular genres and across the different media.[18]

In keeping with this last point, art historian **Bettina Bergmann** in chapter 8, "Seeing and Knowing in Roman Painting," outlines a dynamic of what she calls "intervisuality," comparable to the "intertextuality" that is so familiar to literary scholars. In thematic terms, Bergmann's focus is on the moment of recognition within an intervisual discourse, i.e. on the reader's sudden understanding that the fate of a given character is being visually identified with that of another, quite "different" personage. More broadly, Bergmann compares this effect in the genres of fresco, mosaic, and sculpture to similar effects in Ovid's poetry, especially the *Metamorphoses*. Among the diverse stories with which Bergmann deals, the deaths and transformations of Actaeon and Pentheus stand out as offering particular insight into the questions explored in this volume. The House of the Gilded Cupids in Pompeii contains a depiction of Actaeon as he happens upon Diana in her bath. It is the same moment when, in the *Metamorphoses* (3.192–193), the goddess commands Actaeon to tell people that he has seen her naked—if he can. This taunt, of course, anticipates Actaeon's impending metamorphosis into a stag. In the painting, however, it is not Actaeon's transformation that counts so much as that of the goddess: the painter has modeled his Diana after the well-known statue type of Venus, also in her bath, ineffectually seeming to shield her nudity from the viewer. By this iconographic allusion, the viewer is offered a tantalizing perspective on the identity of his virginal subject as if she were intervisually transfigured into her polar opposite, the goddess of love herself. A vertiginous sense of convergence is enhanced by the perception that comparison to Venus not only emphasizes Diana's sexual allure but also alludes to Venus at a moment of uncharacteristic modesty. In the painting, as in Ovid, Actaeon's discovery of the goddess puts the audience in a voyeuristic position not only with regard to the voluptuous goddess, but also to Actaeon's death. The same linkage appears in a different painting found in the House of the Vettii, in which Agave leads a group of frenzied maenads in the dismembering of her own son Pentheus. Like Actaeon being torn to pieces by his own hounds, the women—Pentheus' own aunts—fail to recognize that he is a human being, not an animal. The ideal viewer's perspective on both scenes contrasts sharply with the misprisions that are dramatized within them.

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18   For different perspectives on the relationship between the *Metamorphoses* and the visual arts in antiquity, specifically regarding directions of influence, see Knox 2014, 2015 and Wallace-Hadrill 2017.

By the same token, Pentheus, too, has been seeing things that he should not, spying on the Bacchic rites celebrated by the women. In Ovid, as if sight alone could guarantee understanding, Pentheus begs Agave to "see" who he is (*adspice, mater* 3.725), but to no avail. He even invokes the fate of Actaeon (3.720) to call his aunts to their senses. Similarly, early in his exile period, Ovid likens himself to Actaeon, asking "why did I see something?" (*cur aliquid vidi? Tr.* 2.103; cf. *inscius Actaeon* 105), but later (*Tr.* 5.3.35–46) he implicitly contrasts himself with Pentheus, praying on the Liberalia that the shade of the Theban hero might continue to be punished, and that Bacchus as a patron deity of poets might intervene with Augustus, as one god with another, to bring about a commutation of Ovid's sentence.[19] The poet's treatment of the two episodes as dealing similarly with issues of voyeurism and recognition seems well aware of the visual tradition represented by the Pompeian paintings. One could add to these themes the implication of artist and viewer, writer and reader, in the dynamics of the tale and its treatment by both painter and poet. At the same time, Ovid's insistence that Actaeon's glimpse of the goddess had been a "mistake" (*error, Met.* 3.142) while his Pentheus confesses that, in spying on the maenads, he "had sinned" (*peccasse, Met.* 3.701–733), seems to distinguish between the cousins in terms that are similar, if not quite identical, to the terms of another distinction, that between the two causes of Ovid's relegation, in the infamous phrase *carmen et error* (*Tr.* 1.207).

The second part (and first half) of the volume concludes with chapter 9, "The Niobids and the Augustan Age: On Some Recent Discoveries at Ciampino," in which **Alessandro Betori** and **Elena Calandra** offer the first authoritative treatment in English of a sculpture garden, excavated initially in 2011 and 2012 and then again in 2016–2017, in what is believed to be the suburban villa of Ovid's friend and perhaps patron M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus. The centerpiece of the garden is a sculpture group representing the death of the Niobids, a story told memorably by Ovid in *Metamorphoses* 6. The existence in this area of a villa owned by Messalla had been suspected since 1861, and the villa in question can be dated to the second half of the 1st century BCE, exactly the right period for Messalla to have occupied it. Though once an adherent of Marcus Antonius, Messalla subsequently became a distinguished supporter of the Augustan regime. The basic theme of the myth of Niobe, the punishment of mortal *hybris* by the gods, has a clear place in Augustan propaganda. We thus may infer a historical and social context for this impressive ensemble. Moreover, because Ovid claims Messalla as one of his *nobiles amici*, the possibility

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19   On *Tr.* 5.3 see Miller 2020.

exists that the poet might have visited this garden and brought his own ideas and sensibility to its treatment of the myth.[20] In the *Metamorphoses*, of course, the story of the Niobids takes its place in a sequence of myths that deal with conflicts between rival divinities (the Pierides and the Muses) or between gods and humans (Minerva and Arachne, Latona and Niobe, Apollo and Marsyas). In all cases, except that of Niobe, it is a question of artistic rivalry, and in all cases, including that of Niobe, the issue is decided by force rather than skill. By documenting the discovery of this statuary ensemble and explicating its artistic and social significance, this chapter brings the volume to its midway point by offering a provocative case study, from an archaeological perspective, of issues surveyed from an art historical point of view by Bergmann in chapter 8. At the same time, it opens up new areas of potential engagement with all of the papers that precede and follow it.

The second half of the volume broods over various ways in which Ovid treats death either as a kind of transfiguration that is not decisive, or that treats metamorphosis as a durable state between life and death. These perspectives involve specific elements of the uncanny, some of them hinted at in the volume's first half, which Ovid himself explores both in tales of death and in reflections on his virtually "posthumous" exilic existence, as well as on his actual *Nachleben*, both as he foresaw it and as it appears from our vantage point. In this spirit, part 3, "Revenants and Undead," begins with **Alison Sharrock**'s chapter 10, "*Ambobus pellite regnis*: Between Life and Death in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," which launches an exploration of metamorphosis as a liminal condition that partakes of elements drawn both from the metamorph's former existence and from its transformed state. Sharrock stresses that there is such a varied typology of transformations that almost every case is more individual than representative.[21] It matters, for instance, whether the vector of transfiguration begins with an inanimate object that becomes animate, or vice versa. It matters whether a plant, being alive, resembles more a creature possessed of an *anima* or one that is not. Of particular interest to Sharrock are not just general questions like these, but special cases in which these questions converge, or are made to converge, in Ovid's handling of a myth that may have been told differently by others. Such a case is that of Myrrha, who, while pregnant, is transformed into a tree and only then gives birth to the baby Adonis. How does this happen? Here we have another instance of the precision that, surprisingly often, Ovid brings to bear on issues that the rapid pace of his narrative

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20   See *Pont.* 1.7 with Gaertner 2005 ad loc.; cf. 2.2, 4.16.
21   See p. 243 below

seemingly encourages readers to overlook. Here Ovid's treatment of Myrrha's transformation makes it clear that she is not merely enveloped by a tree to continue her existence as a woman wrapped inside it until she can carry her baby to term. Like the paradigmatic Daphne, who is herself transformed into a tree precisely so that she might avoid Myrrha's fate by remaining a virgin, Myrrha actually becomes a tree; but unlike Daphne, she is no longer a virgin, but is pregnant, and so, even as a tree, she gives birth to a human child. How is the reader to imagine this experience? What does it imply about the continued existence of the myrrh tree, and of other myrrh trees, the Myrrha tree being evidently the first of its kind? What does it imply about the child? More generally, what is the reader to suppose about the world of the *Metamorphoses* as Ovid describes it, a world populated, as it were, with many plants and animals endowed with origin stories that, each in its own way, present problems analogous to Myrrha's? (Here we may compare Walter's observations on Cygnus in chapter 1.) In addition to a world of semihuman animals and plants, semi-animate plants and stones, and (in effect) semihuman humans (and many of them in addition to the infamous *semibovemque virum, semivirumque bovem, Ars* 2.24; cf. *Tr.* 4.7.18, Sen., *Contr.* 2.2.12), Myrrha focuses on the statue "as an intermediary between raw material and human person ... because it functions as a visual, and indeed concrete, metaphor." This observation reflects directly on the myth of Niobe—"the classic case," according to Sharrock—and so, on Betori and Calandra's observations in chapter 9. Moreover, in accordance with Ovid's technique of exploring nearly parallel situations, it applies as well to other art forms, potentially including painting (with relevance to Bergmann's remarks on figural painting in chapter 8) and, of course, myth, poetry, and storytelling, as well (recall here, for instance, Thorsen's reflections in chapter 3 on Cephalus' (re)telling of Procris' death as a distorted intertextual afterlife). The statue, however, as Sharrock maintains—citing the myth of Perseus and Medusa (cf. Galasso in chapter 7) and that of Pygmalion and Galatea, as well as Niobe—stands as an especially emblematic example of metamorphosis frozen between two states that seem to stand at opposite extremes.

In chapter 11, "Ovid's Exile Poetry and Zombies," **Stephen Hinds** embraces the implications of Ovid's representation of exile as a living death by reading the *Tristia, Epistulae ex Ponto*, and *Ibis* in the light of modern "fan-fiction" in which "Jane Austin meets the zombie apocalypse." While provocatively experimental, his strategy takes its cue from Ovid's own poetics of exile along lines similar to those followed by other contributors to this volume, especially Thorsen in chapter 3, Galasso in chapter 7, and Sharrock in chapter 10. In one sense, Hinds contributes to an understanding of the exile poetry, and perhaps especially of the *Ibis*, that is new; but at the same time, his purpose is to recover one

aspect that is old and in some danger of being lost. That is the sense that the exile poetry is something *different* from Ovid's earlier work, and far less appealing, even somewhat repulsive. Several decades of recuperative criticism have won the works that Ovid composed in Tomis a much wider readership perhaps than they have ever had. At the same time, Hinds argues that this newfound popularity has normalized these works and deprived them of a crucial component of their total effect. To regain some sense of the shock that Ovid's first readers must have felt upon encountering these gloomy productions of the erstwhile *tenerorum lusor Amorum*, Hinds revisits the *Amores* themselves to uncover the gothic possibilities lurking within them. He then shows how much more forcefully this aspect appears when one takes seriously the idea that the exile poems need not, and perhaps should not, be seen simply as practicing the sort of playful self-revision of Ovid's earlier work. Thus, perhaps, the idea of resuscitating a dead body may be taken to describe not only the exile *corpus* itself but also Hinds's critical effort to revise a normalizing trend in recent scholarship on that material, suggesting both how ghastly Ovid's fate may have felt to his earliest readers and how evocative of the poet's reduced circumstances they seemed to modern readers not very long ago.

The period of the last few decades is one that Hinds defines as one in which Ovid's exile poetry came to be reintegrated with the poet's canonical works. It is largely the same period that **Francesco Ursini** identifies as a "new age of Ovid," or perhaps as the latest in a series of such ages. More precisely, Ursini notes a general tendency to connect this period with the appearance, beginning in the 1980s and 1990s, of many works of poetry, fiction, theater, and several forms of popular culture that take their bearings from specific aspects of an Ovidian sensibility and from certain formal features of his poetry. At the same time, these works reserve to themselves a right to place greater or less emphasis on one or another of these aspects without accepting any obligation to represent Ovid or any of his individual works *in toto*. This attitude to revision of the received text is itself, of course, consistent with an Ovidian sensibility. While acknowledging the significance of this movement, however, Ursini argues in chapter 12, "C.H. Sisson's *Metamorphoses* and the 'New Age of Ovid,'" that the origin of this *aetas Ovidiana* is to be found several decades earlier than most scholars have assumed. Sisson's *Metamorphoses*, a poem cycle, appeared as early as 1968, but his occasional treatments of tales from Ovid go back at least to his 1961 collection *The London Zoo*, which includes "The Deer-Park," his first version of the myth of Actaeon. Sisson's second treatment of the same myth, "The Withdrawal," appeared seven years later in the *Metamorphoses* volume. It is in Sisson's work above all that Ursini finds regular exploitation of features that characterize the "new age." These include an embrace of the fragmentary

as principle of composition, various techniques of defamiliarization (in a spirit not unlike that of Hinds's accessing of the "zombie apocalypse" aesthetic), an achronological mixing of mythic story patterns with quotidian modern elements, and so on. In addition to recognizing Sisson as a prophet of the Ovidian revolution that was to come, however, Ursini goes a step further and traces Sisson's discovery of this approach to important predecessors of his own. These include not only recent ones like T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, the High Modernist masters who inspired so much of Sisson's style, but more distant ones like Petrarch, Boccaccio, and other poets of the 14th century. Thus the "new Ovid," he suggests, is a recurring phenomenon, and the pointed incongruity that breathes afterlife into the most contemporary reanimations appears to be so much a feature of Ovidian reception that it is hard to distinguish such reanimators from Ovid himself.

The final paper of this penultimate section, chapter 13, is **Emma Buckley**'s "Reviving the Dead: Ovid in Early Modern England." Her focus is on the English Renaissance reception of Ovid as exemplifying the motif of reviving the dead in relation to various philosophical and religious conceptions of this idea. Buckley's principal examples are Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, and the intricate relationship of each to Ovid and to one another. She argues that the Ovidian lover represented in the first edition of Marlowe's *Elegies*, which itself consists of selections from Marlowe's important translation of the *Amores*— the first complete translation into English—is "brought back to life" only to find himself eternally confined within an elegiac prison from which, in Ovid's own amatory works, the poet managed to "escape" during his actual lifetime. This hellish situation is then compounded in Jonson's *Poetaster*, which "absorbs" Marlowe's translation of *Amores* 1.15 while reducing Ovid to a caricature of the youthful, besotted lover, who stands in sharp contrast to "the 'true' poets of the play, Virgil and Horace." In spite of this satirical reception of Ovid, however, Buckley argues that Jonson and Marlowe "offer a model of collaborative revision rather than competition and erasure that confers upon Ovid true immortality in the face of censorious authority, in antiquity and far beyond."

The volume's fourth and final section, "Immortals and Others," considers elements of Ovid's representation of immortals and immortalities per se and as tropes for his own afterlife as a canonical author, both as he hoped for and imagined it and also as it actually unfolded. The section begins in chapter 14 with **Francesca Romana Berno**'s investigation of Chaos as a symbol of both time and permanence in Ovid's poetry. In "From *Chaos* to *Chaos*: Janus in *Fasti* 1 and the Gates of War," Berno interrogates the idea of time as a whole and that of eternity as something that is either unchanging or in constant flux. She grounds her discussion in Chaos as the starting point of both the *Metamorphoses* and,

in the guise of Janus, the *Fasti*. Further, again as Janus, Chaos is seen to be the deity who presides over opening and closing doors—especially those of the god's own temple. Accordingly, Janus' chaotic nature is revealed not only, as he himself explains in the *Fasti*, by his appearance, but also by his function: closing the gates of his temple, the so-called Gates of War, is said both to keep War imprisoned inside, so that it cannot roam freely abroad, but also to keep Peace inside, where it will be safe. Berno identifies this inconsistency as a symptom of chaotic confusion; but at the same time, in Ovid's linear narrative, she suggests that it represents a transformation on the part of Janus himself "from a rather optimistic role, based on his experience as a peaceful and powerful king, to a pessimistic one, connected with Rome's recent history, which is no longer ruled by Janus, but by the Imperial family instead."

In chapter 15, "Intertextuality, Parody, and the Immortality of Poetry: Petronius and Ovid," **Giuseppe La Bua** shifts the focus from Janus as a symbol of eternal, chaotic transformation to the poet's concern—and, as his career proceeds, one might even say obsession—with his own afterlife. As is well known, Ovid figures his hoped-for recognition as a canonical author as "a series of readings and performances of his work" that amounts to "a modality of eternal afterlife." Arguing that this series of readings and performances "extends to transformations of Ovid's own textual corpus in the hands of imitators," La Bua focuses on the reception of Ovid's early elegiac works to argue that "intertextuality and transformation/manipulation of the intertext" finds potent expression— possibly not exactly of the sort that Ovid himself envisioned—in Petronius. The episode in question, that of Encolpius' impotence and his ensuing exchange of letters with his would-be mistress, Circe, is based on a mélange of Ovidian intertexts that involve relevant themes. These include the "canonical" elegiac topics of lamentation and love, but also more "experimental" varieties, such as erotodidaxis and epistolarity, including the ostensibly anti-elegiac, but Ovidianly sanctioned, theme of impotence, and extending even to *aemulatio* with Ovid himself in exploring varieties of elegiac excess. Here we have evidence of an Ovidian reception that has precedents among Petronius' Julio-Claudian contemporaries and that continues into the Flavian period.[22] In the hands of writers like Phaedrus, Persius, Seneca, Petronius, and Martial, however, Ovid's triumphant afterlife does not resemble the condition of unchanging perfection that he imagines for himself at the end of the *Metamorphoses* so much as a series of grotesque transformations like the ones he himself evokes in his

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22   Currie 1989; Baldwin 1992; Wheeler 2002, 2005; Hinds 2007; Hallet 2012; Antoniadis 2013; Goddard 2015.

exile poetry. And yet, not only does this form of survival seem peculiarly appropriate; it was probably essential, as well. With little evidence that Ovid found institutional support in the schools and libraries of the early Empire, it must have been in large part the enthusiasm of his most knowing and talented readers, the poets and creative writers of the period, that helped keep him relevant until the first of his many periods of rebirth came around.

In chapter 16, "*Tod und Erklärung*: Ovid on the Death of Julius Caesar (*Met.* 15.745–860)," **Katharina Volk** explores the concept that gives this collection its title with reference to one of the most significant transformations in the *Metamorphoses*, that of Julius Caesar into—what? A god, certainly, at least in terms of the state cult, and also, apparently, in terms of the *Götterapparat* of the *Metamorphoses* as a notionally epic poem; but also a star, or rather a comet, which takes us into the realm of astronomy, a branch of natural philosophy. This complexity is what Volk explores, following Ovid, who might have concentrated on one or the other aspect, as we have been taught to think is usually the case among the ancient Romans. True, the availability of the "tripartite theology" as articulated by Marcus Terentius Varro allowed the Romans to understand the disparate conventions of poetry, of cult, and of philosophy, including natural philosophy and astronomy, as sometimes contradictory in a theoretical sense, but in practice as capable of being applied as largely separate and more or less equally valid conceptions of the divine.[23] It is also true that, for the modern interpreter, it is very interesting to observe the interactions of whatever element may be dominant in any given environment with those that are at home in different contexts. An awareness of the Empedoclean equivalence between the divine couple Aphrodite and Ares and the philosophical principles of Love and Strife, for instance, enriches one's appreciation of the close spatial relationship between the Forum of Julius Caesar and that of Augustus, with their imposing temples of Venus Genetrix and Mars Ultor, both of them important and innovative contributions to the state cult. What Volk demonstrates, however, is that Ovid goes much farther than poets normally do in fashioning Caesar's apotheosis as an event that demands to be understood simultaneously in poetic, cultic, and philosophical terms, all in equal measure and in detail. This is true even to the extent that the inherent incompatibility of these three perspectives cannot help but make the episode implicitly self-contradictory. What is more, Volk stresses the relationship between Caesar's overdetermined apotheosis and Ovid's comparatively simple one in the concluding episode of the *Metamorphoses*. This relationship, she argues, is not

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23   Feeney 1998, 14–21.

merely analogous. Since Caesar's metamorphosis—"the only one that happens to a historical character" within the poem, as Volk observes—takes place in the year 44 BCE, and Ovid's birth, as we know from his poetic "autobiography," takes place the very next year, there is "a sense that the poet is the one taking over once history has been transformed into the present."[24] Here Volk follows those who consider Ovid's own projected metamorphosis into the many voices that will proclaim his poem, passing from one human body to another in the process, as a counterpart to Caesar's apotheosis, even to the point of casting the poet—and not Augustus—as the principal successor of the dictator.[25]

In the following chapter 17, "The Books of Fate: The Venus-Jupiter Scene in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 15 and its Epic Models," **Sergio Casali** revisits the episode discussed by Volk in the preceding chapter, focusing not on the remarkable nature of Caesar's apotheosis, but on the curious pre-Ovidian history of Jupiter's role as guarantor of fate in epic poetry. Especially curious, in the light of Ovid's penchant for celebrating contradictions, uncertainties, and in-betweenness, Casali here reveals him as imposing order on an unruly tradition that seems unable to decide whether Jupiter governs fate or is ruled by it himself. That is to say, where Volk finds Ovid to be generating poetic and ideological complexity by bringing the highly separable components of the tripartite theology into direct contact with one another, Casali shows how, in the same episode, the poet insists on resolving questions left unanswered by his predecessors. Throughout the series of closely related passages that Casali considers, the central issue remains the death of heroes, specifically of the descendants of gods, including those of Jupiter himself and, especially, Venus. From the Ur-scene of Zeus's exchange with Hera as he anticipates the death of Sarpedon in *Iliad* 16 down to Venus' protest at the impending assassination of Caesar in Ovid, the entire series is explained as a succession of intertextual and, in effect, theological transformations that end with an imposition of clarity by Ovid on an indecisive antecedent tradition. A rich and highly consequential vein of poetic dialogue is thus revealed as a process of *Erklärung* that culminates in *Metamorphoses* 15. Along the way, questions are raised about when, exactly, and where Jupiter promised Venus this or that; Naevius, especially, and also Ennius, emerge as likely protagonists in these events. What is notable, however, is the doggedness with which Ovid sets out to "correct" his most immediate, and in that sense most important predecessor, Vergil, even to the extent of seeming to produce a more committedly Augustan conception of Jupiter and fate than can be extracted from the *Aeneid*.

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24   Cf. Holzberg 1997.
25   Cf. Farrell 2020, 333–336.

In the final chapter, "Apotheoses of the Poet," **Philip Hardie** surveys the multitude of ways in which Ovid meditates both explicitly and, even more often, implicitly on his career as an extended process of transfiguration into a transcendent being of eternal existence. This leads directly into a consideration of some of the ways in which the even more extended, and very much ongoing, process of Ovidian reception ratifies the poet's aspirations. In the first part of his argument, Hardie shows how Ovid's manner of expressing his posthumous ambitions invites the inference that he aims to become like the gods that are among his most important subjects. That means both monstrous personifications like Fama, the traditional pantheon of the Olympians, "the newfangled kind of god that is a deified Caesar," and the newly canonical poets, like Vergil and Horace, of the previous generation. The poet's power to confer fame, whether on a *scripta puella* or any other addressee or subject, obviously figures in this analysis.[26] So does his role as *poeta creator*, which resembles that of the *deus et melior ... natura* (*Met.* 1.21) that sets the world of Ovid's most ambitious work in motion.[27] Ovid's path to divinity is not a smoothly managed triumphal procession, however, by any means. His chariot also invites comparison with that of the Sun when driven by Phaethon, his flight with that of Daedalus, but also with that of the less fortunate Icarus. Even installation within the pantheon of Roman poetry was never a sure thing, and Ovid's mimicry of his predecessors' own statements about their most audacious literary projects suggests that he learned to see himself as challenging gods and as risking a disastrous fall.[28] Poets and artists of the early modern and neoclassical periods, well aware of their own efforts to equal and surpass the ancient gods of their respective crafts, like Ovid, took their cues from the boasts as well as the anxious disclosures of their great predecessors and role models.

The volume thus treats the theme of death and transfiguration in a way that is, if not comprehensive (for what treatment of Ovid could make such a claim?), then certainly broad, suggestive, and imaginative. It encompasses new treatments of approaches that will be familiar to experienced Ovidians along with others that are virtually unprecedented, whether because of the new material that they discuss or the novel perspectives that they represent. More than a *summa* of death and transfiguration over the first two post-Ovidian millennia, perhaps it offers some hints that will be useful as we make our way into the third.

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26   Wyke 1987.

27   On this theme see Lieberg 1982; Wheeler 1999.

28   See Chaudhuri 2014, esp. chapter 3, "Theomachy as Test in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," 82–115.

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PART 1

Death and the Lover

∵

Death, Lament, and "Elegiac Aetiology" in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*

Anke Walter

The world created by the transformations in the *Metamorphoses* is filled with the traces of mourning: with the tears of the grieving, turned into rivers and lakes,[1] with the flapping of wings forever in search of the beloved,[2] with the noises of animals, which are actually words of lament.[3] Tales of transformation being prompted by, or in other ways being connected with grief, pervade the *Metamorphoses*.[4] Some of them—the story of Niobe for instance[5]—are among the best known tales of the Ovidian epic. Why is that so, and what makes these stories of lament so special?

There certainly are many reasons why the Ovidian tales of lament are so appealing. I want to focus on just one of them: the aspect of time. I shall start with a few general observations about lament and time: grieving for what one has lost is an inherently backward-looking activity, and one that is supposed to

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1 Cf. 6.383–400 (tears for Marsyas turned into a river bearing his name); 13.621–622 (Aurora's tears as dew).

2 Cf. e.g. 14.566–580 (the city of Ardea, upon its destruction, turned into a bird of the same name).

3 Cf. e.g. 4.412–413 (the Minyiades, turned into bats, uttering *querellae*); cf. also Segal 1969, on the interaction of Ovid's stories of transformation with the landscape. On Ovid's animating the landscape—as on landscape in the *Metamorphoses* in general—cf. Hinds 2002, esp. 134–135; Gentilcore 2010, 104.

4 On lament in Greek literature, cf. Vermeule 1979; Monsacré 1984; Loraux 1986; Holst-Warhaft 1992; Sultan 1993; Loraux 1998; Alexiou 2002; Dué 2002, 67–81 (with 91–113 for Briseis and her lament in Roman elegy); Tsagalis 2004; Dué 2006; Arnould 2009; in epic: Murnaghan 1999; in the *Metamorphoses*: Heinze 1919, 106; Miller 1999; Gentilcore 2010. For lament in Lucan, Vergil, and Statius, cf. Fantham 1999; in Vergil's *Aeneid*, cf. Barchiesi 1978; Barchiesi 1994; Perkell 1997; Panoussi 2009, esp. 145–173. Cf. also Keith 2008, for lament in Lucan's *Bellum Civile*; Pagán 2000, for the *Thebaid*. The chapter by Monsacré 1984, 167–184 on the language and gestures of lament in Homer is instructive for the images and motives that are inherent in grief and that suggest why tales of grief and lament might have lent themselves particularly well to Ovidian metamorphosis; cf. also Arnould 2009, 130–138.

5 For a nuanced reading of Niobe's transformation, which also takes into account issues of time, cf. Feldherr 2004. See also the observations of Galasso in chapter 7 of this volume as well as those of Calandra and Betori in chapter 9 and Sharrock in chapter 10.

be transitional, leading the mourner from his focus on death to a renewed participation in life. However, Ovid's combining of lament with the equally transformative phenomenon of metamorphosis creates stunning complications of time, which make narratives of lament particularly fascinating and reflect on Ovid's poetic project as a whole: an epic of tales of transformation, many of which have an aetiological impact.[6]

I shall use as my case study the first extended scene of lament in the epic: that of Phaethon's sisters, the Heliades, and of Phaethon's lover Cygnus. By forever preserving the signs of the Heliades' lament and directly connecting it with the present, Ovid creates what could, rather tentatively and for want of a better term, be called "elegiac aetiology": narratives in which past emotions, lament and tears live on in the present.[7] Yet the way time is working here is more complicated, since the very same tales of lament also foreground novelty, as the mourners are turned into wholly new species of plants and birds. More strongly than in other tales of transformation, in metamorphoses of those in mourning the contrasting impulses of backward-looking lament and forward-looking innovation are inextricably intertwined. Finally, as the transformation of Cygnus will show, the readers are implicated in these questions of time as well. The readers' choice of how to understand the most ambiguous word in this metamorphosis—*ut*—not only mirrors the oscillating nature of Ovid's narrative, but also reflects back on the readers themselves, who have to decide whether to read the aetion as either rooted in the past or oriented towards the future. Stories of lament, then, bring the complexities of time inherent in Ovid's aetiological metamorphosis into particularly sharp focus.

1   General Observations

Lament is perfectly at home in a world dominated by instability and transformations.[8] It is a way of reacting to the irreversible transition of the beloved

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6   On aetiology in the *Metamorphoses*, cf. Knox 1986, 65–83 on "The Roman Callimachus"; Graf 1988; Schmidt 1991, 56–78; Myers 1992; Myers 1994; Tissol 1997, 167–214; Wheeler 1999, 194–205; Francese 2004; Michalopoulos 2001, for etymology. Cf. also Miller 1982, 396–400; Labate 2006, for aetiology in the *Ars amatoria* and *Amores* and Cairns 2003, for Ovid's play on a Callimachean etymology in the *Heroides*.

7   On Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the question of literary genre, cf. Farrell 1992, and for epic and elegy in particular, Knox 1986, 9–26; Hinds 1987; Tissol 1997, 143–153.

8   Dying itself is, if you will, the ultimate metamorphosis, leading from life to death. Not by accident, then, can lament and mourning in the *Metamorphoses* refer both to persons who have

person who has gone from life to death, or even of the city that has been razed to the ground. This transforms the mourner as well: drawing attention to the mourner's own change of situation is one of the standard *topoi* of lament.[9] In the *Metamorphoses*, Hecuba, for instance, juxtaposes her former power as queen of Troy with her present fate as a captive.[10] At the same time, lament is itself supposed to be a state of transition: from an old life to a new one, albeit one bereft of the beloved or of a former status.[11] Mourning for too long a period of time, or even forever, would be regarded as against the norms and expectations of society.[12] Most importantly for the present discussion, lament, while marking the transition to something new, is also characterized by its backward gaze. Mourning expresses a person's inability yet to embark

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died and persons who have been transformed. Cf. e.g. 1.583–585 (Inachus, mourning for Io *ut amissam*); 6.98–100 (Cinyras, mourning his children who have been transformed into marble stairs); 7.380–381 (Cygnus' mother Hyrie). On the affinity between metamorphosis and dying, cf. Skulsky 1981, esp. 25 (quoting the Heliades as an example).

9   Cf. Derderian 2001, 3–4.

10   Cf. 13.508–515 (*modo maxima rerum, | tot generis natisque potens nuribusque viroque, | nunc trahor exul, inops, tumulis avulsa meorum, | Penelopes munus*: "But late on the pinnacle of fame, strong in my many sons, my daughters, and my husband, now, exiled, penniless, torn from the tombs of my loved ones, I am dragged away as prize for Penelope," 13.508–511; all translations are taken from Miller 1977, with slight modifications). On Hecuba, cf. also below, n. 36. On Hecuba's lament in the *Metamorphoses* and its connections with tragedy, cf. Westerhold 2011; Curley 2013, 153–161. Cf. also the fate of Io's father, who contrasts his former hope for a son-in-law and grandchildren with his present state of mourning (1.639–663). On the contrasts between past and present, as well as between mourner and dead as features of lament, cf. Alexiou 2002, 165–177; Tsagalis 2004, 44–45; cf. also Sultan 1993, for the changes in the male participants brought about by female lament in Greek poetry and tragedy.

11   Cf. Redfield 2004, 180: "The formal laments, the *gooi*, do not speak of the dead man as he was in life; rather they speak of how things are now that he is gone .... Mourning is not so much memory of the past as a definition of the new situation; mourning thus looks forward to the situation beyond the funeral and celebrates the departed, not for what he did, but for how much he will be missed. The living person is thus dismissed, and a new social figure, the absent one, is created." Note that the transformation in Redfield's account is taking place with the deceased. For the way lament can shape the mourner's future in modern Cretan examples, cf. Herzfeld 1993. Lament can also function as the site of change in the mourner, or even grief itself can be transformed: cf. the mother of Meleager, who first exchanges her golden robes for black ones (*auratis mutavit vestibus atras*), while her grief is later "turned" from tears for her dead brothers to the wish to take revenge (*excidit omnis | luctus et a lacrimis in poenae versus amorem est*, 8.448–450).

12   Cf. e.g. Sen. *Ep.* 63.12 (*malo relinquas dolorem quam ab illo relinquaris*, "I should prefer you to abandon grief, rather than have grief abandon you"); see also Loraux 1998, 9–34 for restrictions on mourning in Greece and Rome.

on a new phase of life and to part fully with what is lost.[13] As we shall see, in Ovid, the transitional state of lament interacts with another transitional state—metamorphosis—and we shall discover how the mourner's backward gaze is intertwined with a contrasting force: the poem's constant striving for novelty.

2   Phaethon's Sisters

My case study comes from the second book of the *Metamorphoses*, from the aftermath of Phaethon's crash with the chariot of the Sun and his death, as he is mourned by his sisters, the Heliades,[14] and his lover Cygnus. As Gildenhard and Zissos convincingly show, the disaster of Phaethon's ride with the sun's chariot throws the working of time into profound disorder.[15] When approaching the narrative of the Heliades and Cygnus, then, the reader is primed to expect complications of time. But what I am going to focus on—the persistence of emotions over long stretches of time, as well as the interweaving of mourning and innovation—is in fact characteristic of narratives of lament in the *Metamorphoses* in general.

After Phaethon has been buried by the Hesperian nymphs[16] and lamented by his father and mother,[17] he is mourned by his sisters. They "give tears, empty gifts, to the dead and call Phaethon, who is not going to hear their sad lament, by night and day" (*inania morti | munera dant lacrimas et caesae pectora palmis | non auditurum miseras Phaethonta querellas | nocte dieque vocant adsternunturque sepulcro*, 2.340–343).[18] They do this for four full months. Their

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13   Cf. esp. Hardie 2011, 62–105 (ch. 3, "Death, desire and monuments"; cf. 67: "We might think of the poem as a kind of allegorisation or hypostatisation of the principle of desire, lifted above its instantiation within individual subjects").

14   On the connection between the Heliades' transformation and lament in the Greek tradition, cf. Arnould 2009, 239–241.

15   Gildenhard and Zissos 1999; cf. esp. 37–38 on the Heliades and Cygnus. Cf. also Brown 1987, on the order of time—soon to be profoundly disturbed—as displayed in the palace of the Sun. On the relationship between the Heliades and Cygnus episodes and the story of Phaethon, cf. also Bass 1977, 408, noting that it is only in these two episodes that metamorphoses occur, not in the actual Phaethon narrative. On Ovid's Phaethon and his Lucretian associations, cf. Schiesaro 2014.

16   On the role of Apollo in the story of Phaethon and of Apollo's *paenitentia* here and elsewhere in the *Metamorphoses*, cf. Fulkerson 2006.

17   On Clymene's mourning, cf. Fantham 2004, 115–117; Hardie 2011, 83–84.

18   On the grief of the Heliades, cf. Gentilcore 2010, 98–99.

mourning—which should only be a temporary state—has already been transformed into *mos*, a "custom" ("usage had made this a custom," *nam morem fecerat usus*, 2.345).[19]

The next step in the narrative seems only logical: the custom is not only extended over a long period of time, but fully perpetuated. This is achieved by that other transitional state, metamorphosis, which in this case is itself described in the language of lament. One of the sisters "grieves that," when she wanted to fall down to earth, "her feet had hardened" (*questa est / deriguisse pedes*, 2.347–348). The transformation of two others is described in similar terms: "this one complains (*dolet*) that her legs are halted by a trunk, this one that her arms are becoming long branches" (*haec stipite crura teneri, / illa dolet fieri longos sua bracchia ramos*, 2.351–352). As the use of *questa est* and *dolet* suggests, there is a seamless transition from the Heliades' lament for their brother to their own unhappiness about their metamorphosis into poplar trees. The same voices that lament Phaethon, and even while they are doing so, are becoming voices that describe a metamorphosis. This theme is continued when finally, as the bark is growing around the Heliades, the only part of their human body left to them is the mouth. Their last words are "*iamque vale*," "now goodbye" (2.363).[20] The final goodbye, which in their continued lament they had never spoken to their dead brother, now seals their own transformation. Lament and metamorphosis are very closely intertwined indeed.[21]

The question that is often raised in the context of Ovidian metamorphosis becomes pertinent here again: why does a transformation happen, who or what is the agent behind it? In this case, the Heliades' grief itself seems to be this agent,[22] as is underlined by the way metamorphosis and mourning are interwoven. Also, the first transformation, as we saw above, is from a temporary state into a habit—*nam morem fecerat usus* (2.345). The logical conclusion is the permanence of the Heliades' lament, which comes to be closely connected

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19   Interestingly, the same happens to Ovid himself in his exile. In *Pont.* 2.7.39, he declares that his grief has already become a habit (*iam dolor in morem venit meus*); on the paradigm of the Heliades in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, cf. n. 23 below.

20   On the question of whether *vale* or *iamque vale* are the words spoken by the sisters, cf. Barchiesi 2005 ad loc.

21   The narrator too takes part in this interweaving of the narrative of metamorphosis and lament: he calls his own words describing the conflagration caused by Phaethon a "lament" (cf. *parva queror; magnae pereunt cum moenibus urbes*, 2.214).

22   Cf. Salzman-Mitchell 2005, 103–104, who, in commenting on the literal fixation of the Heliades, states that "[t]his is a type of immobility that has sprung from their tears and excessive mourning" (104).

with the present.[23] This is made clear by the last three lines:[24] "Then their tears flow on, and these tears, hardened into amber by the sun, drop down from the new-made trees. The clear river receives them and bears them onward, for Latin brides to wear" (*inde fluunt lacrimae, stillataque sole rigescunt | de ramis electra novis, quae lucidus amnis | excipit et nuribus mittit gestanda Latinis*, 2.364–366). This signals the aetiological aspect of the story, that is, its meaning as a story of the origin of something that still exists in the present. We learn here of the origin, not only of poplar trees, but also of amber.

Usually, there is a certain break between the past and the present in an aetion. What we know as amber are not the "actual" tears of the Heliades, but these "tears" as hardened by the sun, in another metamorphosis: *rigescunt*. But overall, this aetion is remarkable for the immediate contact between *then* and *now* that it creates, as the rupture between past and present is obscured. One indication of this is the word *inde*, which is often used to signal an aetion. Here, it has an interesting double meaning: it could be temporal—the tears are flowing "from that time onwards"—or spatial—the tears are flowing "from there," that is, "from the bark of the newly-made trees." *Inde* points to the aetiological punchline of the tale, as it effaces any divide between the past and the present. Despite their transformation, the Heliades, even in the present, keep on crying seemingly human "tears" (*lacrimae*), as they had been doing ever since Phaethon's death—compare the "empty" gift of tears mentioned in the first two lines of the passage (*inania morti | munera dant lacrimas*, 2.340–341). The drops of amber seem to have become the "real," more substantial, tears of the Heliades, as opposed to the "empty" gift of the tears they used to shed for Phaethon, even while the continuity of the flowing of their tears is under-lined.

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23   Ovid himself, in his exile poetry, rereads this story, like so many others. In contrast to his own situation of unending grief evoked in *Pont.* 1.2, he calls Phaethon's sisters happy, "whose lips, in the act of calling upon your brother, the poplar clothed with new bark" (*vos quoque felices, quarum clamantia fratrem | cortice velavit populus ora novo! Pont.* 1.2.31–32; for the parallels between the two accounts, cf. Helzle 2003 ad loc.; Gärtner 2005 ad loc.). Unlike what is most frequently suggested in the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid now emphasizes the way the transformation ends the "real" emotion, rather than focusing on the power of the metamorphosis to preserve it—all in order to magnify his suffering in exile, which cannot be brought to an end by transformation (cf. esp. *Pont.* 1.2.33–34 with Gärtner's commentary ad loc.).

24   The clearest expression of this wish for permanent mourning is the story of Cyparissus, who prays to the gods to let him mourn forever (*ut tempore lugeat omni*, 10.135; cf. also the words of Apollo, who grants this wish: "*lugebere nobis, | lugebisque alios aderisque dolentibus*," 10.141–142).

The tears flow, *fluunt*, and the river that "receives them" and "bears them onward" continues the motion inherent in the tears themselves, the motion of "flowing." The enjambment *lucidus amnis / excipit* underscores this notion of flow. The tears of the Heliades seem to drip directly into the Roman—or rather Latin—present of the poem's audience, as the river sends them to the Latin brides to wear.[25] The fact that all the verbs used here are in the present tense further helps to bridge that gap. By virtue of this particular way of telling this story—a metamorphosis born out of lament, and a seamless transition to the present—the poet achieves what could be called an "elegizing of the present." I use the term here not so much to describe the generic affiliation of the passage—although it is definitely elegiac—but with more emphasis on its diachronic dimension: through the aetion and the transformation, which is itself cast in the terms of mourning, the "elegiac" emotions of the Heliades, their grief and mourning, "spill over" into the present of the poet and his audience.[26]

At the same time, another transformation is going on. As Alessandro Barchiesi shows, Ovid here pointedly chooses not to tell the aetion in the manner that we know Aeschylus told it, according to whom the grief of the Heliades was the origin of a specific mourning garb worn by the women in the area where Phaethon fell to earth (*Heliadae*, fr. 71 Radt). Instead, the Heliades' tears turn into amber items of jewellery, which were worn by Italian women—*except* when in mourning.[27] It could be argued that the last lines of this narrative of metamorphosis bring about the transition that the Heliades themselves, in their fixation on their grief, had failed to achieve: from death to life and to marriage, from the young girls that the Heliades obviously had been, to brides (*nurus*). The metamorphosis, then, both preserves the Heliades' grief in the shape of the poplar trees and their "tears," while also marking, with these same "tears," the transition that should follow a period of lament. This ties the present shape of the Heliades' tears even closer to the present moment: the drops of amber worn by the Latin brides, rather than being a distant memory of a tale of the past, are the ongoing conclusion to that tale, the embodiment of the new phase of life that the Heliades themselves did not reach.

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25   Cf. Wheeler 1999, 202 for the fact that the "tears of the Heliades" (*Heliadum lacrimas*, 10.263) reappear in the *Metamorphoses* themselves, when Pygmalion decks his ivory statue with amber.

26   Cf. also Tissol 1997, esp. 191–195, on how Ovid invites us to "see behind the outward face of nature an origin of human suffering and passion" (193).

27   Barchiesi 2005, ad 365–366.

In this respect, Ovid, in his treatment of aetiological metamorphosis in his epic, is even more "elegiac" than in his aetiological poem written in elegiacs, the *Fasti*. In that work, there is lament too—for instance by Ariadne and by Ceres (after the abduction of her daughter)—but it is not immediately connected with the readers' present in the way that is done in the *Metamorphoses*. While aetiology in the *Fasti* is dedicated to the creation of Rome's calendar, its festive days, monuments and rituals—and thus to the more forward-looking aspects of aetiology—Ovid in a large part of the *Metamorphoses* fills our own world with the traces of the lament and mourning of the past. In that respect, Ovid in his epic realizes what Callimachus first invents, but, it seems, does not fully live up to: truly "elegiac" aetiology, which not only informs the readers, but also allows them to recognize the way past emotions live on in their own present.[28]

But there is more to it than that. The preservation of the Heliades' backward-looking grief would not be possible without its opposite, the inherently forward-looking creation of something new. As the Heliades speak their final goodbye, "*iamque vale!*," tree bark grows into their "last words" (*cortex in verba novissima venit*, 2.363). The phrase *verba novissima* both denotes the end of the Heliades' speech and paves the way for the creation of the "new branches," *rami novi*, which occur only two lines later. These branches, while they are marked as an "innovation" (*novi*[29]) on their first appearance a little earlier, are objects of lament: one of the Heliades had "lamented that her arms were becoming long branches" (*illa dolet fieri longos sua bracchia ramos*, 2.352).[30] The Heliades, then, greet any change to their situation with lament: be it the loss of their brother, or be it the transformation of their bodies. Somewhat ironically, their impulse to lament Phaethon eternally gives rise to their transformation, which perpetuates their grief, but which itself also becomes the object of their lament: even their grief is transformed.

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28   The two stories of transformation examined here correspond to the two alternative ways of responding to the metamorphosis of e.g. Lycaon and Daphne, as sketched out by Feldherr 2002, 174: the reader can either regard these stories "as exempla that perpetuate that [i.e. the cosmic and political] order by recalling the consequences of violating it," or the reader, "far from retaining a comfortable position in the world after metamorphosis, … is drawn back into the unstable past, entering into the fiction rather than marking it off as such."

29   On *novus* in the *Metamorphoses*, cf. Bömer 1969, ad 2.377, who renders its meaning as "'saepe fere' i.q. 'inaudita,' 'adhuc ignota'."

30   On these words and their shifting meaning, cf. Wheeler 1999, 12–14. On issues of time in the textual and artistic representation of metamorphosis, cf. Sharrock 1996.

The mourning of the Heliades, then, brings essential aspects of Ovidian metamorphosis into particularly sharp focus. On the one hand, the transformation of Phaethon's sisters allows their backward-looking impulse to lament, which had already become a regular phenomenon (*mos*), to persist forever. Their gestures of mourning are preserved, and their "tears" seem to trickle directly into the present, infusing it with "elegiac" traces of mourning, while the transmission of their tears to the Latin brides and their transformation into jewellery mark the essential transition to life and marriage that has so far been missing from the story of the Heliades. At the same time, this "elegiac" continuity and the preservation of the Heliades' grief is impossible without, and deeply entangled with, innovation: the creation of "new" trees, and the new material, amber.

The two temporal forces at work here underlie the *Metamorphoses* as a whole: novelty is announced as an important focus of the work by its very first two words: *in nova*.[31] At the same time, the poet is also looking back, towards the "first origin of the world" (*primaque ab origine mundi*) to trace the long story of how this leads to his own time (*ad mea tempora*, 1.3). The directions of time evoked in these programmatic lines become more complicated in the story of the Heliades: while this certainly is an aetion, leading from a "first origin" to the present, the status of old and new is actually more complex: forward-looking novelty allows the Heliades' backward-looking gaze to be preserved, as their new shape is both born out of, and immediately made subject to, lament.

3   Cygnus

The Heliades' impulse to perpetuate their grief appears to be almost contagious. Immediately after the wondrous fact of this transformation Phaethon's lover Cygnus appears on the scene. While he fills "the green banks of the Eridanus" with wailing, as well as "the woods which the sisters had increased," he too begins to be transformed: "his voice became thin and shrill; white plumage hid his hair and his neck stretched far out from his breast. A web-like membrane joined his reddened fingers, wings clothed his sides, and a blunt beak his mouth. So Cygnus became a strange new bird, the swan" (*cum vox est tenuata viro canaeque capillos | dissimulant plumae collumque a pectore longe | porrigitur digitosque ligat iunctura rubentes, | penna latus velat, tenet os acumine*

Barchiesi 2002, 182 rightly states that "this epos has the longest time span ever in ancient literature."

rostrum. | *fit nova Cygnus avis*, 2.373–377).[32] The first feature to be transformed is Cygnus' voice: as he fills the woods with his laments, *querellis*, his voice suddenly becomes thin. Alison Keith very convincingly shows the elegiac affiliation of this passage.[33] Again, as in the story of the Heliades, the voice of lament is important. Yet while the Heliades, after their final "*iamque vale!*," fall silent forever, Cygnus keeps his voice. In their present shape, the Heliades and Cygnus create a complete image of mourning, the sisters supplying the gestures and the tears, Cygnus' thin voice preserving the noise of his laments.

Like the "new branches" of the poplar trees, the bird into which Cygnus is transformed is novel (*fit **nova** Cygnus avis*, 2.377).[34] Both Cygnus' transformation and the characteristic features of the swan are expressed in the present tense. He "becomes" a new bird, he does not "trust" himself to the sky, but seeks out lakes (*fit … credit … petit*, 377–379). Cygnus merges with the species of the swan as it still exists in the present of the reader. The concluding perfect tense, however—he "chose" to live in rivers (*elegit*, 2.380)—subtly suggests the aetiological aspect of the tale: the choice of the swan's natural habitat is one made in the past, by the very first swan, Cygnus.

The connection between the present and the past, between Cygnus and the species of the swan as it lives on after him,[35] hinges on a markedly ambiguous

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32 On Cygnus' grief, cf. de Luce 1982, 84. After Cygnus, a number of other characters are transformed into swans as well, over the course of the poem: cf. 7.371–379, on Cygnus, the son of Hyrie, who is transformed into a swan (*subitus … olor*, 7.372); 12.71–167, Neptune's son Cygnus, who withstands Achilles in the Trojan War, is finally killed and transformed into "the white bird whose name he lately bore" (*cuius modo nomen habebat*, 12.145); cf. Myers 1994, 40; Michalopoulos 2001, 64–65, s.v. "cygnus"; Hardie 2011, 249. For the connection of the swan with lament in the Greek tradition, cf. Arnould 2009, 255–257.

33 Keith 1992, 137–146.

34 Bömer 1969 ad loc., however, is of course right to say that this is actually an anachronism, since swans are already described in 2.252–253. They already exhibit a feature that is mentioned in Cygnus' story as well: they live in the water, but even there they feel the heat of the conflagration caused by Phaethon (*medio caluere Caystro*, 2.253). However, they are not referred to by name, so that it will indeed be left to Cygnus to give his name to the "new" species of birds.

35 Already a little later in the text, this characteristic of the novel bird is confirmed, when the species of the swan is called "river-loving" (*amanti flumina cygno*, 2.539). Cf. also the reference to the singing swans populating the lake Pergus and the river Caystrus (on which cf. Hinds 1987, 44–48, with 148–149 nn. 64–65 on the association between swans and poetry). The story of Cygnus is also told in the *Aeneid* (10.185–197). Here too Cygnus' grief for Phaethon is the context of his transformation, and "while he is singing and with music solacing his woeful love amid the shade of his sisters' leafy poplars, drew over his form the soft plumage of white old age, leaving earth and seeking the stars with his cry" (10.190–193). The cry does appear as a trace of Cygnus' mournful song, but overall, the contrast

phrase: the new bird does not "trust himself to the upper air and Jove, since—or, as though—he remembered the fiery bolt which the god had unjustly hurled": *nec se caeloque Iovique / credit ut iniuste missi memor ignis ab illo* (2.377–378). *Ut*, in particular without a finite verb, could mean that the swan's memory of the story of Phaethon is just a deception, "as though." There would be no actual memory of Cygnus' story in all later swans, then, but only the semblance of it. But—and this is how most translators and Bömer in his commentary take it—*ut* could also be causal: "since he is mindful of Jupiter's thunderbolt." This leaves open the possibility that there is still an awareness of this story, and of Cygnus' grief, in swans as a species. This interpretation of *ut* is supported by a couple of parallels in the *Metamorphoses*, where characters after their transformation are still mindful, *memor*, of what had happened before. Perdix, for instance, the nephew of Daedalus, is thrown by his uncle from the *arx* sacred to Minerva and turned into a partridge: a new bird, yet one that lives close to the ground and fears the height, "mindful of his past fall" (*antiquique memor metuit sublimia casus*, 8.259).[36]

Ut can be taken in two ways, then. Bömer tellingly speaks of a "transition from a simile ('as though') to the stating of a reason."[37] The transformation

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between looking back in grief and being turned into something new is not brought out, in contrast to the Ovidian treatment of this tale.

36   On this, cf. Tissol 1997, 192–193. Hecuba too, after she has been turned into a dog, "long remained mindful of her old misfortune," as she sadly howled over the Sithonian plain (*veterumque diu memor illa malorum*, 13.570). Note that this inability to forget is shown by Hecuba also earlier, when she sets in motion her revenge, "not having forgotten her rage, but having forgotten her age" (*non oblita animorum, annorum oblita suorum*, 13.550); cf. also Hopkinson 2000, ad 13.616 (*meminere*). Interestingly, this backward gaze is even emphasized in a highly programmatic transformation of the *Metamorphoses*, in which it enters into a dialogue with Ovid's epic predecessor, the *Aeneid*. In Book 14, Ovid relates how Aeneas' ships, after they have been turned into nymphs, "mindful of the defeat of Phrygia still hated the Pelasgians" (*cladis adhuc Phrygiae memores odere Pelasgos*, 14.562); nor have they forgotten the many dangers they had faced at sea (*non tamen oblitae*, 14.559). The Ovidian nymphs are decidedly looking backwards, while in the *Aeneid*, the nymphs in their encounter with Aeneas cannot look back further than their own transformation. Instead, they speak about the present situation in Latium and prophesy that many Rutulians will be killed the next day (*Aen.* 10.215–245; note esp. 244–245: *crastina lux, mea si non inrita dicta putaris, / ingentis Rutulae spectabit caedis acervos*). In responding to the *Aeneid*'s most famously "metamorphic" moment, Ovid programmatically looks back where the *Aeneid*, in order to arrive at least somewhere near the fulfillment of its foundational program, needed to look forward. On the phenomenon of metamorphosis in the *Aeneid*, cf. Feldherr 2002, 167–169; cf. also, on the idea of the "mutability of Rome," Hardie 1997.

37   Bömer 1969 ad loc. On similes in the *Metamorphoses*, cf. von Glinski 2012.

narrated in the text is mirrored in the oscillating meaning of this one word at its center. This ambiguity demands the active participation of readers,[38] who have to decide for themselves whether to privilege change or continuity in their interpretation of the tale: how much of Cygnus is still in the swan today? Do modern-day swans share only their shape with Cygnus, or do they still remember his story—and thus, it is implied, Ovid's account of it? Or are rather both true at the same time?

What is at stake here as well is both the reader's and Cygnus' overall assessment of the story of Phaethon's death.[39] The word *iniuste* is a strong indictment of Jupiter's action, but it is one that is clearly focalized through Cygnus' eyes, whose memory this is (*memor*). The readers, aware of the transgressive nature of Phaethon's wish, might not share this judgment and might thus be reminded of the dichotomy between their own perspective and that of the characters of Ovid's narrative. In his own understanding, however, Cygnus in his new form as a swan becomes a monument of protest against Jupiter's thunderbolt, seeking retroactively to express and fix a certain interpretation of the story of Phaethon. The swan, whether only by appearance or truly remembering these events, by his choice of habitat will also forever embody his own protest and question our interpretation of this tale. And, fundamentally, the decision made about real or imagined permanence in the swan's memory reflects back on the readers themselves, and the way they prefer to see the world: as fairly new, or as deeply entrenched in the emotions of the past.

4   Conclusion

The first extended scenes of mourning in the *Metamorphoses*, then, raise new questions about and complicate not only the epic's generic status, but also the functioning of its aetia. In the story of the Heliades, the lament for Phaethon is first turned into a custom, and then also informs the Heliades' transformation into eternal monuments of lament. The power of their mourning is such that their tears seem to directly flow into the present, adorning the world of Ovid's contemporaries, and our world, with the signs of their grief. Only the present use of amber, it is implied, accomplishes the transition from death to life that the Heliades themselves failed to achieve. To that extent, Ovid presents his readers with a truly "elegiac" aetion—"elegiac" in a diachronic perspective—

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38   On a similar process happening in the poem's first two lines, cf. Wheeler 1999, 12–14.

39   I am grateful to Julia Worlitzsch for alerting me to this.

that imbues the present with the emotions of the past: the grief, the tears, and a failed transition back to life.

Somewhat paradoxically, then, two transitional states, mourning and metamorphosis, work together to create an impressive continuity between past and present. However, this continuity also complicates the layers of time involved. The Heliades' impulse to grieve forever can become reality only through their transformation into something new. The force of innovation, which is eminently directed towards the future, provides a counterpull to their backward-looking grief. The creation of something new is born out of grief, and is first described by voices of lamentation, as the Heliades seamlessly make the transition from lamenting their brother to lamenting their own new shapes. The story of Cygnus, which immediately follows, implicates the readers in the question to what extent the aetia born out of lament are looking forwards or backwards. With *ut memor* oscillating between a simile and the statement of a cause, the question of which reading one should privilege reflects back on the readers' point of view and their orientation towards either the future or the past, or both at the same time.

Stories of lament with their inherently transitional nature allow Ovid to reflect on the interplay of past and future, of the lament for what is lost and the irreversible change brought about by the creation of something new. In insisting on the permanence of emotions from the past, but also in complicating any clear-cut distinction between past, present, and future, Ovid creates something truly unique in the history of aetiological literature, both in terms of literary genre and the construction of time.[40]

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Duo moriemur: Death and Doubling in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*

Florence Klein

It is common for a lover who is either about to die himself or to lose his or her beloved to fantasize about a shared death. The *Metamorphoses* offer a few examples of such a wish (with the stories of Pyramus and Thisbe,[1] Philemon and Baucis,[2] and Ceyx and Alcyone[3]), but only two characters actually get to reunite after death with the object of their desire: Narcissus and Orpheus. In fact, both episodes end with the deceased lovers engaging in the very activity that was previously prohibited or deadly: looking intensely (though now safely) at the loved one. On the one hand, as Narcissus fades away, consumed by his vain love for his own reflection, he takes comfort in the idea that they will both pass away at once: "but as it is, we two shall die together in one breath" (*nunc duo concordes anima moriemur in una*, 3.473). And indeed, after his death, we see him admiring himself forever in the waters of the Styx (3.504–505):

> tum quoque se, postquam est inferna sede receptus,
> in Stygia spectabat aqua.

> And even when he had been received into the infernal abodes,
> he kept on gazing on his image in the Stygian pool.

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1 As is well known, Pyramus first kills himself (because he mistakenly thinks that Thisbe has been killed by a lioness), crying "One night shall bring two lovers to death" (*una duos nox perdet amantes*, 4.108; throughout this chapter I cite the translation of F.J. Miller 1977, rev. G.P. Goold). Then Thisbe kills herself as well, asking again for unity in death (156–167). After their deaths, the remains from both funeral pyres rest in a single urn (*quod ... rogis superest, una requiescit in urna*, 166).

2 "[S]ince we have spent our lives in constant company, we pray that the same hour may bring death to both of us" (*et quoniam concordes egimus annos, / auferat hora duos eadem*, 8.708–709). They will actually be changed simultaneously into "two trees standing close together, and growing from one double trunk" (716–720).

3 Alcyone attempts to follow her deceased husband in death: "Now at least I shall come to be your companion; and if not the entombed urn, at least the lettered stone shall join us" (*et tibi nunc saltem veniam comes, inque sepulcro / si non urna, tamen iunget nos littera*, 11.705–706). They are then both metamorphosed into birds.

On the other hand, Orpheus, trying to resurrect his dead wife, informs the infernal gods that if they do not release Eurydice from the Underworld, he will himself not return to the world of the living: "rejoice in the death of two" (*leto gaudete duorum*, 10.39).[4] But after he has lost her a second time, because he could not help looking back at her, and after the lengthy song that follows his conversion to homoerotic love, the mythical bard gets killed by maenads and finally reunites with his wife in the Underworld, where he can now gaze at her as much as he desires (11.61–66):

> umbra subit terras et quae loca viderat ante,
> cuncta recognoscit quaerensque per arva piorum
> invenit Eurydicen cupidisque amplectitur ulnis;
> hic modo coniunctis spatiantur passibus ambo,
> nunc praecedentem sequitur, nunc praevius anteit
> Eurydicenque suam, iam tuto, respicit Orpheus.

> The poet's shade fled beneath the earth, and recognized all the places he had seen before; and, seeking through the blessed fields, found Eurydice and caught her in his eager arms. Here now side by side they walk; now Orpheus follows her as she precedes, now goes before her, now may in safety look back upon his Eurydice.

The two stories are thus linked by the common theme of "double death" (*duo moriemur* / *leto duorum*) that actually enables a *post mortem* reunion of the couples, and the parallelism is reinforced by the fact that Narcissus and Orpheus are allowed, after their respective deaths, to gaze forever at their beloved. I want to suggest that this twinning invites us to read Orpheus' narrative as the mirror of Narcissus' death, and maybe see the former as a reflection of the latter. We shall see how such a reading in terms of intratextual doubling of the double death pattern sheds an interesting light on Ovid's account of Orpheus' story, and I shall especially contend that, by allowing us to read Orpheus' death as partly recalling that of Narcissus, Ovid creates a new kind of allusive signpost: the use of *intra*textual echoes to highlight and comment on *inter*textual games with his Vergilian model.

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4   Rimell 2006, 113 links the passage with Narcissus' fantasizing about unity in death.

1   Orpheus on the Bank of the Styx: Another Narcissus?

Before considering further this intratextual doubling of the "double death" pattern, let us envision another moment when the two characters virtually reflect each other near the realm of dead, just after Eurydice's "second death." As his (twice) deceased wife is sent back into the Underworld without him, a mourning Orpheus wants to cross the Styx, to join her for a second time, but in vain. Inconsolable in his grief, he stays there, sitting on the bank of the river for a whole week (10.64, 72–75):

> ... stupuit gemina nece coniugis Orpheus,
> ...
> orantem frustraque iterum transire volentem
> portitor arcuerat: septem tamen ille diebus
> squalidus in ripa Cereris sine munere sedit;
> cura dolorque animi lacrimaeque alimenta fuere.

> By his wife's double death Orpheus was stunned .... [He] prayed and wished in vain to cross the Styx a second time, but the keeper drove him back. Seven days he sat there on the bank in filthy rags and with no taste of food. Care, anguish of soul, and tears were his nourishment.

In this posture, suffering from the absence of his beloved, Orpheus resembles Narcissus paralyzed by his erotic pain on the bank of the pool (3.437–439):

> non illum Cereris, non illum cura quietis
> abstrahere inde potest, sed opaca fusus in herba
> spectat inexpleto mendacem lumine formam ...

> No thought of food or rest can draw him from the spot; but, stretched on the shaded grass, he gazes on that false image with eyes that cannot look their fill.

Like Narcissus, Orpheus will not care for food (74). The only things that will feed his soul are love and pain (*cura dolorque animi lacrimaeque alimenta fuere*, 75). The very choice of the word *alimenta* to designate the erotic suffering may echo Narcissus' situation. In the *Metamorphoses* it is only for him, indeed, that the word is employed with this metaphoric sense as well: "Still may it be mine to gaze on what I may not touch, and by that gaze feed my unhappy passion" (*liceat, quod tangere non est, / adspicere et misero prae-*

bere alimenta furori, 3.478–479). Another point in common is the astonishment of both lovers separated from their beloved, with a parallel use of the verb (*ad*)*stupere* (cf. 3.418–419 *adstupet ipse sibi vultuque inmotus eodem / haeret, ut e Pario formatum marmore signum*, "He looks in speechless wonder at himself and hangs there motionless in the same expression, like a statue carved from Parian marble," and 10.64–65 *non aliter stupuit gemina nece coniugis Orpheus / quam …*, "By his wife's double death Orpheus was stunned, like …"[5]). In this posture, lying on the bank of the river Styx and mourning the separation from his beloved, Orpheus appears as another Narcissus.[6] Thus, although their stories are quite different, Narcissus' complaint that he and his lover are kept apart by a thin barrier of water (*exigua aqua*) could—ironically—fit Orpheus' situation, as he is prevented from crossing the Styx (*exigua aqua* being here something of a euphemism) in order to join his deceased wife.[7]

Moreover, when one considers the supposed relative chronology of the two episodes, it is amusing to imagine that, at the very moment when Orpheus appears as a twin of Narcissus, prostrated near the infernal river, the "original" Narcissus, already deceased, lies on the other side of the same river where he contemplates forever his reflection in the water. One is thus tempted to visualize Narcissus and Orpheus, facing each other from either side of the Styx, each one longing for a shade.

But does this image allow us to go so far as to suggest that one could read Orpheus himself as a kind of (second) reflection of Narcissus, a twinned double so to speak? To what extent may we consider Orpheus as another Narcissus,

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5 In the lines that follow (65–71) Orpheus is compared to mythical characters who have been changed into stones.

6 Conversely, it is interesting to recall that Philip Hardie has linked Narcissus' story with Lucretius' description of the imagistic experience of seeing into a sort of Underworld when gazing into a puddle of water (*DRN* 4.416–419) and stressed that the landscape in which the young boy encounters his double, near a pool that is disturbed by no birds (*quem nulla volucris / … turbarat, Met.* 3.409–410), which alludes to the Greek etymology of Avernus from *a-ornos* "birdless," could also evoke the entrance to the Underworld. (Hardie 2002, 156–157: "Ghosts and the Underworld"). Thus, according to him, Narcissus, desperately trying to evoke a shade (*corpus putat esse quod umbra est*, 417), foreshadows the episode of Orpheus: "the attempt to evoke an *umbra* from a world below also recalls the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, with the ironic contrast that the continuing presence of Narcissus' beloved is wholly dependent on the lover's direct gaze" (157).

7 "[A]nd to make me grieve the more, no mighty ocean separates us, no long road, no mountain ranges, no city walls with close-shut gates; by a thin barrier of water we are kept apart" (*quoque magis doleam, nec nos mare separat ingens / nec via nec montes nec clausis moenia portis: / exigua prohibemur aqua*, 3.448–450).

or—to put it another way—how significant is this apparent doubling of the "double death" pattern, from Narcissus' episode to that of Orpheus? The next stage in my argument will attempt to suggest that approaching Orpheus' relationship to his deceased wife through the model of Narcissus' relationship to his reflection contributes to qualifying Eurydice's status in Ovid's account of Orpheus' story.

2 Couples: Reading Orpheus and Eurydice in light of the Narcissus Episode

Even if both narratives end with a similar vision of deceased lovers gazing at each other for eternity, there is still an obvious gap between the two couples. Narcissus actually looks at himself, while Orpheus looks at Eurydice. But this is precisely what makes the comparison interesting. In fact, it seems possible to see in the couple formed by Orpheus and his wife a doubling of the odd couple formed by Narcissus and his reflection; or, to put it another way, Eurydice seems to appear in the *Metamorphoses* as Orpheus' reflection. This connection seems apparent, for example, in the passage where Orpheus, trying to return Eurydice to the upper world, looks at her too soon, before leaving the realm of dead, and loses her to death for the second time (10.56–59):

> hic, ne deficeret, metuens avidusque videndi
> flexit amans oculos, et protinus illa relapsa est,
> bracchiaque intendens prendique et prendere certans
> nil nisi cedentis infelix adripit auras.
>
> He, afraid that she might fall behind, eager for sight of her, turned back his longing eyes; and instantly she slipped into the depths. He stretched out his arms, eager to catch her or to feel her clasp; but, unhappy one, he clasped nothing but the yielding air.

One must highlight the ambiguity of the passage regarding the subject of the actions described by the Ovidian narrator. In his commentary on the words *ne deficeret* (56), Anderson notes that "it is not clear whether Orpheus or Eurydice should be the subject. Orpheus might fear either that she has fallen behind or that he is pulling away from her."[8] Victoria Rimell, recalling as well that the

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8   Anderson 1972, 479.

verb might refer to Eurydice as well as Orpheus, adds that the two possible movements (he too far ahead, she too far behind) are mutually dependent.[9] There is also a real ambivalence regarding the subject of the desperate gesture and vain attempt to embrace the beloved in lines 58–59. Anderson presumes a change of person from Eurydice (*illa*, 57) to Orpheus (58), assuming that he is the one who holds out his arms and grasps at thin air: "I have placed a comma after *relapsa est* to indicate the change of subject. Otherwise, it is not immediately clear whether husband or wife acts in 58–59. The gestures of 58 could fit either; those of 59 could only be Orpheus' for snatching at retreating air belongs among the formulaic motions of one who sees a dream or vision of a beloved one … or has contact with the dead."[10] On the contrary, Reed attributes all the actions to Eurydice.[11] In fact, nothing in the Latin text dictates the shift of subject: the present participles *intendens* and *certans* follow naturally from *relapsa est*, and as Anderson himself claims, modern editors must insert a comma, or even a full stop, to indicate alteration of subject from 57 to 58.[12] Yet, as Rimell rightly underscores, the gesture fits either party, or both: "if we try to visualize the drama, it would be strange if either Orpheus or Eurydice did *not* extend their arms to attempt to catch hold of the other, as the concurrent active and passive action in *prendique et prendere certans* suggests."[13]

Now, this ambivalence regarding the subject of the actions and this reciprocity of the loving gesture can usefully be read through the model of Narcissus' interaction with his double. There, this very reciprocity is indeed expressed, throughout the episode, by the same kind of polyptoton created by the active and passive forms of the verbs, as can be seen for example in the narrator's presentation of Narcissus' love for his reflection in the pool (3.425–426):

> se cupit inprudens et, qui *probat*, ipse *probatur*,
> dumque *petit, petitur*, pariterque accendit et ardet.

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9   Cf. Rimell 2006, 110: "Afraid of (her) failing, hungry for the sight of her, he flicked back his longing eyes, and in an instant, back she fell—and stretching out arms, flailing to catch or be caught, the cursed figure grasped at nothing but thin air" (with a few punctuation changes in the beginning of the passage: *hic ne deficeret metuens avidusque videndi / flexit amans oculos, et protinus illa relapsa est, / bracchiaque intendens*).

10   Anderson 1972, 479–480.

11   Reed 2004, 179: "58–59, *bracchia … auras*: il soggetto è Euridice, come nella precedente frase e nella seguente."

12   Rimell 2006, 111.

13   Rimell 2006, 111.

> Unwittingly he desires himself; he praises, and is himself what he praises; and while he seeks, is sought; equally he kindles love and burns with love.

Or, in the words that Narcissus himself addresses to his beloved: "What shall I do? Shall I be wooed or woo?" (*quid faciam? roger, anne rogem?* 3.465). More-over, before Narcissus realizes that he *is* the handsome boy he is attracted to ("I am he!" *iste ego sum*, 463), he strongly emphasizes the mirroring symmetry of his (or "their") movements: for example, "and when I have stretched out my arms to you, you stretch yours too. When I have smiled, you smile back; and I have often seen tears, when I weep, on your cheeks. My becks you answer with your nod" (*cumque ego porrexi tibi bracchia, porrigis ultro: / cum risi, adrides; lacrimas quoque saepe notavi / me lacrimante tuas, nutu quoque signa remittis*, 3.458–460). In particular, the first sentence of the passage—*cum ego porrexi tibi bracchia, porrigis ultro*—could well describe the gestures of Orpheus and/or Eurydice both extending their arms to attempt to catch hold of the other. Thus, considering the passage in light of the Narcissus episode offers a sort of critical response from within the poem to the reading issues of the ambiguous passage regarding the subject of the actions of Orpheus and his bride. Conversely, the grammatical ambiguity of lines 10.56–59 could be a way for Ovid to reinforce the parallelism he draws between the two couples—Orpheus and Eurydice, on the one hand, and Narcissus and his reflection, on the other hand—a paral-lelism that will be confirmed at the end of the episode by the doubling of the double death pattern and the *post mortem* situation of the characters still gaz-ing at each other.

Additionally, a word must be said about the parallels at *Georgics* 4, in the end of the plaintive speech that Vergil assigns to Eurydice as she is carried off (4.495–502, trans. Fairclough-Goold):

> "en iterum crudelia retro
> fata vocant, conditque natantia lumina somnus.
> iamque vale: feror ingenti circumdata nocte
> invalidasque tibi tendens, heu! non tua, palmas."
> dixit et ex oculis subito, ceu fumus in auras
> commixtus tenuis, fugit diversa, neve illum
> prensantem nequiquam umbras et multa volentem
> dicere praeterea vidit.

> "See, again the cruel Fates call me back, and sleep seals my swimming eyes. And now farewell! I am borne away, covered in night's vast pall, and stretching towards you strengthless hands, regained, alas! no more." She

spoke, and straightway from his sight, like smoke mingling with thin air, vanished afar and saw him not again, as he vainly clutched at the shadows with so much left unsaid.

As Anderson notes, Vergil distinguishes the desperate movements of Orpheus and Eurydice: she holds out faltering hands (498); he tries in vain to grasp (*prensantem*) the shade as she eludes him (499–501).[14] Rimell concludes that by fusing Vergil's carefully separated lovers in a single figure that could be Orpheus and/or Eurydice, Ovid suggests "a breakdown of difference into symmetry" and "preview[s] the homosexual and incestuous temptations of the rest of Book 10."[15] I would add that such a reading in the light of Orpheus' song—as it is indeed obsessed with various forms of refusal of Otherness, be it through the preference for homoerotic loves[16] or through the incestuous pattern that links the last stories (Myrrha, obviously, but also Pygmalion and Adonis[17])—is all the more significant as we are tempted to evoke the model of Narcissus to comment on this "intertextual fusion" of the two Vergilian characters into a unique one, whose desperate gestures are reflected (with an ambiguous reciprocity) by his/her beloved.

This leads us to our next point: the use by the poet of intratextual doublings as a way to create a new kind of allusive signpost signaling and commenting on his intertextual relationship to the *Georgics*. We will now see how the doubling of the "double death" pattern enables him to do so.

3   From Intratextual Doublings to Intertextual (Extra) Signposts[18]

First, one should recall that both double deaths can be described as such in more than one way, since the two episodes are profoundly structured by the theme of doubling. For Narcissus, in addition to the "double death" (*duo*

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14   Anderson 1972, 480.

15   Rimell 2006, 111.

16   On the links between Orpheus' erotic situation (his conversion to homosexuality) and the content of his song, see Barchiesi 2001, 55–62.

17   On the incestuous pattern linking these episodes, see Hardie 2002, 187–188; Hardie 2004; Fabre-Serris 2005. On Myrrha see Sharrock in chapter 10 of this volume.

18   Cf. Klein 2016, with a parallel analysis of the intratextual echo between Narcissus' rejection of all the boys and all the girls (3.353–355 *multi illum iuvenes, multae cupiere puellae. / sed fuit in tenera tam dura superbia forma: / nulli illum iuvenes, nullae tetigere puellae*) and Orpheus' rejection of the women after Eurydice's death (10.81–82 *multas tamen ardor habebat / iungere se vati, multae doluere repulsae*).

moriemur, 472) of the character and his reflection, the whole passage is organized around the doubling of its two parts (the story of Narcissus and Echo, i.e. Narcissus and his acoustic double) and the story of Narcissus and his reflection (i.e. Narcissus and his visual double).[19] Now, on a third level, this pattern of doubling is also linked with intertextual mirroring and repetition, for which Echo is a metapoetic figure *par excellence*.[20] Following Stephen Hinds,[21] one can note that Echo, at the moment of Narcissus' death, repeats the last words uttered by her beloved one to his own reflection (3.499–501):

> ultima vox solitam fuit haec spectantis in undam,
> "heu frustra dilecte puer!" totidemque remisit
> verba locens, dictoque vale "vale!" inquit et Echo.

> His last words as he gazed into the familiar spring were these: "Alas, dear boy, vainly beloved!" and the place gave back his words. And when he said "Farewell!", "Farewell!" said Echo too.

The *vale* echoed by the nymph is also a repetition of a Vergilian model (*Ecl.* 3.79):

> et longum "formose, *vale, vale," inquit*, "Iolla"

> and in halting accents cried, "farewell, farewell, my handsome Iollas!"

Thus Echo, repeating the words uttered by a dying Narcissus, functions as the annotator of the intertextual "echo" between the two texts, Vergilian and Ovidian.[22]

As for Orpheus, in addition to the fact that he claims the deaths of two people (*leto duorum*, 10.49), his own and his spouse's, one must add that of Eurydice twice, for her death is famously her second one (Ovid speaks of her *gemina nex*, 10.64). Besides, Orpheus himself enters twice into the Underworld and so on the second occasion recognizes all the places that he had already seen before: "The poet's shade fled beneath the earth, and recognized all the places he had seen before" (*umbra subit terras, et quae loca viderat ante, /*

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19   Rosati 1983; Fabre-Serris 1995.
20   See for example Hollander 1981, 62; Barchiesi 1995; Bonadeo 2003, 69–75.
21   Hinds 1998, 5–8.
22   Hinds 1998, 6. Cf. Wills 1996, 347: "Ovid imitates Virgil's repetition in the same position, but marks it as an imitation by transforming it into an explicit, as well as implicit, echo."

cuncta recognoscit, 11.61–62). Now, this doubling of the two characters' deaths (or, at least, visits to the Underworld) is also a way of annotating the intertextual doubling of a poetic model, as Ovid rewrites the Vergilian narrative of Eurydice and Orpheus' deaths in *Georgics* 4. When Eurydice dies a second and final time (because Orpheus could not restrain himself and looked back at her too soon), Ovid remarks that she does not complain about her second death (10.60–61):

> iamque iterum moriens non est de coniuge quicquam
> questa suo (quid enim nisi se quereretur amatam?)

> And now, dying a second time, she made no complaint against her husband; for what could she complain save that she was beloved?

At a first (and literal) level, the adverb *iterum* means that Eurydice's death is the second one in the course of events. It is indeed with this very meaning that the same adverb was used, in the first place, in the account of the same story in the *Georgics* (4.494–498):

> illa "quis et me" inquit "miseram et te perdidit, Orpheu,
> quis tantus furor? en iterum crudelia retro
> fata vocant conditque natantia lumina somnus.
> iamque vale: feror ingenti circumdata nocte
> invalidasque tibi tendens, heu! non tua, palmas."

> She cried: "What madness, Orpheus, what dreadful madness has brought disaster alike upon you and me, poor soul? See, again the cruel Fates call me back, and sleep seals my swimming eyes. And now farewell! I am borne away, covered in night's vast pall, and stretching towards you strengthless hands, regained, alas! no more."

Ovid thus repeats the adverb *iterum*, with the same literal meaning as his predecessor, since in both texts Eurydice does in fact die "twice." It is tempting to see in this repetition of a word precisely denoting repetition a way of annotating intertextual doubling and Ovid's duplication of the Vergilian model. Similarly, one can imagine that when Orpheus recognizes (*recognoscit*, 11.62) the places that he had already seen before (*quae loca viderat ante*, 61), the character may function as a model for the reader who recognizes earlier literary descriptions of the place that she/he had already encountered earlier in the poetic tradition.

The Narcissus and Orpheus episodes thus have in common their rich use of the doubling pattern and, among other things, its metapoetic function to signal to readers the intertextual duplication involved. Now, as we have seen, they can also be seen as duplicating each other, mostly thanks to the reiteration of the "double death" motif and the parallelism that can be inferred from the final (and eternal) reconciliation of the dead characters with their beloved (Narcissus' reflection / Orpheus' wife) in the Underworld. The question is then: can we apply a similar metapoetic interpretation to the doubling of some elements from Narcissus' death in those of Orpheus and Eurydice and hence interpret them as some innovative kind of allusive signpost? I am tempted to read these intratextual echoes as a new way devised by Ovid to highlight his intertextual relationship with his Vergilian model.

Let us begin with the very moment of Orpheus' death. As his body has been dismembered, his head and his lyre, floating on the river Hebrus, repeat his mournful laments and the riverbank responds to them (11.44–53):

> te maestae volucres, Orpheu, te turba ferarum,
> te rigidi silices, tua carmina saepe secutae
> fleverunt silvae, positis te frondibus arbor
> tonsa comas luxit; lacrimis quoque flumina dicunt
> increvisse suis, obstrusaque carbasa pullo
> naides et dryades passosque habuere capillos.
> membra iacent diversa locis, caput, Hebre, lyramque
> excipis: et (mirum!) medio dum labitur amne,
> flebile nescio quid queritur lyra, flebile lingua
> murmurat exanimis, respondent flebile ripae.

> The mourning birds wept for thee, Orpheus, the throng of beasts, the flinty rocks, and the trees which had so often gathered to thy songs; yes, the trees shed their leaves as if so tearing their hair in grief for thee. They say that the rivers also were swollen with their own tears, and that naiads and dryads alike mourned with disheveled hair and clad in garb of somber hue. The poet's limbs lay scattered all around; but his head and lyre, O Hebrus, thou didst receive, and (a marvel!) while they floated in midstream the lyre gave forth some mournful notes, mournfully the lifeless tongue murmured, mournfully the banks replied.

As was noted by Jeffrey Wills, the triple *flebile* (*flebile ... flebile ... respondent flebile ripae*), is a formal echo of the same scene in the *Georgics*, where dying Orpheus' tongue and the bank echoed a triple *Eurydicen* (4.523–527):

> tum quoque marmorea caput a cervice revulsum
> gurgite cum medio portans Oeagrius Hebrus
> volveret, Eurydicen vox ipsa et frigida lingua,
> a miseram Eurydicen! anima fugiente vocabat:
> Eurydicen toto referebant flumine ripae.

> And even when Oeagrian Hebrus rolled in midcurrent that head, severed
> from its marble neck, the disembodied voice and the tongue, now cold
> forever, called with departing breath on Eurydice—ah, poor Eurydice!
> "Eurydice" the banks re-echoed, all along the stream.

From the *Georgics* Ovid thus imitates the triple repetition (the triple *flebile*
"responds" to the triple *Eurydicen*) and the image of the bank responds to
dead Orpheus' tongue (cf. Vergilian *referebant ... ripae* and Ovidian *respon-
dent ... ripae*).[23] One is tempted to see in the (implicit) image of the echo,
following the tradition of nature's pathetic fallacy, an allusive signpost sig-
naling the intertextual duplication of the Vergilian model. Now, this feature
is reinforced by another echo, this one *intra*textual. Indeed, before Orpheus'
death in Book 11, it is in the episode of Narcissus' death in Book 3 that we
have encountered a similar kind of echoing of the dying character's last words
(3.494–507):

> quae tamen ut vidit, quamvis irata memorque
> indoluit, quotiensque puer miserabilis "eheu"
> dixerat, haec resonis iterabat vocibus "eheu";
> cumque suos manibus percusserat ille lacertos,
> haec quoque reddebat sonitum plangoris eundem.
> ultima vox solitam fuit haec spectantis in undam,
> "heu frustra dilecte puer!" totidemque remisit
> verba locus, dictoque vale "vale!" inquit et Echo.
> ille caput viridi fessum submisit in herba,
> lumina mors clausit domini mirantia formam:
> tum quoque se, postquam est inferna sede receptus,
> in Stygia spectabat aqua. planxere sorores
> naides et sectos fratri posuere capillos,
> planxerunt dryades; plangentibus adsonat Echo.

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23   Wills 1996, 360.

> But when she saw it, though still angry and unforgetful, she felt pity; and as often as the poor boy said "Alas!" again with answering utterance she cries "Alas!" and as his hands beat his shoulders she gives back the same sounds of woe. His last words as he gazed into the familiar spring were these: "Alas, dear boy, vainly beloved!" and the place gave back his words. And when he said "Farewell!", "Farewell" said Echo too. He drooped his weary head on the green grass and death sealed the eyes that marvelled at their master's beauty. And even when he had been received into the infernal abodes, he kept on gazing on his image in the Stygian pool. His naiad-sisters beat their breasts and shore their locks in sign of grief for their dear brother; the dryads, too, lamented, and Echo gave back their sounds of woe.

After Echo has repeated the last words uttered by Narcissus (*eheu ... eheu; heu, frustra dilecte puer; vale*, 495–501) and as the latter dies, one hears successively the lamentations of the Naiads, those of the Dryads, and, lastly, those of Echo (505–507). The similarities with Orpheus' death are striking: the Naiads and Dryads' lamentations foreshadow the mourning of the same nymphs for the Rhodopeian hero (*obstrusaque carbasa pullo / naides et dryades passosque habuere capillos*[24]), and we obviously encounter as well the triple repetition (here with polyptoton): *planxere ... planxerunt ... plangentibus adsonat Echo*.

In this passage Ovid explicitly attributes this repetition to Echo, whereas in the Orpheus episode the image of the echo was only implicitly suggested by the motif of the bank responding to the mourning cries. Moreover, just a few lines earlier, he had notified his reader that the figure of Echo repeating dying Narcissus' words could offer an allusive signpost (as her repetition of the *vale* uttered by Narcissus was highlighting Ovid's (intertextual) "echo" of Vergil's *vale* in the third *Eclogue*).[25] One can thus suggest that the intratextual doubling of the pattern (from Narcissus' death to Orpheus') allows the poet to elaborate on the intertextual games that underlie his account of Orpheus' story (from his Vergilian model to his own rewriting of that model). Of course, these intertextual echoes are signaled within the single episode by the reiteration of the (Vergilian) triple repetition. In addition, the memory of the previous explicit attribution of this very repetition to the nymph Echo, as well as her designation as the allusive signpost *par excellence*, ensures

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24   Also note the parallelism, with a rhyming effect at the verse endings: *posuere capillos* (3.506) and *habuere capillos* (11.49).

25   See Hinds 1998, 5–8 and cf. above.

that the *intra*textual doubling highlights the use of the repetition as a way to signal the *inter*textual link.

The same process may also be discerned when one considers, not Orpheus' death, but his wife's, as he must let her go for the second time (10.60–63):

> iamque iterum moriens non est de coniuge quicquam
> questa suo (quid enim nisi se quereretur amatam?)
> supremumque "vale," quod iam vix auribus ille
> acciperet, dixit revolutaque rursus eodem est.

> And now, dying a second time, she made no complaint against her husband; for of what would she complain save that she was beloved? She spoke one last "farewell" which scarcely reached her husband's ears, and fell back again to the place whence she had come.

As we recalled earlier, Eurydice's death in Ovid accentuates its own doubling of its Vergilian model with the reflexive repetition of Vergil's adverb *iterum* to designate the girl's second death. But another word from the Vergilian passage is repeated here, *vale* (*Geo*. 4.495–498):

> en iterum crudelia retro
> Fata vocant, conditque natantia lumina somnus.
> iamque vale: feror ingenti circumdata nocte
> invalidasque tibi tendens, heu! non tua, palmas.

> See, again the cruel Fates call me back, and sleep seals my swimming eyes. And now farewell! I am borne away, covered in night's vast pall, and stretching towards you strengthless hands, alas! no more yours.

Unlike *iterum*, though, nothing in the literal meaning of the word *vale* allows it to denote as well the intertextual replication at stake here. But, on the other hand, the intratextual link with the episode of Narcissus' death may come into play. There, as we saw, the repetition by the nymph Echo of the *vale* uttered by the dying Narcissus to his own reflection functioned as an allusive signpost highlighting Ovid's imitation of the Vergilian text of *Eclogue* 3. One could thus surmise that the intratextual memory of the repetition of *vale* from Vergil to Ovid that was clearly exhibited as an "echo" in the literal sense (since it was in fact repeated by Echo herself) and the metapoetic sense enable the same repetition, in Orpheus' episode, to function as a similar signpost of the intertextual allusion, along with the repetition of the

adverb *iterum* which carries in itself the potential for connoting the metapoetic doubling.

So, for the two death narratives that frame the episode of Orpheus—his wife's death and his own—the intratextual memory of Narcissus' death offers a new kind of allusive signpost that highlights the intertextual echo of their respective Vergilian models in the *Georgics*. On the one hand, the second death of Eurydice in Ovid echoes the second death of the same character in Vergil and this is indicated *inter alia* by the doubling of Echo's *vale* from the Narcissus episode. On the other hand, while the evocation of Orpheus' death and his last words with a triple repetition echoes the triple repetition of its Vergilian model, the intratextual memory of Narcissus' death allows Ovid's reader to associate this repetition explicitly with the figure of Echo, thereby supporting the function of this pattern as indicating an intertextual "echo."

Now we shall see that this kind of intratextual doubling as a way to signal and comment on intertextual games is no less interesting when there is actually a slight shift of focus between the *Georgics* and the *Metamorphoses*, as the Ovidian narrative of Orpheus' death seems to be modeled upon the Vergilian narrative of the death of Eurydice.

4   Twisted Repetitions

As is well known, when Ovid shows animate nature mourning Orpheus (as did the landscape, inhabited by the nymph Echo, for Narcissus), the anaphora of the second person *te*, as a pathetic quadruplet, echoes, not the Vergilian narrative of Orpheus' death but his account of Orpheus' lament after Eurydice's death (11.44–47):[26]

> te maestae volucres, Orpheu, te turba ferarum,
> te rigidi silices, tua carmina saepe secutae
> fleverunt silvae, positis te frondibus arbor
> tonsa comas luxit.

> The mourning birds wept for thee, Orpheus, the throng of beasts, the flinty rocks, and the trees which had so often followed thy songs; yes, the trees shed their leaves as if so tearing their hair in grief for thee.

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26   See Wills 1996, 360.

Cf. *Geo*. 4.464–466:

> ipse cava solans aegrum testudine amorem
> te, dulcis coniunx, te solo in litore secum,
> te veniente die, te decedente canebat.

> But he, solacing an aching heart with music from his hollow shell, sang of
> you, dear wife, sang of you to himself on the lonely shore, of you as day
> drew nigh, of you as day departed.

The shift is obvious, with the Ovidian passage about Orpheus' death alluding to
the Vergilian one about Eurydice's death. And while the pronoun *te* is literally
echoed, its referent changes: in Vergil, *te* refers to Eurydice, as she is mourned
by her loving husband, while in Ovid the same *te* refers to Orpheus himself,
mourned by the elements.

It seems that here again the intratextual model of the final words uttered
by the dying Narcissus and repeated by the nymph Echo offers an illuminating
paradigm which serves to accentuate and comment on Ovid's twisted intertex-
tual imitation.

Indeed, as the handsome young boy fades away and addresses his beloved
(his own image in the pool), Echo repeats his words but changes their refer-
ent so that they now designate Narcissus himself, and no longer his reflection.
This appropriation of Narcissus' language by Echo (who changes the meaning
of the words that she imitates) underlies the whole episode.[27] Here, however,
I want to focus on the very moment of Narcissus' death. For example, Narcis-
sus addresses his "alter ego" as "dear boy, vainly beloved," *frustra dilecte puer*
(3.499–501):

> ultima vox solitam fuit haec spectantis in undam,
> "heu frustra dilecte puer!" totidemque remisit
> verba locens, dictoque vale "vale!" inquit et Echo.

> His last words as he gazed into the familiar spring were these: "Alas, dear
> boy, vainly beloved!" and the place gave back his words. And when he said
> "Farewell!", "Farewell!" said Echo too.

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27   See, for example, Gely-Ghedira 2000; Fabre-Serris 1995. For this (mis-)appropriation as a
      metapoetic image of the creative misreading that underlies intertextual relationships, see
      Klein 2018.

In a kind of love triangle, the words "vainly beloved boy" uttered by Narcissus designate the *imago* that he sees in the pool, while Echo repeats and twists the same words to designate Narcissus himself. Now, this is exactly what happens—on the intertextual level—between the Vergilian and the Ovidian passages: in Vergil, the anaphoric *te* uttered by Orpheus designates Eurydice, while in Ovid, it is formally repeated (by an intertextual echo rather than by the nymph Echo) and twisted to designate Orpheus himself. It thus seems that, once more, the intratextual doubling (from Narcissus to Orpheus, especially at the moments of their respective death) offers the reader a metapoetic comment on what is at stake in the intertextual game uniting the Vergilian and Ovidian narratives of Orpheus.

Now, the parallelism between the two "situations"—first, Echo repeating the words addressed by Narcissus to his reflection, but applying them to Narcissus himself, and second, the intertextual echo repeating the words addressed by (Vergilian) Orpheus to his wife, but applying them to (Ovidian) Orpheus himself—should obviously be qualified, but the nuance must be meaningful. Indeed, when Narcissus addresses his beloved as *frustra dilecte puer* and Echo appropriates these words to relate them to Narcissus himself, one can contend that she does not really change the referent, since Narcissus is in fact already addressing himself (whether knowingly or not is another issue). Thus, by apparently shifting the referent of the words, Echo does in reality make explicit the distinctive feature of this odd couple, whose lover and beloved are one and the same person. But we have seen earlier that Ovid did actually connect—partly thanks to the reworking of his Vergilian model to fuse the *Georgics*' carefully separated lovers into one and the same character—the couple formed by Orpheus and Eurydice with the "couple" formed by Narcissus and his image, as the twinned final vision of both sets of characters' afterlife in the Underworld reveals. Thus, if the memory of Echo's appropriation of Narcissus' mourning can be read as a way for Ovid to comment on his twisted intertextual relationship with his predecessor, it might also mean that, inasmuch as Echo's repetition actually reveals the inner truth of Narcissus' words, Ovid's echoing and misreading the Vergilian text could also deliver a "truer" version of the story they both narrate.

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Ovid's Artistic Transfiguration, Procris and Cephalus

Thea S. Thorsen

This chapter takes as its point of departure a miracle: that which occurs when an electric impulse of the brain is made manifest in the form of words that in turn yield that incredibly durable form of art that we call literature. An essential prerogative for literature, if it is to perform such a miracle, is to outlive the death and decay of everything that surrounds it at the time of its creation. The term "transfiguration," which is primarily a theological one,[1] and associated with the overcoming of death in the Resurrection of the Christ, is consequently a fitting one to apply in describing this process. And yet, the transfiguration involved in literature, however miraculous it may ultimately be, is sharply distinct from that of theology as regards one important point. Theologically, transfiguration is a part of the doctrine; it cannot fail. By contrast, nothing is certain in the field of literature: what happens if there is only death and no transfiguration? Or if perhaps, even worse, only a distorted version of the original work of art continues to live on? While a great poet may believe in eternal fame, it requires a poet who is greater still to acknowledge that artistic transfiguration may be both a miracle and a mirage. This chapter argues that Ovid is precisely such a poet.

The argument takes as its starting point Ovid's triumphant claim in the epilogue of the *Metamorphoses* that he will survive his own death, pursues a connection between this epilogue and the two versions of Ovid's Procris and Cephalus, through the idea of catching up a dying person's spirit in a living person's mouth, as a kind of metempsychosis,[2] and argues that the story of this couple is a hitherto neglected case in point for how the idea of artistic transfiguration vacillates between success and failure in the Ovidian corpus. Throughout, a number of passages from this corpus will be called upon to support the argument. The question of whether these passages are to be understood as

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1 "Transfiguration" is of course also a part of the scholastic curriculum at Hogwarts in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* books.
2 This may be regarded as Ovid's Romanization—and indeed Ovidianization—of an originally Greek concept, as presented e.g. in Plato's *Laws* (782c). I am grateful to Brill's anonymous referee for this observation.

author-generated internal allusions[3] or specimens of reader-generated intra-textuality[4] is here considered to be of less importance than the fact that these passages serve to demonstrate the central dynamics of the potentially trans-figurative powers of literature,[5] on which both author and reader ultimately depend.[6]

The aim of this chapter is thus to show how the perspective offered by an understanding of artistic transfiguration as potentially both a miracle and a mirage has important consequences for how we may view Ovid's Procris and Cephalus episodes, and consequently Ovidian poetics, afresh.

1   Vivam?

The starting point of the present argument is the monumental epilogue of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (15.871–879):

> Iamque opus exegi, quod nec Iovis ira nec ignis
> nec poterit ferrum nec edax abolere vetustas.
> cum volet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius
> ius habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aevi;
> parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis
> astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum;
> quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris
> ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama
> (si quid habent veri vatum praesagia) vivam.[7]

> And now my work is done, which neither the wrath of Jove, nor fire, nor sword, nor the gnawing tooth of time shall ever be able to undo. Let that day come when it will, which has no power save over this mortal frame, and end the span of my uncertain years. Still in my better part I shall be borne immortal far beyond the lofty stars and I shall have an undying name. Wherever Rome's power extends over the conquered world, I shall

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3   Seminal here are Conte 1986, 2017 and Martindale 1993.

4   See e.g. Hinds 1998.

5   See Fulkerson and Stover 2016 for a recent contribution to the particular dynamics of repetition and variation in the Ovidian corpus.

6   Even when it is assumed that the reader generates meaning in a text, the reader often includes an idea of the author's intention as a part of that meaning.

7   The text is that of Tarrant 2004.

be picked up/read by the mouth of the people, and, if the prophecies of bards have any truth, through all the ages shall I live in fame.[8]

Within this celebration of the immortality of poets and poetry there are nonetheless certain reservations revealing the tension between the miracle and the mirage of artistic transfiguration, a transfiguration which is arguably expanded upon—with references to precisely this epilogue—in Ovid's exile poetry.[9]

One such reservation is found in the words *ore legar populi* (878). The phrase is rich in significance, which spreads across at least three levels. The most straightforward involves taking *legar* as a reference to the works of Ovid, the "I" of the epilogue, being read by the people in the future.[10] At the same time, the phrase refers to the picking up of Ovid by the mouth of the people in the sense that the poet himself will be known and talked about. Additionally, the phrase may refer to the traditional Roman practice of catching up a dying person's soul in the mouth of someone who is still alive.[11] In scholarship, this imagery has been linked to the idea of metempsychosis,[12] that is, the migration of souls from one body to another, regardless of whether this new body is that of an animal or a human being. This idea resounds against a particularly rich soundboard within the Ovidian corpus, as metempsychosis is the centerpiece of the discourse of the philosopher Pythagoras at the outset of Book 15 (75–478).[13] The phrase *ore legar populi* at the very end of the same book thus points back to Pythagoras' speech in a ring-compositional gesture, which arguably lends

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8   All translations are taken, sometimes in modified form, from Goold's revised version of Miller 1916, unless otherwise stated.

9   The most obvious reservation is found in the parenthesis, introduced by the "if" of the last line: *si quid habent veri vatum praesagia* (879). This reservation takes the grammatical form of a conditional clause, which is fitting as a means of expressing hesitation. At the same time, the line clearly dramatizes Ovid's inexhaustible fascination with the poetics of illusion (Hardie 2015, 627), and may thus be regarded as yet another way for the poet to sign his epilogue affirmatively, as a *nomen indelebile* of sorts. The "recycling" of this line towards the end of Ovid's autobiography underscores the close association between the poetry and the poet, and stresses its significance as a signature: *si quid habent igitur praesagia veri, / protinus ut morior non ero, terra, tuus* (*Tr.* 4.10.129). Cf. also Hardie 2002, 91–97 and Río Torres-Murciano 2016.

10   "This is a textual survival, animated by a surrogate vitality through the transient breath of successive generations of readers" (Hardie 2002, 94).

11   See Farrell 1999, 132.

12   See Hardie 2015, 620.

13   For Pythagorean influences on Plato on the theme of metempsychosis (cf. n. 2 above), see Long 1948; for Pythagoras in Ovid on metempsychosis, and, occasionally, metapoetics, see Segal 1969 and 2001; Miller 1994; Hardie 1995 and 2002, 10 and 95; and—in an Augustan context—Beagon 2009.

the reference to metempsychosis in the epilogue of the *Metamorphoses* a particular weight compared to the other meanings listed above.

Notably, from the point of view of Ovid's Pythagoras, metempsychosis translates into an imperative towards vegetarianism, because one actually slaughters one's "fellow human being" when one slaughters an animal (15.139–142):

> quod, oro,
> ne facite et monitis animos advertite nostris,
> cumque boum dabitis caesorum membra palato,
> mandere vos vestros scite et sentite colonos.

> I pray you, do not do it [kill animals], but turn your minds to these my words of warning, and when you take the flesh of slaughtered cattle in your mouths, know and realize that you are devouring your own fellow-labourers.

Within the optic of metempsychosis there are two aspects that appear particularly relevant to the present argument. One is cannibalism as the perversion of metempsychosis, exemplified by the Cyclops in Pythagoras' discourse (15.91–95):

> scilicet in tantis opibus, quas, optima matrum,
> terra parit, nil te nisi tristia mandere saevo
> vulnera dente iuvat ritusque referre Cyclopum,
> nec, nisi perdideris alium, placare voracis
> et male morati poteris ieiunia ventris!

> And so in the midst of the wealth of food which Earth, the best of mothers, has produced, it is your pleasure to chew the piteous flesh of slaughtered animals with your savage teeth, and thus to repeat the Cyclops' horrid manners! And you cannot, without destroying other life, appease the cravings of your greedy and insatiable maw![14]

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14   Pythagoras' mention of the Cyclops echoes the story of one of the men, Achaemenides, who escaped the jaws of the Cyclops, as he tells his story in Book 14 of the *Metamorphoses*: "It is due to him that my life came not into the Cyclops' jaws, and though even now I should leave the light of life, I should be buried in a tomb, but surely not in that monster's maw" (*ille dedit, quod non anima haec Cyclopis in ora / venit et, ut iam nunc lumen vitale relinquam, / aut tumulo aut certe non illa condar in alvo*, 14.174–176). Relevant here is also the negative exemplum of how Itys is killed by his own mother and aunt, Procne and

The other aspect is metapoetic, and turns metempsychosis into another way of dramatizing the idea of artistic transfiguration through the concrete reception of an artist via the consumption of his or her work by others.[15] Furthermore, metempsychosis as metapoetics may result in success (cf. 15.879, *vivam*), but also in failure, as suggested by Ovid's exile poetry (*Tr.* 3.3.59–64):

> atque utinam pereant animae cum corpore nostrae,
>   effugiatque avidos pars mihi nulla rogos!
> nam si morte carens vacua volat altus in aura
>   spiritus, et Samii sunt rata dicta senis,
> inter Sarmaticas Romana vagabitur umbras,
>   perque feros manes hospita semper erit.[16]

> O that our souls might perish with the body and that so no part of me might escape the greedy pyre! For if the spirit flits aloft deathless in the empty air, and the words of the Samian sage are true, a Roman will wander among Sarmatian shades, a stranger forever among barbarians.

In this poem,[17] the self-confident prophecy of the poet's survival after his own death through the immortality of his work in the epilogue of the *Metamorphoses* is reversed into a horror vision for the ghost poet Ovid, for whom the idea of artistic transfiguration remains a mirage.

In another such passage,[18] the failure of artistic transfiguration is linked to two concrete works in the Ovidian corpus (*Tr.* 3.14.18–25):

> tres mihi sunt nati contagia nostra secuti:
>   cetera fac curae sit tibi turba palam.
> sunt quoque mutatae, ter quinque volumina, formae,
>   carmina de domini funere rapta sui.
> illud opus potuit, si non prius ipse perissem,
>   certius a summa nomen habere manu:

Philomela, who cook and serve him to his own father, Tereus, who eats him unwittingly (*Met.* 6.636–660).

15   Another example of metempsychosis as metapoetics is that of Ennius' reception of Homer; cf. Aicher 1989. For another connection between Ennius and the metempsychosis of the epilogue of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, see Hardie 2002, 94; Hardie 1995; Segal 2001.

16   The text and translation are those of Luck 1967.

17   For the poem as a whole, see Ingleheart 2015.

18   This poem is probably addressed to a book-seller; see White 2002, 18.

nunc incorrectum populi pervenit in ora,
     in populi quicquam si tamen ore meum est.

Three of my children have caught pollution from me: make the rest of
the flock openly your care. There are also thrice five books on changing
forms, verses snatched from the funeral of their master. That work, had
I not perished beforehand, might have gained a more secure name from
my finishing hand: but now, unrevised, it has come in the mouth of the
people—if anything of mine is in their mouth.

The works in question are the *Ars amatoria* and the *Metamorphoses*, of which
the latter's presence is further underscored by the fact that much of the content
of its epilogue is repeated *verbatim* in the *Tristia* passage.

    I shall argue in the following that there is a connection, parallel to the pas-
sage quoted above from *Tristia* 3.14.18–25, between the *Ars amatoria*, the *Meta-
morphoses* and the metapoetics of metempsychosis in Ovid's two versions of
the story of Procris and Cephalus (*Ars* 3.685–746, *Met.* 7.670–865). Firstly, their
story occurs both in the *Ars amatoria* and the *Metamorphoses*, and thus acts as
a further connection between the two works.[19] More importantly, the story of
Procris and Cephalus is the only mythological narrative in the entire output of
Ovid that includes a scene which puts on display the catching up of the breath
of a dying person by one who is alive, and which—as a result—has been asso-
ciated with metempsychosis, as is also the case for the phrase *ore legar populi*
in the epilogue of the *Metamorphoses*.[20]

    The scene occurs in both versions: towards the end of the story, when
Cephalus has pierced his wife with a hunting javelin, having allegedly mistaken
her for an animal, his catching up of her dying breath is described thus in the
Ars amatoria (*Ars* 3.743–746):

ille sinu dominae morientia corpora maesto
     sustinet, et lacrimis vulnera saeva lavat;
exit et incauto paulatim pectore lapsus
     excipitur miseri spiritus ore viri.[21]

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19   Much like the two stories of Daedalus and Icarus (*Ars* 2.21–96 and *Met.* 8.183–235).

20   Hardie 2002, 95; cf. 76. "*Legar*, però, potrebbe anche essere tradotto "sarò reccolto" … idea
    espressa anche da Cefalo in *Met.* 7.860–861" (Hardie 2015, 626 ad *Met.* 15.878–879; cf. Ken-
    ney 2011, 305).

21   The text is that of Kenney 1995.

He raises to his grieving bosom his mistress' dying body, and washes the cruel wound in tears: her spirit passes, and ebbing little by little from her rash breast is caught by her unfortunate husband's mouth.

And thus, in the words of Cephalus, as he tells of Procris' death in the *Metamorphoses* (*Met.* 7.859–861):

> labitur, et parvae fugiunt cum sanguine vires.
> dumque aliquid spectare potest, me spectat et in me
> infelicem animam nostroque exhalat in ore

> She fell back in my arms and her last faint strength fled with her blood. So long as she could look at anything she looked at me and breathed out her unhappy soul on my lips.

The image of the catching up of a dying person's breath, which is evocative of metempsychosis, thus occurs both towards the end of the *Ars amatoria* and towards the end of Book 7 of the *Metamorphoses*, the approximate mid-point of the epic work. When we associate these with the metempsychosis imagery in the epilogue of that epic, we find a set of key moments in the macrostructure of the Ovidian corpus.[22] In the following, I shall suggest that their placement at such key moments adds to the metapoetic significance of these instances of Ovidian metempsychosis, which pick up on the speech of Pythagoras, especially in relation to the themes of cannibalism and the metapoetics of failure, and thus dramatize the miracle and mirage of artistic transfiguration.

2　　　Nec cito credideris (*Ars* 3.685)—vocibus ambiguis (*Met.* 7.821)

As noted above, like several other stories in the Ovidian oeuvre, that of Procris and Cephalus occurs twice, in two different works.[23] As in the case of these other stories, the question of whether one version is simply a replica of the other or whether the two belong to a sequence in which repetitions and vari-

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22　See Papaioannou 2017, who draws parallels to the macrostructure of Vergil's *Aeneid*. Cf. also Anderson 1990 for a different approach to the structural and thematic parallels between the *Ars amatoria* and the *Metamorphoses* episodes.

23　Seminal here are Hinds 1986 on the episodes of Persephone in *Fasti* and the *Metamorphoses*, and Sharrock 1992 on *inter alia* the Daedalus and Icarus episodes in the *Ars amatoria* and the *Metamorphoses*.

ations are significant, is a highly relevant one. I shall return to the potential significance of the variations and repetitions between the *Ars amatoria* and *Metamorphoses* versions below, but first, I shall outline some of the main features of the story in question.

There are several elements in the Ovidian corpus, both within and outside of the Procris and Cephalus narratives, that back up the events of the story as it is told in other sources.[24] These elements include:

1. Cephalus' adulterous affair with the goddess Aurora, which is noted in the *Ars* (3.84) and confirmed by Cephalus himself in the *Metamorphoses* (7.700–705);[25]

2. Procris' liaison with King Minos of Crete,[26] where she had fled when Cephalus discovered that she was willing to have an extramarital affair, either (in one version) with another man for the price of a golden crown,[27] or (in Cephalus' version in the *Metamorphoses*) with Cephalus himself in

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24   The main sources of the Procris and Cephalus myth outside Ovid are: Pherecydes ("the genealogist") in *FGrH* 3.F.34 (Fr. 34 Fowler) = ap. Schol. *CMV* Hom. *Od.* 11.321, cf. Eustath. p. 1688 ad Hom. *Od.* 11.321; Hyg. *Fab.* 189, Pseudo-Apollodorus 3.XV.1–2 and Antoninus Liberalis 41; because Nicander is an important source for Antoninus Liberalis, some equate the latter with the former, e.g. Otis 1971. The different passages are referred to below by the names of their authors. It is difficult to establish which versions refer back to which; with the exception of Pherecydes, the dates of these sources are either hard to pin down, as in the case of Hyginus (cf. *OCD s.v.* 3), or later than Ovid. *Procris* was the title of a play by Sophocles (Pollux 9.140 = *TGF* 4 fr. 533 Radt) as well as one by Eubulus (fr. 90–92, Hunter), but very little can be inferred from the remains of these plays. The *Suda* includes interesting information about Procris and Cephalus, although this is of a later rather than earlier date (cf. *OLD s.v.*). At Π 2484 in the *Suda*, we learn of Πρόκριδος ἄκοντα ("Procris' javelin/dart"), which is proverbially defined as ἐπὶ τῶν πάντων τυγχανόντων: τοιοῦτον γὰρ ἔχουσα ἡ Πρόκρις πάντα ἐθήρα ("In reference to those hitting everything; for with such a spear Procris used to hit everything," trans. Robert Dyer), and at T429 we learn that the story of Cephalus and the Teumessian fox are known from the *Epic Cycle* (cf. *Epigoni* F 4, incert. loc. 1 Davies).

25   The didactic setting in which this line occurs, of a parallel drawn between heroes pursued by goddesses and lustful men, casts doubt on the unwillingness of the male characters in the examples cited, thus: "nor is Cephalus a prize that shames the roseate goddess ... Study, ye mortal folk, the examples of the goddesses, nor deny your joys to hungry lovers" (*nec Cephalus roseae praeda pudenda deae. / ... ite per exemplum, genus o mortale, dearum, gaudia nec cupidis vestra negate viris, Ars* 3.84, 87–88; cf. also *Am.* 1.13.39 and *Her.* 15.87). The affair between Aurora and Cephalus features also in Hyginus, Pseudo-Apollodorus and Antoninus Liberalis; cf. Davidson 1997, and, more generally, Celoria 1992.

26   So Hyginus (ad loc.), Pseudo-Apollodorus (ad loc.) and Antoninus Liberalis (ad loc.). Otis' summary (1971, 411) is euphemistic regarding the sexual relationship of Procris and King Minos.

27   So Pseudo-Apollodorus (ad loc.).

disguise (and cf. "in Procris Minos lost his passion for Pasiphae," *Pasiphaes Minos in Procride perdidit ignes, Rem.* 453);

3. Cephalus' embarrassment at having been willing to prostitute himself in order to obtain the trappings of the hunt, a dog and a javelin, from a boy—who was in fact his wife.[28] When this event takes place, Procris has returned from Crete to her husband in disguise. The third-person narrative in the *Metamorphoses* reveals Cephalus' embarrassed recollection of this event when he is being asked about his hunting spear ("what he [Phocus] asks for, he [Cephalus] tells, but out of shame and touched by pain he is silent about the rest, that is at which price he carried it [the javelin] off," *quae petit ille refert; ceterum narrare pudori,/ qua tulerit mercede, silet et tactus dolore, Met.* 7.687b–688 Kenney[29]);

4. Procris giving her husband the dog and the javelin as tokens of their reconciliation—an element of the Ovidian episode in the *Metamorphoses* as well as of all other sources;

5. Procris' death, following this act of appeasement. We encounter Procris in *medias res* in the *Ars amatoria*: she hears Cephalus speaking of an *A/aura* and, thinking that he is unfaithful (again?), spies on him as he hunts in the woods, and is killed by his javelin when he allegedly mistakes her for an animal (*Ars* 3.732–742). This event is later recalled by Cephalus in the *Metamorphoses* episode (7.840–859).[30]

Taken together, the Ovidian elements not only offer snippets of a continuous narrative, (supported, though also slightly varied, by other sources), but also provide the most essential information about the couple, which is that Procris and Cephalus are each other's equals in terms of deception, both through adultery and by tricking one another while in disguise. The elements that provide the fuller narrative context for the two main Procris and Cephalus episodes are aptly placed in the close vicinity of those episodes in the Ovidian corpus, as Cephalus' liaison with the goddess is mentioned at the beginning of the same book in which Procris dies in the *Ars amatoria*, Procris' affair with Minos is included in the sequel, *Remedia amoris*, and Cephalus' embarrassed silence precedes his narration of the death of his wife.

What does not emerge from this outline of the basic elements in their story,

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28   So Hyginus (ad loc.) and Antoninus Liberalis (ad loc.).

29   The variants, which are all based on sound manuscript traditions, are included in the text of Kenney 2011, 40. As may be seen below, I argue that the contradiction between this information and what Cephalus later claims about how he received the javelin from Procris is productive, rather than problematic. For a different view, see Tarrant 1995.

30   Antoninus Liberalis is the only source not to report Procris' death.

however, is the arguably most important overall feature that both versions share in the Ovidian corpus: namely, their fundamental ambiguity. For, while the bare facts tell a rather unromantic tale, the way in which this tale is told in the Ovidian corpus is apt to make the most hard-hearted reader weep. In fact, both the *Ars amatoria* and the *Metamorphoses* versions include a stark contrast between the content of the story, as it emerges from other sources and in the Ovidian passages quoted above, and their strongly moving treatment.[31] What meets the eye in the Ovidian episodes is romantic tragedy: so much so, that most scholars who have argued for the suppression and omission of the elements outlined above have done so because they run counter to a wholly heartbreaking tale.[32] The most fundamental question, therefore, remains this: what were they, Procris and Cephalus? Were they equally bad, or were they unfortunate, but equally loving?

I would argue that the two potential answers to this question are both important, inasmuch as, operating together, they have a great metapoetic potential and, consequently, considerable relevance for the Ovidian question of the failure or success of artistic transfiguration. Key to this understanding are smaller

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31   So Anderson 1972, 311: "Ovid tells the story with exquisite taste, despite the fact that the myth came to him in a number of gross versions."

32   So Fontenrose 1980, 289: "It is irrelevant that Ovid alludes to Minos' passion in another poem (*RA* 453); that is a different composition." Such claims are, however, hard to sustain in the wake of studies such as Conte and Most 1989; Gibson, Green and Sharrock 2006; Martelli 2013; and Thorsen 2014, which all argue for the significance of Ovid's internal references in one of his works to another, for example, by means of stories that occur in more than one of his works. Tarrant 1995 argues for the text to be changed so that there are no hints about Cephalus' offering of sexual services to his "boy" wife in exchange for the trappings of the hunt—an operation which removes the contradiction between the third person account of how Cephalus obtained the dog and the javelin and the one that he provides himself in his own version of events. This contradiction may, however, also be regarded as productive, as argued below. The most important argument, according to Tarrant, for assuming that the hints at Cephalus' embarrassment are later interpolations is the lack of any information in the episode that might underpin the hints at the embarrassing explanation. However, Tarrant does not consider the shadow of King Minos, who leaves Aegina, as Cephalus is arriving at the island where he tells the story of him and Procris at *Met.* 7.490–493 (see below), which may be regarded as underpinning precisely this darker side of the story both in the *Metamorphoses* and in the *Ars amatoria*. The question of how to interpret Ovid's Procris and Cephalus story divides scholarship. Those who maintain a tragic-romantic outlook include Pöschl 1959; Otis 1971, 174–183; Labate 1976; Segal 1978; Fontenrose 1980; Davis 1983; Sabot 1985; Fabre-Serris 1988; and Saylor 2008. Those who maintain a non-romantic outlook include Green 1979; Peek 2004; and Lateiner 2013. A middle approach may be seen in Hardie 2002, 75–77; Laigneau-Fontaine 2009; Hutchinson 2011, 252–256; and Hejduk 2011.

elements of each of the two versions. The first is the didactic precept that precedes the story in the *Ars amatoria* (3.685–686):

> nec cito credideris: quantum cito credere laedat,
>   exemplum vobis non leve Procris erit.

> Nor be quick to believe: of what harm quick belief can do, Procris will be to you not a slight warning.

This warning arguably has several functions. The most obvious is that it is related to Ovid's erotodidaxis on how to love wisely (cf. *Ars* 2.501; *Rem.* 745). By this precept, if one gets some upsetting information about one's lover, one should not necessarily believe this information straight away, for such information may be false or misleading. And when we meet Procris in the *Ars amatoria*, she has indeed just been informed that Cephalus has been uttering the word *A/aura* when he is hunting in the woods; she fears that he is having an affair, acts on that suspicion and gets killed for it. Thus, at first glance, it all seems to be the tragic result of a terrible misunderstanding. The only problem is that Cephalus actually *has* been unfaithful to Procris in the past, as we have learned earlier in the same book of the *Ars amatoria* (3.84; see above), and as Cephalus himself will later confirm in the *Metamorphoses* (*Met.* 7.700–705, see below). Given that the readers of the *Ars amatoria* already know that Procris has good reason to suspect that Cephalus is (again) unfaithful, how well does she *really* exemplify the dangers of believing something too rashly and on false grounds?

In fact, the precept about not believing something too rashly works at least as well, if not better, as a metapoetic warning about not taking whatever you are presented with at face value. Notably, Cephalus himself corroborates this lesson in the *Metamorphoses* by admitting that his own exclamations to the breeze were ambiguous, in a passage that has been recognized as highly metapoetic (*Met.* 7.821–823):[33]

> vocibus ambiguis deceptam praebuit aurem
> nescio quis nomenque aurae tam saepe vocatum
> esse putat nymphae, nympham me credit amare.[34]

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33   See Miller 1993.
34   The text *me … amare* is a manuscript version (Marcianus Florentinus 255), which has the advantage of implying both "a nymph loved me" and "I loved a nymph." Cf. Tarrant 2004 ad loc. with critical apparatus.

Someone overhearing these words was deceived by their double meaning; and, thinking that the word "Aura" was a name that was so often called, was convinced that I loved a nymph.

Thus, Ovid's two versions of the Procris and Cephalus tale are excellent illustrations of the pitfalls of approaching a narrative superficially, and of too rashly presuming that one has grasped the fuller meaning of a story. The precept *nec cito credideris ... ambiguis vocibus* may thus also sum up the lesson that the two versions—metapoetically—have in common: "do not believe ambiguous words too rashly."

3 Pythagorean Lessons in the *Ars amatoria*

There are many differences between the versions of the story of Cephalus and Procris presented in the *Ars amatoria* and the *Metamorphoses*. Some of these differences are due to the works' dissimilar genres (broadly speaking, elegy and epic), different narrators, and different addressees. Nevertheless, the difference that has greatest relevance to the present argument is that the versions belong to different points in time within a narrative framework. In the *Ars amatoria*, the narrator *Naso magister* describes an event taking place at a time which has become the distant past by the time the aged Cephalus recalls it many years later in the *Metamorphoses*. The two versions thus occupy different positions in a narrative continuum.

In the *Ars amatoria*, most of the focus is on the distress of Procris when she suspects that *A/aura* is the name of her husband's new love. When Procris finally follows Cephalus into the woods and there realizes that he is in fact calling for the breeze, the story reaches its climax (*Ars* 3.729–742):

> ut patuit miserae iucundus nominis error,
>   et mens et rediit verus in ora color;
> surgit, et oppositas agitato corpore frondes
>   movit, in amplexus uxor itura viri.
> ille feram movisse ratus, iuvenaliter artus
>   corripit; in dextra tela fuere manu—
> quid facis, infelix?[35] non est fera: supprime tela—
>   me miserum! iaculo fixa puella tuo est.

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35   See Gibson 2003 ad loc. for the dramatic apostrophe on the part of the poet.

"ei mihi," conclamat "fixisti pectus amicum:
     hic locus a Cephalo vulnera semper habet.
ante diem morior, sed nulla paelice laesa:
     hoc faciet positae te mihi, terra, levem.
nomine suspectas iam spiritus exit in auras:
     Labor, io! cara lumina conde manu!"

When the name's pleasing error was manifest to the hapless woman, her reason returned, and the true colour to her face. She rises, and speeding to her lover's embrace stirred with her hurrying frame the leaves that were in her way: he, thinking he saw a quarry, leapt up with youthful ardour, and his weapon was in his hand. What are you doing, unfortunate one? It is no beast: drop your missile. Ah me! Your javelin has pierced the girl. "Woe to me!" she cries, "you have pierced a friendly breast: this spot will always have a wound from Cephalus. Untimely I die, yet injured by no human rival: this will make you, earth, lie lightly on my bones. Now goes my spirit out upon the air whose name I once suspected: I faint, o woe! Close my eyes with a dear hand."

Thus, in the *Ars amatoria* Procris dies while revealing that she thinks that she has understood the real meaning of *A/aura*.[36]

Importantly, in the passage quoted above, Cephalus thinks that he is killing an animal, when it is in fact a human being. This is exactly what Pythagoras speaks against in his discourse on metempsychosis and the ethical imperative towards vegetarianism in the *Metamorphoses*. Given that Cephalus thus epitomizes all that is wrong from the point of view of Ovid's Pythagoras, and that he readily kills animals and Procris alike, how safe is she with Cephalus as he catches up her final breath, in an action which may be associated with metempsychosis? Against the background of metempsychosis, the cannibalism represented by the Cyclops and the metapoetic aspect of Pythagoras' speech also seem relevant to this question: for, given that Cephalus has actu-

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36 On the basis of her claim that she is *nulla paelice laesa* she seems to believe that she has never been betrayed by Cephalus. However, the fact that the term *paelex* is used, which is nowhere in Ovid applied to goddesses such as Aurora, with whom Cephalus has indeed had an affair (cf. *Ars* 3.84), indicates that her realization that Cephalus is just calling for the breeze means only that she thinks that she did not have a rival in this particular case (though other cases may be different). Also, this term picks up on and thus helps to connect the general advice given in the *Ars amatoria* preceding this exemplum with the exemplum itself ("nor be put out when you hear of a rival," *nec sis audita paelice mentis inops, Ars* 3.684).

ally killed Procris, will his subsequent catching up of her spirit amount to a sort of cannibalism, à la Pythagoras' Cyclops? And—when considered from the point of view of metempsychosis as metapoetics—how much of her story will remain as he retells it from his perspective? Will she too end up as a distortion of herself? Will she be an *opus incorrectum*? If indeed anything of her will remain (cf. *si meum est*, *Tr.* 3.14.24–25, above)?

It is precisely against the background of questions such as these that the recollection of Procris, told by Cephalus himself many years after her death, becomes particularly relevant, since this later account can actually show to what extent the spirit of Procris may still be alive in the mouth of Cephalus after her death.

4   Cephalus' Metamorphoses

Another feature that the two Ovidian versions have in common is the shadow of King Minos of Crete, which lingers over Procris and Cephalus as a couple. In the *Ars amatoria*, theirs is one of three episodes that extend over more than thirty lines in Books 1, 2 and 3 respectively, which have as their common denominator the theme of Minoan adultery.[37] Furthermore, the mention of Procris in the *Remedia amoris*, the sequel to the *Ars amatoria*, confirms her adulterous connection with that king (cf. *Rem.* 453). Finally, when we hear the story of Procris' death told again, this time by Cephalus himself, he is literally framed by King Minos, inasmuch as his story is embedded in a longer narrative framework in which Minos is the main character.[38] Thus, Cephalus emerges from under the shadow of King Minos, as it were, when he reappears in the *Metamorphoses*.

In the *Metamorphoses* setting, many years have passed since the death of Procris, and King Minos threatens war against Athens, to avenge the death of his son Androgeos, which he blames on the Athenians. King Minos has just failed to persuade King Aeacus of Aegina to join him in his war and sailed off from the island, when Cephalus approaches it on his diplomatic mission to secure allies for Athens against his former erotic rival (7.490–493):

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37   See *Ars* 1.289–326, where King Minos's wife Pasiphae courts and mates with the bull, *Ars* 2.21–96, where Daedalus tries to flee Crete, after having constructed the maze in which King Minos hides the result of Pasiphae's adulterous union, the Mintaur, and *Ars* 3.683–746, where the death of King Minos's adulterous ex-lover, Procris, is dramatized.

38   See Pechillo 1991, Otis 1971, 175 and Brenk 1999.

> classis ab Oenopiis etiamnum Lyctia muris
> spectari poterat, cum plena concita velo
> Attica puppis adest in portusve intrat amicos,
> quae Cephalum patriaeque simul mandata ferebat.

> Still the Cretan fleet could be seen from the Oenopian walls, when, driven on under full sail, an Attic ship arrived and entered the friendly port, bringing Cephalus and his country's greetings.

Cephalus' mission should be fairly easily accomplished. Aeacus is already well disposed towards Athens; he has just referred to his allegiance with that city in rejecting the advances of King Minos (7.471–498). Furthermore, Aeacus is an old friend of Cephalus, who has visited his island in the past.

In fact, there appear to be only two potential obstacles between Cephalus and his diplomatic goal: he must not draw attention to his previous defeat by his former erotic and present political rival King Minos, and he must not be incriminated by the death of Procris, who was, after all, the daughter of Erechtheus and a princess of Athens. Cephalus' fear of being accused of her murder is explicitly stated in his account of her death: "I pray that she might not leave me stained with her death" (*neu me morte sua sceleratum deserat, oro*, 7.850). This expression may simply denote the husband's wish that his wife should not die, and yet, the wish remains sufficiently ambiguous to suggest at the same time that Cephalus is afraid that he will be accused of Procris' murder. Notably, in Pseudo-Apollodorus, Cephalus was "tried before the Areopagos for the murder of Procris and condemned to exile" (καὶ κριθεὶς ἐν Ἀρείῳ πάγῳ φυγὴν ἀΐδιον καταδικάζεται).

The javelin is linked to both these obstacles. Therefore, when Phocus asks about it, he places Cephalus in a tricky situation. First, one of the sons of Pallas[39] comes to Cephalus' aid and provides an answer (7.681–684):

> "usum
> maiorem specie mirabere" dixit "in isto.
> consequitur, quodcumque petit, fortunaque missum
> non regit, et revolat nullo referente cruentum.

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[39] "Ovid seems to have invented for Cephalus two Athenian companions, [Clytos and Butes,] sons of Pallas, who was Aegeus' brother." Anderson 1976, 297 and Bömer 1967, 327, both on *Met.* 7.500.

"You will admire the weapon's use more than its beauty;" he said, "it goes straight to any mark, and chance does not guide its flight; and it flies back, all bloody, with no hand to bring it.

However, this piece of information only inflames Phocus' curiosity: "Then indeed young Phocus was eager to know why it was so, and whence it came, who was the giver of so wonderful a gift" (*tum vero iuvenis Nereius omnia quaerit, / cur sit et unde datum, quis tanti muneris auctor*, 685–686). And so, Cephalus has to deal with the question of the *muneris auctor*, which is arguably as difficult as it can get, because answering it honestly may lead Cephalus to reveal embarrassing aspects of his and Procris' relationship, notably Cephalus' willingness to prostitute himself for the javelin, Procris' extramarital liaison with King Minos—who may in fact have given the javelin to her in the first place—and incriminating facets of the circumstances of Procris' death, the awkwardness of which increases in pace with the relevance of King Minos, since Cephalus' killing of Procris suddenly seems to have her adultery as its motive. The revelation of even one of these pieces of information would render Cephalus' diplomatic mission difficult.

Tellingly, Cephalus' immediate reaction to the question is silence (*silet*, 688); he then starts his discourse (690–758), which is broken off in the middle by a digression about the Teumessian fox (759), and then he goes silent again (*tacuit*, 794) until Phocus encourages him to resume his narrative about the javelin; and Cephalus continues, going on to tell of Procris' death. Cephalus' silence thus marks the beginning of each of the two halves of his tale, each of which is around 65 lines in length, and which embrace the digression, which is around 35 lines long. The striking symmetry of Cephalus' monologue,[40] chopped up by two moments of silence and one digression, suggests that Cephalus pauses for a reason. The romantic reason would be that it pains Cephalus to recall the death of his wife, while the less romantic would be Cephalus' need to manipulate parts of the story, since a truthful answer to Phocus' question may frustrate Cephalus' diplomatic mission. Strikingly, three strategies related to ambiguity—cf. *vocibus ambiguis* (721)—in Cephalus' discourse further corroborate this notion of manipulation, by being more or less successful as such.

The most pervasive strategy employed throughout Cephalus' narrative is arguably his avoidance of providing an answer to Phocus' question. This question is a genuinely good one within the broader context of the Ovidian corpus.

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40   Cf. Otis 1971, 181.

For, who *did* make the javelin? And who gave it away? Certainly, in one sense, the *muneris auctor* is Procris, because she gave the javelin to Cephalus as a token of their reconciliation. But if Procris is a candidate for the title of "giver" at this stage, then from whom did Procris get the javelin in the first place? Clearly, she acquired it after Cephalus had tested her fidelity and she fled (7.743–746). Cephalus claims that she then went off *studiis operata Dianae* (7.756, "devoted to the pursuits of Diana") without specifying the exact whereabouts of these pursuits. All other sources, however, Ovid in his *Remedia amoris* included, are explicit about Procris going to Crete (see above). Notably, Ovid's Cephalus does not deny that Procris fled to Crete. However, he draws attention away from the possible existence of any lover for Procris, such as King Minos, by claiming that Procris hated all mankind—that is, all *men*—much like the virgin goddess Diana herself (cf. 7.743–746), who is said to have given Procris the hunting dog Laelaps (7.753–756):

> dat mihi praeterea, tamquam se parva dedisset
> dona, canem munus; quem cum sua traderet illi
> Cynthia, "currendo superabit" dixerat "omnes."
> dat simul et iaculum, manibus quod, cernis, habemus.

> She gave me besides, as though she had given but small gifts in herself, a wonderful hound which her own Cynthia had given, and said as she gave: "He will surpass all other hounds in speed." She gave me a javelin also, this one which, as you see, I hold in my hands.

So, Cephalus claims that he received the dog and javelin from Procris. And since he simultaneously points out that the dog originally came from Diana, the listener or reader may easily assume that the goddess was also the original source of the javelin, but this is in fact never stated in the Ovidian text. "King Minos" therefore remains a possible answer to Phocus' question about the identity of the producer of such a gift, since King Minos is, in other sources, the one who gives Procris the javelin, in gratitude for her sexual favors, as is partly confirmed by Ovid in the *Remedia amoris*.

Furthermore, such an answer to Phocus' question may lie embedded in the description of the dog Laelaps (7.776–778):

> non ocior illo
> hasta nec exussae contorto verbere glandes
> nec Gortyniaco calamus levis exit ab arcu.

No spear is swifter than he, nor leaden bullets thrown by a whirled sling,
or the light reed shot from a Gortynian bow.

Cephalus' comparison between these various kinds of missiles and the dog—
the *munus* that he wishes to focus on, as he avoids talking about the provenance
of the *munus* that Phocus is actually asking about, which in fact *is* a missile—
arguably draws attention back to precisely the gift of the javelin. Furthermore,
when we consider the fact that one of the missiles in the comparison is defined
according to its affiliation with Cretan geography (*Gortyniaco ... arcu*),[41] we are
faced with a cluster of associations between a gift, missiles and Crete, which is
highly evocative of the broader elements of the story: that Procris went to this
island, had sex with King Minos, and—according to some sources—received
gifts from him that included the javelin Phocus is asking about. While Cephalus
evades Phocus' question throughout, the comparison between Laelaps and the
missiles, one of which is Cretan, thus appears to be a slip of the tongue on the
part of Cephalus, hinting at the one answer to this question of the identity of
the *muneris auctor* that is also backed up elsewhere in Ovid and other sources:
namely, "King Minos." Cephalus may thus be regarded as not entirely successful
in his evasive strategy, which against the background of knowledge about the
myth in other sources may raise the suspicion that his narrative may be both
manipulated and manipulative.

Cephalus' potential manipulation not only of the story itself, but also of
his audience, is perhaps at its most conspicuous when he inserts a digression
into his account, which may be regarded as a special case of avoidance. At the
same time, this digression is of the utmost importance within the metapoetic
framework of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, since it includes the most obvious trans-
formation within the whole episode. The digression is introduced with words
recalling the opening of the *Metamorphoses* (*in nova*, 1.1), including an engag-
ing imperative in the singular—which is as fitting for addressing the listener
Phocus as for addressing the actual reader of the text—and a focus on the
miraculous: "Hear the wonderful story: you will be moved by the novelty of the
deed" (*accipe mirandum: novitate movebere facti*, 7.758). And, in fact, among all
the metamorphoses in the *Metamorphoses*, that of Cephalus' digression is con-
siderably novel. In a way, it is the most realistic metamorphosis in the whole of
Ovid's epic—phenomena of the natural world feature regularly as models for
artworks, and this fact is recalled in Cephalus' digression, in the sense that two

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41   "Das Adjektiv, im Griechischen anscheinend unbekannt ..., bedeutet einfach 'kretisch'"
      (Bömer 1976, 389).

animals are turned into marble statues when he is about to throw his spear at one of them (7.787–791):

> ad iaculi vertebar opem; quod dextera librat
> dum mea, dum digitos amentis addere tempto,
> lumina deflexi. revocataque rursus eodem
> rettuleram: medio (mirum) duo marmora campo
> adspicio; fugere hoc, illud captare putares.

> I turned to my javelin's aid. As my right hand was balancing it, while I was fitting my fingers into the loop, I turned my eyes aside for a single moment; and when I turned them back again to the same spot—oh, miraculous! I saw two marble images in the plain; the one you would think was fleeing, the other catching at the prey.

Other Ovidian metamorphoses that involve petrification include stones or other hard material turned into humans or vice versa, often as a reward or a punishment from the gods.[42] And while Cephalus speculates on the divine intervention that must have caused the transformation (cf. *deus voluit, si quis deus adfuit illis*, 7.793), his focus is wholly on the *wonder* that the turning of the two animals into marble effigies entails: *mirum* (7.790). For the metamorphosis that Cephalus witnesses may indeed be regarded as a miracle of artistic transfiguration: i.e., the changing of a perishable being into the enduring form of art. It seems especially pointed that Cephalus' digression appears not only as disconnected from his main tale, and absolute, as it were, but at the same time it captures the essence of artistic transfiguration, thus embodying the deeper significance of the *Metamorphoses*, which is also dramatized in its epilogue: namely, that the art form of literature has transfigurative powers. Cephalus' strategy of including a digression, which distracts his audience from the initial question about the javelin, thus has a strongly metapoetic aspect.

Another strategy involves puns and repetitions centered on the similarities between *A/aura* and Aurora as names both of female figures and of natural phenomena: more precisely, of the breeze and the dawn. Compared to the tale

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[42]   Compare e.g. the stones turned into humans by Deucalion and Pyrrha (1.313–415), Battus (2.688) and Aglaurus (2.820) changed by Mercury into stone, Perseus' enemies turned into statues by the petrifying looks of *Medusa* (5.1–219), the Propoetides, hardened to stone by the prostitution inflicted upon them by a vengeful Venus (10.221; 238), the ivory girl of Pygmalion (10.247–249), and the snake which is petrified by Apollo, when it is about to bite the head of Orpheus (11.56–60).

as it is told in the *Ars amatoria*, in which Aurora is kept out of the Procris and Cephalus episode (though not completely out of the *Ars amatoria*: cf. 3.84), and in which the crucial misunderstanding of the tale concerns the referent of the word/name *A/aura* (a new girlfriend or the breeze), Aurora is by contrast an imposing figure in Cephalus' tale. And, here, the ambiguity arguably lies in the close resemblance between the Latin name of the goddess and that of the breeze, which in Cephalus' account amounts to a punning repetition of *aura* in "Aurora." Furthermore, the echo of the word *aura* in the name of Aurora has a parallel in a series of textual repetitions within Cephalus' tale that also involve variations serving to underscore the ambiguity of what is said.

Aurora occurs at the very outset of Cephalus' account, when, he tells us, the goddess sees him as he is hunting on Hymettus, rapes him and tries to keep him for herself (see point 1. in the summary above). However, when Cephalus will not stop talking about Procris, Aurora lets him go. But, jealous and in search of revenge at having thus been rejected, Aurora also persuades Cephalus to test his wife's fidelity. He does so by trying to seduce Procris in disguise. Procris hesitates, Cephalus reveals his true identity and Procris, upset, flees from him. When Cephalus subsequently regrets it all, and asks Procris for forgiveness, she accepts his excuse and gives him the trappings of the hunt, the javelin included, as tokens of their reconciliation.

When Aurora reappears later in Cephalus' account, it is in a setting that confuses the name of the goddess with that of the natural phenomenon of dawn, thus providing a parallel to the ambiguity between name and nature seen in *A/aura* both in the episode in the *Ars amatoria* and also earlier on in the same *Metamorphoses* episode (7.832–844):

> saepe tamen dubitat speratque miserrima falli
> indiciique fidem negat et, nisi viderit ipsa,
> damnatura sui non est delicta mariti.
> postera depulerant Aurorae lumina noctem.
> egredior silvamque peto victorque per herbas
> "aura, veni" dixi "nostroque medere labori!"
> et subito gemitus inter mea verba videbar
> nescio quos audisse; "veni" tamen "optima!" dixi.
> fronde levem rursus strepitum faciente caduca
> sum ratus esse feram telumque volatile misi;
> Procris erat medioque tenens in pectore vulnus
> "ei mihi" conclamat! vox est ubi cognita fidae
> coniugis, ad vocem praeceps amensque cucurri.

> And yet she would often doubt and hope in her depth of misery that she
> was mistaken; she rejected as untrue the story she had heard, and, unless
> she saw it with her own eyes, would not think her husband guilty of such
> sin. The next morning, when the lights/eyes of Aurora/dawn had driven
> night away, I left the house and sought the woods; there, successful, as I
> lay on the grass, I cried: "Come, Aura/breeze, come and soothe my toil"—
> I said. And suddenly I thought I heard a groan. Yet "Come, dearest," I cried
> again, and as the fallen leaves made a slight rustling sound, I thought it
> was some beast and hurled my javelin at the place. It was Procris, and,
> clutching at the wound in her breast, she cried, "Woe to me!" When I
> recognized the voice of my faithful wife, I rushed headlong towards the
> sound, beside myself with horror.

First, the phrase mentioning Aurora plays on the potential confusion between
the name of a goddess and that of the natural phenomenon of dawn,[43] repeat-
ing or even anticipating, the same potential confusion between "Aura" and
aura, which is crucial in the *Ars amatoria* and then again—repeatedly—in the
Metamorphoses (7.810–823). Furthermore, the passage quoted above repeats
Procris' fearful jealousy from the *Ars amatoria*, the repeated presence of A/
aurora from the outset of Cephalus' *Metamorphoses* account (which gives Pro-
cris a reason to fear that Cephalus is unfaithful to her), and Cephalus' endear-
ments, which is the third occurrence, as it were, since these repeat both those
in the *Ars amatoria* and those appearing previously in the *Metamorphoses*.
An effect of this triple repetition is that Cephalus' endearments seem far too
exaggerated to be addressed to a breeze, and are thus suspicious. The pun-
ning repetitions centering on the name of A/aurora thus have an effect similar
to that of Cephalus' evasion of Phocus' question, namely that both strategies
simultaneously conceal and reveal ambiguous aspects of his story.

A third strategy employed by Cephalus, which is also the most revealing
and least successful of his manipulations, involves contradiction. As we have
seen, before Cephalus commences his tale, the third person narrative tells us
that Cephalus "was silent" (*silet*, 7.307) because of the shame evoked by "that
price" (*qua mercede*, 688), which must refer to Cephalus having offered sex in
return for the trappings of the hunt that Procris, disguised as a boy, possessed.
This is later denied in Cephalus' own account, which makes perfect sense, inas-
much as the internal contradiction between Cephalus' attempt to acquire the

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43   Cf. Montuschi 1998 on this *double entendre* against the background of Ovid's use of previ-
      ous authors.

javelin by means of prostitution, as related by the third person narrator, and the romantic, alternative story Cephalus tells in his first-person narrative, is symptomatic of Cephalus' apparent self-serving modification of his story in the *Metamorphoses*.

Furthermore, Cephalus contradicts the *Ars amatoria* version when it comes to Procris' last words. In the *Ars amatoria*, she has realized that Cephalus is not seeing another woman, whereas in the *Metamorphoses*, Cephalus tells of Procris begging him not to marry "Aura," which suggests that she does still think that there is another woman. One effect of this contradiction is that the Procris of the *Metamorphoses* corroborates the idea of mutual exclusivity between the two, and of Procris as a model wife (cf. *fidae*, 7.843); at the same time this variation may also be related to the next instance of this strategy of contradiction, as shown below.

This contradiction involves a ring-compositional structure in two steps, relating to the javelin. First, there is Cephalus' claim, "I wish I had lacked this gift [the javelin] always and for ever" (*hoc utinam caruissem munere semper*, 7.693), which is blatantly contradicted by the fact that Cephalus, many years on, still carries the javelin with him.[44] Furthermore, the description of the javelin by one of Pallas' sons as a missile that "flies all bloody with no hand to bring it" (*revolat nullo referente cruentum*, 7.684), before Cephalus commences his tale, is directly contradicted in Cephalus' description of Procris' death (7.845–849):

> semianimem et sparsas foedantem sanguine vestes
> et sua (me miserum!) de vulnere dona trahentem
> invenio corpusque meo mihi carius ulnis
> mollibus attollo scissaque a pectore veste
> vulnera saeva ligo conorque inhibere cruorem.

> There I found her dying, her disordered garments stained with blood, and oh, the pity! trying to draw the very weapon she had given me from her wounded breast. With loving arms I raised her body, dearer to me than my own, tore open the garment from her breast and bound up the cruel wound, and tried to staunch the blood.

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44   This contradiction has been duly pointed out in scholarship and given various explanations, such as this one, by the commentator Bömer 1976, 367: "Nach allen Gesetzen von Psychologie und Logik trägt ein Mann die Waffe mit der er die geliebte Frau getötet hat und deren Anblick ihn zu einem Weinen ohne Unterlaß veranlaßt, nicht dauernd bei sich, zumal diesem Fall, da er sicher weiß, daß er ihrer überhaupt nicht bedarf."

This scene contains subtle evocations of the contradictory description of the javelin at the outset of the episode as a missile that flies back to its thrower. Firstly, the javelin is called *dona*, a synonym of *munus*, thus recalling Phocus' initial question about the *muneris auctor*. Then there is the fact that not only is this "gift" stuck in the breast of Procris, it is indeed so firmly stuck that she has to try to remove it herself. The tension between Cephalus' account and the boomerang quality of the javelin is as its most intense in the evocation of Pallas' son's word, *cruentum*, in Cephalus' *cruorem* (see above, cf. 7.681–684), which, so to speak, seals the allusive contradiction in Procris' blood.[45]

In this blood, as will become clear below, one may even see a connection with Pythagoras' speech in the *Metamorphoses*. Yet another potential contradiction helps to prepare the ground for this link. When Procris is dead, Cephalus describes her thus: "but she seemed to die without worries and with a happy look on her face" (*sed vultu meliore mori secura videtur*, 7.862). This claim seems to contradict the anxiousness Procris expressed in her wish that Cephalus should not remarry. For how can Procris beg of Cephalus not to marry "Aura," fail to get any response from her husband, and then die with a contented look on her face?

Cephalus' words about the look on the face of his wife not only contradict her last words, but also stress the idea of appearances, especially through the words *vultu meliore* and *videtur*. This may be regarded as symptomatic of how Cephalus corroborates the superficial, first-glance impression of things by evading, confusing and contradicting certain details of his story. One effect of these strategies is that he avoids touching upon the role of King Minos in his past, the fact that he offered his own sexual services in exchange for the trappings of the hunt, and his potential motive for killing Procris in revenge for her adultery. Another, corollary effect of these strategies is that he turns the pity of which Procris is the primary object in the *Ars amatoria* episode towards himself. This is done in a sustained manner throughout Cephalus' account, which is initiated "with tears" (*lacrimis*, 7.689) and sealed with tears, his own as well as those of his audience: "The hero, all tears, recalled these things to those who were [also] crying" (*flentibus haec lacrimans heros memorabat*, 7.863). After this final shedding of tears, Aeacus, now awake, arrives: "Look, Aeacus comes with his two sons and his new levied band of soldiers, which Cephalus received with their valiant arms" (*ecce / Aeacus ingreditur duplici cum prole novoque / milite; quem Cephalus cum fortibus accipit armis*, 7.863–865,). Cephalus has thus been saved by the moment; there are no more questions about the *muneris*

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auctor, and Cephalus has accomplished his mission. The closing lines of the episode celebrate Cephalus' diplomatic success.

Prior to this diplomatic success, Cephalus arguably also perverts Procris' associated metempsychosis by suggestively turning the couple's unique experience into something that he can share with others. This effect is achieved by playing on several levels of significance that the spirit-and-mouth imagery evokes, which are also active in the words *ore legar populi* in the epilogue of the *Metamorphoses*, as shown above. In this work, Cephalus thus recalls his metaphorical catching up of Procris' spirit while a captive of Aurora: "it was Procris I loved; Procris was in my heart, Procris was ever in my mouth" (*ego Procrin amabam; / pectore Procris erat, Procris mihi semper in ore*, 7.707–708,).[46] The metempsychosis association is subsequently vulgarized when Cephalus later explains that "'Aura' ... perhaps I would add ... 'this spirit of yours is always caught by my mouth'" (*"aura" ... forsitan addiderim ... "meoque/ spiritus iste tuus semper captatur ab ore,"* 7.813–822). Cephalus thus replaces Procris with another female figure, evoking the same associations with metempsychosis. The fact that these associations are evoked in reference to a potential rival of Procris, at least from her point of view, arguably imbues Cephalus' subsequent description of the moment when Procris gives up her spirit with an adulterous aspect: "she breathed out her unhappy spirit into my mouth" (*"in me / infelicem animam nostroque exhalat in ore,"* 7.860–861). This internal evocation of the metempsychosis imagery in relation to Procris, then *A/aura*, and then Procris again, arguably contradicts the image of exclusivity between Procris and Cephalus and instils their relationship with adulterous implications, even in death.

Thus, this extramarital aspect of the metempsychosis imagery, together with the manipulative strategies and ambiguous words of Cephalus throughout his discourse, suggests some answers to the questions posed earlier in this chapter. According to this argument, Procris is clearly not safe with Cephalus as the vehicle of her process of metempsychosis. To the reader who does not jump to conclusions, but digs deeper, Cephalus appears to commit a double murder, which disquietingly resembles the kind that Ovid's Pythagoras warns against in his speech (see above, p. 64). And the blood (*cruentum*) that stains the javelin

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46   For the ways in which this echoes the severed head of Orpheus calling for Eurydice in Vergil's *G.* 4.525–527, see Hardie 2002, 76–77. The echo may seem romantic, but there are testimonies to a less romantic perception of the Orpheus and Eurydice story, too; cf. e.g. Boethius' claim that Orpheus *occidit* ("killed") Eurydice (*De consolatione* 3.m.12.51). I am grateful to Peter Astrup Sundt for this comment. Cf. also Lateiner 2013. It also seems relevant to the present argument that Eurydice does indeed turn into a ghost.

which, according to one of the sons of Pallas, always flies back to its thrower—a claim which is contradicted in the javelin that remains lodged in Procris' breast, as the blood (*cruentem*) gushes forth from the wound—may be said to be splattered across the very last warning of Pythagoras in the *Metamorphoses*: "may mouths be free of blood" (*ora cruore vacant*, 15.478). For—from a certain perspective—Cephalus kills Procris as if she were an animal, he swallows up her spirit, and, by retelling their story in a self-serving manner, Cephalus fills his mouth with words of her blood.

5   Conclusion: Omnia mutantur nihil interit (Met. 15.165)

The interpretation of Ovid's Procris and Cephalus episodes offered in this chapter follows one strand in a truly ambiguous tale. Indeed, the story does have highly romantic qualities, and the catching up of Procris' breath in the mouth of Cephalus may of course resemble one last kiss more readily than an act of cannibalism. At the same time, though, the purely romantic approach raises a number of questions, which remain very hard to answer; for, what would it mean for a tragic and romantic tale to hold such key positions in the macrostructure of Ovid's corpus? Why is there a unique reverberation of the catching up of Procris' spirit in the mouth of Cephalus in the phrase *ore legar populi* in the epilogue of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*? What do the discrepancies between the episodes as they are told in the *Ars amatoria* and the *Metamorphoses* mean? What is the significance of the apparent contradictions even within Cephalus' own tale in the latter work? What does Cephalus' digression about the Teumessian fox have to do with his account of the death of Procris? And why does this account violate the most fundamental rule of the *Metamorphoses* by seemingly ending with no metamorphosis?[47]

By contrast, the less romantic aspects of the Cephalus and Procris episodes have a considerable explanatory force. Their metapoetic potential, which opens up an understanding of the episodes as a story about the superficial and deeper meanings in a narrative, as well as the dangers of its reception, fits together well with the structurally important positions that these episodes

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47   The seeming lack of metamorphosis towards the end of Cephalus' narrative has puzzled readers and scholars, e.g. Hutchinson 2011, 252: "Procris' death ends the book with a striking violation of the poem's rules: there is no metamorphosis but only the slightest alterations of expression .... Readers are left to wonder about the relation between the constructed poet's emotional engagement and his fidelity to the secondary narrator's perspective."

occupy in the Ovidian macrostructure, which generally tend to draw attention to such essentially literary dynamics.[48] Moreover, the association between the idea of metempsychosis as metapoetics and the catching up of a dying person's spirit in someone else's mouth sheds meaningful light on the many discrepancies between the versions of the story as told in the *Ars amatoria* and the *Metamorphoses*, as well as on a number of contradictions within Cephalus' own narrative, which may thus be regarded as signs of the tension between the superficial and the deeper meaning of this story, and consequently of the inherent potential of all narratives to change completely in accordance with a change of perspective. Finally, the less romantic aspects of the Procris and Cephalus story even allow us to see a closing transformation in Book 7 of the *Metamorphoses*.

From this perspective, the deeper metamorphosis of this episode, as it is told in Ovid's epic, is that of Procris,[49] who, as she is killed by Cephalus, changes from the living equal of her husband into an *opus incorrectum* (cf. *Tr.* 3.14.24–25, above), whose death by his hand is staged as a loving sacrifice "of high pathos and tragic misunderstandings"[50] that serves his version of events. Strikingly, this metamorphosis, which is implicit, acquires a still deeper significance when paired with that narrated in Cephalus' digression, which constitutes the explicit metamorphosis in the episode. This deeper significance emerges from the fact that, when taken together, these metamorphoses show themselves to be perfectly calibrated between death and artistic transfiguration: the metamorphosis of the Teumessian fox and the dog Laelaps into marble effigies in Cephalus' digression represents the miracle—*mirum!*—while the metamorphosis of Procris—which begs the question if anything of her indeed remains (cf. *si meum est*, *Tr.* 3.14.24–25, above)—represents the mirage embedded within.

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48   Cf. e.g. Martelli 2013, generally but esp. 1–103, with references.

49   Thus Hardie 2002, 76: "Henceforth Procris will be reduced to nothing more substantial than breath, as Cephalus wishfully thinks in the form of her life-breath captured at the point of death on his lips, but more truthfully perhaps in the breath of Cephalus as he retells her story."

50   Segal 1978, 175.

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Suicides for Love, Phyllis, Pyramus and Thisbe: Critical Variations on a Famous Motif of Erotic Poetry?

Jacqueline Fabre-Serris

The lover who dies of love was evidently a motif that appeared in Gallus' *Amores*, which became famous and influential, if we can judge by Vergil (*Eclogue* 10) and Propertius (2.34). Vergil portrays Gallus as consumed with love: Lycoris has followed another, Gallus cannot resign himself to this *discidium*, and he is dying (*indigno cum Gallus amore peribat, Ecl.* 10.10). Propertius next places Gallus in the Underworld, where he washes his wounds, having died "for the beautiful Lycoris" (*et formosa quam multa Lycoride Gallus / mortuus inferna vulnera lavit aqua*, 2.34.91–92). There is another indication favoring the hypothesis that Gallus liked to imagine his death as immanent, and due to love. Vergil and Horace both seem to be alluding to erotic elegiac discourse in a spirit of parody when each of them introduces an abandoned lover who has decided to kill himself. In Virgil's *Eclogue* 8, Damon, an elegiac lover in shepherd's clothing, announces that he is about to jump into the sea because the woman he loves has married someone else.[1] His announcement inspires little confidence, however, because his suicide is conditioned upon the prior occurrence of an unlikely event, a flood that will swallow the whole world (*Ecl.* 8.58–60). Similarly, in Horace's *Ode* 3.27, when Europa complains of having been abandoned by the bull that brought her to Crete, she lists some of the ways in which she might end her life, each of them more improbable than the others. What is more, she simultaneously alludes to her own beauty with a rather suspicious complacency: *utinam inter errem / **nuda** leones. / ... **speciosa** quaero / pascere tigris. / ... potes hac ab orno / pendulum ... / laedere collum. / sive te rupes et acuta leto / saxa delectant, age te procellae / crede veloci* ("if only I could wander nude among lions ... beautiful as I am, I want to feed feed tigers .... You can break your neck by hanging it from this elm. Or, if cliffs and rocks sharp to cause death please you, come on! Trust the swift storm," 51–52, 55–56, 58–63).

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1 Damon expresses himself in more dramatic terms than the goatherd in his model, Theocritus, *Id.* 3.25–27, who also speaks of leaping into the water and dying—"perhaps."

Even though it enjoyed such distinguished precedents, suicide for love is not a motif that Ovid liked. One of his most distinctive traits is that he always tries to keep erotic relationships under control. After writing about the art of love, he wrote about remedies for love; and it is at the beginning of the *Remedia amoris* that such distancing is clearly seen. After enumerating different ways that desperate lovers had chosen to commit suicide, Ovid concludes by apostrophizing the god Amor: *qui, nisi desierit, misero periturus amore est / desinat, et nulli funeris auctor eris* ("whoever is going to die because of an unhappy love unless he renounces it, let him renounce, and you will not be the author of anyone's death," *Rem.* 21–22). I would like to show that elsewhere in his work Ovid condemned such a terrible resolution more precisely by purposely borrowing an example that had probably been used by Gallus, namely, that of Phyllis, a Thracian princess who killed herself because she believed she had been abandoned by her lover Demophoon. After examining why Ovid disapproved of this radical choice and considering his arguments against it, I shall read from a similar perspective his version of the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, two young lovers who kill themselves, one after the other, for love. It is a story that Ovid doubtless wanted to be "exemplary," but not in a positive way, as is often believed.

1   Phyllis

Phyllis offered hospitality to Demophoon, son of Theseus, when he was shipwrecked returning from Troy, and she fell in love with him. Eventually Demophoon left for Athens, promising to return; but on the appointed day, his ship did not appear. After lamenting for a long time, Phyllis hanged herself. In addition to Ovid's version of the story, we have those of two mythographers, Apollodorus and Hyginus, and two commentators of late antiquity, Servius and Tzetzes.[2] It is probable that the myth of Phyllis had earlier been narrated in the *Aetia* of Callimachus, though all we have is a fragment that is too short to give us an idea of the whole story. That said, the fragment clearly emphasizes male perfidy: νυμφίε Δημοφοῶν, ἄ[δικε ξενέ] ("you, bridegroom Demophoon, un[just guest]").[3] Moreover, it is possible that Euphorion was also interested in Phyllis.[4] Callimachus and Euphorion are important models for the *poetae novi*

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2   Apollod. *Epit.* 6.16–6.17; Hyg. *Fab.* 59; Serv. on *Buc.* 5.10; Tzetz. ad *Lyc. Alex.* 495.

3   Fr. 556 Pfeiffer.

4   According to fr. 58 Powell (Dix, 258) Euphorion had evoked the story of Phyllis in regard to that of Laodice, a daughter of Priam, who had had a child with Acamas or with Demophoon.

and the elegiac poets, but the prominent place that Ovid allotted to Phyllis in the *Heroides* (immediately after the letter of Penelope, the first in the collection) probably reflects the fame that Demophoon's unhappy lover had recently acquired at Rome. That she had done so at least a generation before Ovid is clear from the fact that Vergil, Horace, and Propertius all refer to the story of Phyllis in three different poetic genres. Rather than imagining that these three poets all became interested in Phyllis more or less simultaneously, but independently, it seems more likely that all of them are responding to the work of some specific, and fairly recent, predecessor.

1.1 *Phyllis, an Exemplum of the Effects of Furor in Gallus' Amores?*

In an earlier paper,[5] I examined the texts in which Vergil, Horace, and Propertius all use the name Phyllis, but to designate, respectively, a shepherdess, a slave, or a musician.[6] All of these passages evoke Demophoon's lover by alluding to some famous details in her story. Each of the poets deals with themes of fidelity and infidelity, constancy, and *renuntiatio amoris*, and each develops his own point of view in accordance with the literary genre he has chosen, be it bucolic, lyric, or elegiac. Their similar way of alluding to the myth of Phyllis seems to me an indication that they were following some earlier treatment of this story by a Roman poet. In that article, I proposed Gallus as a candidate, because in *Eclogue* 10, Vergil makes Gallus say that, if he had been an Arcadian shepherd, he would have loved Phyllis, or Amyntas, or *quicumque furor* (38). The *situation d'énonciation*, or "utterance situation," implies that the words attributed by Vergil to his friend contain words and motifs taken from Gallus' own poems. Because poets do not deploy proper names at random, it is very likely that the names of Phyllis and Amyntas are part of the elements alluding to Gallus' *Amores*. Throughout his speech in *Eclogue* 10, Gallus places in opposition pastoral poetry and elegy: fidelity and constancy in love would be characteristic of the life of the shepherds in Arcadia; the themes associated with elegy are the infidelity of Lycoris and Gallus' own inability to renounce his love for her. Perhaps, then, he had used the story of Phyllis in the *Amores* to illustrate these elegiac themes; perhaps he had associated it with the themes of male perfidy (as does Callimachus[7]) and *furor*. But what did Ovid, for his part, do?

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5 Fabre-Serris 2013.

6 The different texs are Vergil's *Eclogues* 3, 7 and 10, Horace, *Odes* 2.4 and 4.11, and Propertius, 4.8.

7 This is at least the case in the *Culex*, a poem whose author mainly alludes to Vergil and Gallus: *posterius cui Demophoon aeterna reliquit / perfidiam lamentandi mala—perfide multis / per-*

1.2 *Phyllis According to Ovid: A Woman Who Did Not Know How to Love*

At the beginning of *Ars amatoria* 3, Phyllis is included with Medea, Ariadne, and Dido in a list of women who were disappointed by perfidious men (31–32) because they "did not know how to love": *quid vos perdiderit, dicam; nescistis amare; / defuit ars vobis; arte perennat amor* ("What led you to ruin, I now will say: you did not know how to love; you lacked art: art sustains love," 41–42). According to Hyginus (*Fab.* 59), the day when Demophoon was to arrive, Phyllis ran nine times to the shore. For this reason the place was called in Greek "the nine roads" (*enneados*). The mythographer adds that the trees that grew on the girl's grave mourned her death when their leaves dried and fell.[8] For this reason the word for leaves is in Greek *phylla*. When Ovid evokes Phyllis, he alludes to these two details associated with her despair and her death (*Ars* 3.37–38):

> Quaere novem cur una viae dicantur, et audi
> depositis siluas Phyllida flesse comis.

> Find out why a single road is called the nine roads, and learn that the forests mourned Phyllis by dropping their hair.

The four heroines chosen by Ovid as examples of women who did not know how to love, Medea, Ariadne, Phyllis, and Dido, also feature in his *Heroides*. Does this interpretation also apply to *Heroides* 2? It has been noted that the purported "letters" of Phyllis and Dido, written shortly before their respective suicides, end with words that are to be inscribed on their tombstones.[9] Both

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fide Demophoon, et nunc deflende puellis ("then the tree to which Demophoon bequeathed the eternal misfortune of lamenting his unfaithfulness, unfaithful, unfaithful Demophoon, now the object of tears for so many young girls," 132–133). See Fabre-Serris 2013, 125.

8 According to Hyginus, Phyllis does not commit suicide but dies of sorrow: *Phyllis autem ob desiderium Demophoontis spiritum emisit* (*Fab.* 59.2).

9 Here I have to disagree with Fulkerson, who argues, "I will concern myself in this study with the ways Phyllis' letter—indeed her story—models itself on several of the foundational tales of abandoned women" (2002, 145), and, "I shall suggest that, like a number of the heroines, she [Phyllis] finds herself seduced by the stories of other women into writing her own" (2005, 22). These two formulations attribute to Phyllis an autonomy as a letter writer that does not exist for a secondary character in a fiction. The only real author of the *Heroides* is Ovid, not the mythological heroines whom he presents as letter writers, even if he assumes their characters for the sake of his fiction and can therefore suggest motives and emotions "felt" by the characters. The resulting narrative situation is very complex: for each letter there is a different, fictive, Greek (or barbarian), female author and her fictive, Greek, male addressee (here Phyllis and Demophoon), and a single Roman author and his many Roman readers (Ovid and his female and male readership). Fulkerson lists some innovations noted by critics regarding

make the same subtle distinction between the hand that performed the fatal gesture (their own) and the cause of their death, which is attributable to the unfaithful lover (2.147–148; 7.195–196):

> PHYLLIDA DEMOPHOON LETO DEDIT HOSPES AMANTEM;
>   ILLE NECIS CAUSAM PRAEBUIT, IPSA MANUM.

> He who was her guest, Demophoon, led Phyllis, who loved him, to death; he provided the cause of death, she herself the hand.

> PRAEBUIT AENEAS ET CAUSAM MORTIS ET ENSEM;
>   IPSA SUA DIDO CONCIDIT USA MANU.

> Aeneas provided the cause of death and the sword: Dido herself fell under a blow from her own hand.

Dido writes her letter with the sword given her by Aeneas on her lap (*et gremio Troicus ensis adest*, 184). This gift, now bathed in tears, she says, will be stained with blood, and it will not be the first time her chest will be struck, since Love has already wounded her (189–190). Phyllis demonstrates a similar ingenuity in her search for a death that "signifies," that is, one that makes an accusation. She cherishes the idea of several possibilities, each of which has its advantages. She could jump into the nearby sea: *hinc mihi suppositas immittere corpus in undas / mens fuit* ("I had the idea of hurling my body from this place into the waters below," 133–134); perhaps the waves would take her body to the shores of Athens to appear before Demophoon's eyes: *ad tua me fluctus proiectam litora portent / occurramque oculis intumulata tuis* ("may the waves bear and cast me up onto your shores and may I appear, unburied, before your eyes," 135–136). Phyllis is pleased to imagine the regret that this spectacle would tear from the lover even if he were the worst of all men: *duritia ferrum ut superes adaman-*

Phyllis' story, including "Demophoon's shipwreck; Phyllis' status as queen instead of princess and her consequent freedom to select her own husband; her offer of Thrace to Demophoon; and her belief (2.81–84) that she needs to be married to preserve authority over her subjects," and she concludes, "many of these alterations seem designed to force comparison to the story of Dido" (2005, 27). This is an interesting and convincing observation *per se* but, in my opinion, it does not support Fulkerson's thesis. All intertextual allusions to Vergil in the *Heroides* are made by the first narrator, Ovid (not by Phyllis), and are intended to be perceived and appreciated only by Ovid's Roman readers (not Demophoon). Furthermore, as we do not know how Gallus may have treated Phyllis' story, it is difficult to evaluate whether or how Ovid's differed from his treatment.

taque teque: / "Non tibi sic, dices, Phylli, sequendus eram" ("Even if you in your hardness surpass iron, adamant, and your own self, you will say, 'This is not the way, Phyllis, for you to follow me!'" 137–138). After having briefly discussed two other possible deaths, by poison or by sword, Phyllis lingers on a final method that would also have a symbolic significance (141–142):

> colla quoque, infidis quia se nectenda lacertis
> praebuerunt, laqueis implicuisse iuvat.

> My neck too, because it gave itself to be embraced by unfaithful arms, it pleases me to tie into a noose.

The word *complexus* designates a moment during a night of lovemaking that elegiac lovers prolong and always want to repeat. The mortal embrace by which Phyllis chooses to end her life is therefore another way of incriminating Demophoon, whose last gesture towards her was a very long embrace: *ausus es **amplecti** colloque infusus amantis* ("you dared to embrace me, and lying on your lover's neck," 93).[10] The end of the verse refers to Vergil, who wrote about Vulcan: *optatos dedit amplexus ... / coniugis infusus gremio* ("he gave her the embraces she hoped for ... lying on his spouse's breast," *Aen.* 8.405–406). It is no coincidence that Ovid replaced Virgil's *gremio* with *collo*.[11] Therefore, it seems perfectly appropriate that the Phyllis of the *Heroides* in her epitaph designates Demophoon as "the odious cause" (*causa invidiosa*, 145) of her death. But perhaps another reading is also possible?

1.3   *Phyllis' Suicide: A Choice Criticized by Ovid*

Whenever Ovid alludes to Phyllis' story after the *Heroides*, he always disapproves of her amorous behavior. In *Ars* 3, where he recommends avoiding some kinds of men, he gives Phyllis as an example of women who let themselves be seduced by a fallacious man (3.455–456; 459–460):

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10   For example, I refer to Propertius 1.13, which places Gallus precisely in this position: *vidi ego te toto vinctum languescere collo / ... non ego complexus potui diducere vestros: / tantus erat demens inter utrosque furor* ("I saw you languish with your neck all entwined in her embrace. ... I could not separate your hugs, such a mad frenzy raged between you both," 15, 19–20).

11   Because Demophoon did not return to marry her, Phyllis declares that she is determined to redeem the loss of her chastity: *stat nece matura tenerum pensare pudorem* ("I have decided to redeem my tender chastity with a quick death," 143). We find the same version in Servius (on *Ecl.* 5.10), according to whom Phyllis hangs herself and is changed into an almond tree with no leaves.

discite ab alterius vestris timuisse querelis;
     ianua fallaci ne sit aperta viro
...
et tibi, Demophoon, Thesei criminis heres,
     Phyllide decepta nulla relicta fides.

Learn to be afraid from the laments of others; let your door not be opened to a fallacious man … and in you, Demophoon, heir of Theseus and his crime, having tricked Phyllis, no confidence remains.

In the *Remedia*, when Ovid advises one to beware the effects of solitude, he chooses the example of Phyllis, explaining that she died because she had no one beside her: *quid, nisi secretae laeserunt Phyllida silvae? / certa necis causa est: incomitata fuit* ("What harmed Phyllis, if not the isolated forests? The cause of her death is beyond doubt: she had no companions," 591–592). The surprising hypothesis of line 591 serves to highlight the ingenious idea developed later: when she was in despair, Phyllis was surrounded only by trees in which she saw an easy means of ending her life. I quote the end of the long passage in which Ovid describes and analyzes her unhappy state of mind (*Rem.* 599–696):

Limes erat tenuis longa subnubilus umbra,
     qua tulit illa suos ad mare saepe pedes.
Nona terebatur miserae via: "viderit," inquit,
     et spectat zonam pallida facta suam,
adspicit et ramos: dubitat refugitque quod audet;
     et timet et digitos ad sua colla refert.
Sithoni, tunc certe vellem non sola fuisses;
     non flesset positis Phyllida silva comis.

There was a narrow path a little dark due to the long shadow of the foliage; she often passed this way when her feet took her to the sea. The unhappy girl had walked the road nine times: "it is up to him to see," she says and, turning pale, she looks at her belt, considers the branches, and brings her fingers to her neck. Daughter of Sithon, at this moment at least I would have liked you not to be alone: the forest would not have mourned Phyllis by losing its hair.

After reconstructing the dramatic moment in which Phyllis made her fatal decision, the author intervenes to regret that she was, unfortunately, alone at that

time. The reader can only agree with him: Phyllis missed a friendly voice, like Ovid's. The poet had already said it at the beginning of the poem: *vixisset Phyllis, si me foret usa magistro, / et per quod novies, saepius isset iter* ("Phyllis would have lived if she had had me as a teacher, and she would have walked more often the road she traveled nine times," *Rem.* 55–56).

But perhaps Ovid was already of this opinion in *Heroides* 2. Line 27 supports this theory: *dic mihi quid feci, nisi non sapienter amavi* ("tell me what I did, except that I loved unwisely"). When she met Demophoon, Phyllis now understands, she was without experience; she was deceived because she knew nothing about the *artes* that men use when they want to seduce a girl (2.49–52, 63–65):[12]

> credidimus blandis, quorum tibi copia, verbis,
> >   credidimus generi nominibusque tuis,
> credidimus lacrimis; an et hae simulare docentur?
> >   hae quoque habent artes quaque iubentur eunt?
> …
> fallere credentem non est operosa puellam
> >   gloria; simplicitas digna favore fuit.
> sum decepta tuis et amans et femina uerbis.

> I trusted the caressing words that you used in abundance. I trusted your lineage and the great names of your ancestors. I trusted in tears; do they too have their artifices and arise upon request? They too have their artifices and arise upon request … To deceive a credulous girl is not a difficult glory to acquire; my simplicity also deserved favorable treatment; I have been deceived by your words both as a lover and as a woman.

Even if Phyllis now sees Demophoon's game, and his perfidy, clearly, the despair caused by his abandonment continues to torment her and leads her to death.[13] It has been noted that Ovid seems to have chosen a version of the story that is totally unfavorable to Demophoon, unlike Servius. According to Vergil's com-

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12   As noted by Kennedy 2006, 64: "Demophoon was, it appears, very successful in instilling *fides*."

13   Her destiny well illustrates this observation by Ovid in *Ars amatoria* 3: women do not manage very well when they are lovestruck (*femina nec flammas nec saevos discutit arcus*, "a woman does not shake off the flames or the wild weapons of love," 29); men are less vulnerable: *parcius haec video tela nocere viris* ("I observe that these missiles are less harmful to men," 30).

mentator (on *Buc.* 5.10), Phyllis was changed after her death into an almond tree without leaves, but Demophoon returned to Thrace. When he learned what had happened, he hugged the tree trunk, *qui velut sponsi sentiret adventum, folia emisit* ("which, as if she had felt the arrival of her fiancé, sprouted leaves").[14] This version was known in Ovid's time: Vergil plays with this final trajectory in *Eclogue* 7 when, imagining an ingenious variation, he associates the revival of the forests with the return of Phyllis, and not of her lover: *Phyllidis adventu nostrae nemus omne virebit* ("When our Phyllis arrives, the whole forest will revive," *Ecl.* 7.59).[15] Perhaps Ovid's Phyllis made too rash a decision by killing herself: she should have waited a little longer. I have no space here to develop this interpretation (which must, however, be taken into account when discussing the reading *semel / quater* in line 8).[16] Instead, I now propose to read in the light of these Ovidian texts about Phyllis one of the most famous love stories told in the *Metamorphoses*: that of Pyramus and Thisbe.

2   Pyramus and Thisbe: An "Exemplary" Tale?

Why compare the story of Phyllis and Demophoon with that of Pyramus and Thisbe? Because they have narrative sequences in common, or ones that play on the same elements. Demophoon has not returned on the appointed day; Pyramus did not arrive at the meeting place when he should have done so: he set out later, and therefore too late (*serius egressus, Met.* 4.105). The end result is the same: like Phyllis, Thisbe kills herself, proclaiming Pyramus responsible for this fatal act. To be sure, there is an important difference: Thisbe kills herself because Pyramus had killed himself earlier. He decided to die because he believed, wrongly, that he was responsible for Thisbe's death. In the end, this really will be the case, precisely because Pyramus started the chain of deci-

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14   Servius (ad *Ecl.* 5.10): the greening of the almond tree inspired the use of the Greek word φύλλα to designate its leaves, which were formerly called πέταλα (*unde etiam φύλλα sunt dicta a Phyllide, quae antea πέταλα dicebantur*).

15   Fabre-Serris 2013, 125–126.

16   The word *semel* (3) was corrected by Burmann (1727) and changed to *quater*. As many other editors, Barchiesi 1992 prefers to keep *semel* by arguing "Tutto il contesto (vv. 8 sgg) enfatizza piuttosto l'idea che Fillide è stata paziente, ha atteso a lungo (three months after the expected date) quasi non credendo all'evidenza dei fatti." For Fulkerson (2002, 151), who prefers *quater*, Phyllis kills herself the same day on which Demophoon does not come back. But even if Phyllis has waited three months, she would have killed herself too early if Demophon finally returned.

sions. I would like to show that Ovid has designed his story so as to lead his reader not only to deplore this double suicide but also to condemn the choice to die for love. As in *Heroides* 2, the fault apparently lies with the boy.

2.1   *Thisbe: The Behavior of a Perfect Elegiac Lover*

As their fathers are opposed to their love, Pyramus and Thisbe have decided to meet each other outside the city. Thisbe is called "clever" (*callida*, 4.93) when she leaves home "through the darkness" (*per tenebras*, 93) with her face veiled, eluding the surveillance of her family (*fallitque suos*, 94); Ovid adds that "love made her bold" (*audacem faciebat amor*, 96). These two traits, cleverness and boldness, resemble those of the ideal *puella* dreamed of by the elegiac poets. As has been observed, Thisbe behaves like Delia, of whom Tibullus says in poem 1.6, *iam Delia furtim / nescio quem tacita **callida** nocte fovet* ("clever Delia is already coddling someone secretly in the silent night," 5–6), and to whom he recommends in 1.2, *tu quoque ne timide custodes, Delia, falle; / **audendum** est: fortes adiuvat ipsa Venus* ("You too, Delia, do not be afraid when you deceive your guardians; one must be bold: Venus herself helps those who are brave," 15–16).[17] When Thisbe sees from a distance a lioness attracted by a spring, she proves to be clever: she immediately flees and hides in a cave. In her escape, however, she loses her veil, which the beast tears to pieces before it returns to the forest.

2.2   *Pyramus's Death: A Hasty Decision Described without Empathy*

If Thisbe is the "ideal" elegiac *puella* (a girl, in love, resourceful), what about Pyramus? He can certainly be compared to an elegiac lover, but one that *puellae* would regard with disappointment. In fact, he resembles Demophoon, whose delay causes the death of his girlfriend, except that, unlike Phyllis' lover, Pyramus considers himself guilty (4.110–112):

> nostra nocens anima est; ego te, miseranda, peremi,
> in loca plena metus qui iussi nocte venires
> nec prior huc veni.

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17   Rosati in Barchiesi and Rosati 2007, 263. Tibullus 2.1 depicts in detail the cautious behavior inspired by Amor that permits a girl to rendezvous with her lover: *hoc duce custodes furtim transgressa iacentes / ad iuvenem tenebris sola puella venit / et pedibus praetemptat iter suspensa timore, / explorat caecas cui manus ante vias* ("under his guidance a girl passes secretly by her sleeping guardians and in the dark goes all alone to her boyfriend; anxious and fearful, she feels her way by foot, her hand groping for directions that she cannot see before her," 75–78).

My soul is guilty; pitiable girl, it is I who killed you when I asked you to come to these places full of terror at night, and did not myself come first.

Pyramus not only feels responsible, but wants to die immediately: *"una duos,"* *inquit, "nox perdet amantes"* ("one night," he says, "will cause the end of two lovers," 108). He also wishes to be torn apart by a beast, and describes this death as a punishment with a grandiloquence that allows one to suspect a certain distancing on Ovid's part (112–114):

> nostrum divellite corpus
> et scelerata fero consumite viscera morsu,
> o quicumque sub hac habitatis rupe, leones.

Rip my body apart and ruin these criminal innards with your ferocious bite, o lions, all of you who live under these rocks.

Because hoping for death would be the act of a coward (*sed timidi est optare necem*, 115), after drenching Thisbe's veil with tears Pyramus kills himself with his sword: *"accipe nunc," inquit, "nostri quoque sanguinis haustus"* ("Now," he says, "have a drink of my blood, too," 118). Ovid then makes a comparison that has been much discussed (121–124):[18]

> cruor emicat alte,
> non aliter quam cum vitiato fistula plumbo
> scinditur et tenui stridente foramine longas
> eiaculatur aquas atque ictibus aera rumpit.

The blood spurts up as high as when a pipe, because the lead is not sound, breaks, and from the thin crack with a shrill whistle shoots out long jets of water and cuts through the air with its shootings.

The trivial nature of the object, a lead pipe, is surprising, as is the fact that this trivial incident is described at such length. As any comparison, positive or negative, has an impact on how its subject is viewed, Pyramus' death then cannot

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18   But perhaps Demophoon too will be found guilty of Phyllis's death: this is what she hopes when she imagines her lover's reaction at the sight of her corpse.

really be considered tragic. But what did the author intend? As often, intertextual relationships can give us some clues. First, Charles Segal has highlighted the sexual symbolism of the Ovidian comparison.[19] Next, taking up this point of view, Stephen Hinds noted that these verses refer to Lucretius, particularly a passage from Book 4 in which "the word *ictus* ('stroke') is openly used in connection with male ejaculation."[20] Lucretius describes the phenomenon that is produced when a teenager is sexually aroused and his sperm (*humanum semen*, 1040) makes its way through his genitals (*DRN* 4.1045–1052):

> inritata tument loca semine, fitque voluntas
> eicere id quo se contendit dira lubido,
> idque petit corpus mens unde est saucia amore.
> namque omnes plerumque cadunt in volnus, et illam
> emicat in partem sanguis unde icimur ictu,
> et si comminus est, hostem ruber occupat umor.
> sic igitur Veneris qui telis accipit ictus.

> These parts when irritated swell with semen, and there develops a will to cast it out where the sexual drive, terrible as it is, strives to go; and the body seeks out that from which the mind has received the wound of love. For everyone for the most part falls on their wound and the blood spurts in the direction from which the blow has wounded us, and if it is close, the enemy is covered by the red fluid. That happens when you are struck by Venus's missiles.

Here the ejaculation of the teenage lover into the body that provoked his desire is compared to the spurt of the blood of a wounded man whose blood gushes upon the enemy who struck him. Ovid shares with this passage the words *emicat* (121), *eiaculatur* (124), and *ictibus* (124).[21] These are just a few words, but the likelihood that they refer to Lucretius's text is increased by the fact that Pyramus himself is an adolescent lover. Otherwise, what we find in the *Metamorphoses* is not a comparison, but a transformation: the young lover becomes a wounded man, who can never satisfy his desire. If we refer to the text of Lucretius, it seems right to interpret the tree with white berries that is covered with Pyramus' blood as equivalent to the origin of Pyramus' desire, that

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19   Segal 1969, 50.
20   Hinds 1987, 31 and 143 n. 16.
21   As Hinds (1987, 143) observes, *foramine* is also a Lucretian word. *emicat ... alte* occurs at Lucretius 2.195 (Bömer ad *Met.* 4.123).

is, as an image of the beloved. If, however, it is true, as Carole Newlands puts it, that "Pyramus' manner of dying suggests a gigantic orgasm," then at the same time the "ejaculation" of blood (instead of sperm) cruelly highlights the boy's failure.[22]

2.3 *How to Interpret This Break in the Tone of the Narration?*

According to Newlands, Ovid's intention was to parody the ancient novel.[23] A characteristic ingredient of the novel is a mistake combined with a suicide attempt. This circumstance is usually followed by a wonderful "resurrection" or rescue. The Ovidian reader therefore expects that the separation of the lovers will not last and that their subsequent "deaths" are not real. This is the case only for Thisbe's first "death," which is merely imagined by her lover. After the death of Pyramus, which is real, the separation of the lovers seems to be final. Thisbe, however, asserts that she and Pyramus will not be separated by death, because she will die too: *quique a me morte revelli / heu! sola poteras, poteris nec morte revelli* ("and you who could have been torn away from me by death alone, alas, will not be able to be torn away even by death," 152–153). But is it true that death is an appropriate response to separation?

2.3.1 An Ambiguous Story

In elegy, when a lover evokes his approaching death (as in Tibullus 1.1 and Lygdamus 2, for example), he imagines (usually) that his *puella* will weep for him at his funeral.[24] Seneca the Elder gives us a *controversia* (2.2) in which "a husband and his wife swore that, if something happened to one of them, the other would die.[25] The husband left for a trip abroad and sent his wife a message announcing his death. The wife flung herself from on high place. Once revived, she receives an order from her father to leave her husband. She is unwilling to do so. Her father disowns her. She contests this decision." Seneca says that Ovid treated this *controversia* when he was the pupil of Arellius Fuscus. He argued "what is difficult for you [i.e. the father] is to admit that the husband loved his wife, and

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22 Newlands 1986, 143.

23 "The simile of the broken pipe marks the strategic point in the story when the pattern of romance is arrested. The disruptive nature of the simile reinforces the dislocation of the story and generic expectations at this point" (Newlands 1986, 146).

24 Tibullus (1.1.61–68) and Lygdamus (2.11–14) attribute to Delia and Neaera the customary demonstrations of grief. Cynthia will bring perfumes and garlands and will remain next to Propertius' pyre (3.16.21–24).

25 *vir et uxor iuraverunt, ut, si quid alteri optigisset alter moreretur. vir peregre profectus est, misit nuntium ad uxorem, qui diceret decessisse virum. uxor se praecipitavit. recreata iubetur a patre relinquere virum; non vult. abdicatur.*

the wife her husband" (*quidquid laboris est in hoc est, ut uxori virum et uxorem viro diligere concedas*, 9)—or in other words, that the love between two spouses can be similar to that between two lovers, which everyone agrees is excessive. Ovid said, "in love it is easier to obtain cessation than moderation" (*facilius in amore finem impetres quam modum*, 10). He added that this was not the first wife to have made such a gesture: one had died with her husband, another for her husband (*periit aliqua cum viro, periit aliqua pro viro*), and all would always be honored and celebrated by all (11). Of such extreme conjugal devotion there was a famous example in Latin poetry: that of Laodamia. The story of Laodamia, who killed herself after the death of her husband in Troy, was often evoked by Ovid. Every time he did so, he used the word **comes**: *me tibi venturam* **comitem**, *quocumque vocaris / sive—quod* (*heu!*) *timeo—sive superstes eris* ("I will follow you as a companion, wherever you are summoned, whether, alas! what I fear happens, or you will survive," *Her.* 13.161–162); *aut* **comes** *extincto Laodamia viro* ("or Laodamia, companion to her deceased husband," *Tr.* 1.6.20); *respice Phylacidem et quae* **comes** *isse marito / fertur et ante annos occubuisse suos* ("consider Phylax's grandson [Protesilaus] and her who is said to have gone as a companion to her husband and died before her time," *Ars* 3.17–18). The phrase *ante annos suos* emphasizes that the death of Laodamia was premature. In the *Remedia* (723–724), Ovid was more openly critical: *si potes, et ceras remove; quid imagine muta / carperis? hoc periit Laodamia modo* ("If you can, remove the wax portraits; why let yourself be tormented by a silent image? That's how Laodamia died"). This makes it clear that Laodamia is not an example to follow.

   I return to the *Metamorphoses*. The narrator (one of the daughters of Minyas) emphasizes the responsibility of Pyramus in the decision taken by Thisbe. The boy was late: he came out "later" than intended, and therefore too late (*serius egressus*, 105). That is his first fault. At the beginning of the passage that describes his suicide in detail and includes the comparison with the lead pipe, the expression *nec mora* indicts him on a charge opposite to the first: he acts precipitously. This is Pyramus' second fault, which transforms an error of judgment, that of believing in Thisbe's false death, into an irremediable fact, a real suicide, which leads his lover to repeat this ill-considered act. Alison Keith has highlighted a subtle verbal game, with which Ovid supports the critical point of view attributed to the narrator, between *mora* (delay), *mors* (death), *amor* (love), and *morum* (mulberries): "Furthermore, the *mora* ('mulberries') are ironically reminiscent of the *mora* ('delay,' 120), the cautionary delay which Pyramus fails to observe, thus causing his own *mors* ('death')."[26]

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26   Keith 2001, 149.

When Thisbe returns and sees quivering on the ground a bloody body in which she recognizes her lover, she begins to lament, believing that fortune has dealt her this blow: *"quis te mihi casus ademit?"* ("What chance has taken you from me?" 142). Then she recognizes her veil, sees the sheath empty of its sword, and understands: *"tua te manus," inquit "amorque / perdidit, infelix"* ("It was your hand and your love," she says, "that destroyed you, poor boy," 148). She immediately adds, "I too have a hand and a love that are strong enough for this same purpose" (*est et mihi fortis in unum / hoc manus, est et amor*, 149–150) and "I will be called the very wretched cause and companion of your death" (*letique miserrima dicar / causa comesque tui*, 151–152). It is not by chance that we find here the words *manus* and *leti causa*, words played upon by the accusatory epitaphs of Phyllis and Dido as well. They are accompanied by *amor*, which underlines the paradox of the situation. While she is sure of Pyramus's love, as Phyllis is sure of Demophoon's perfidy, Thisbe also expresses a regret about her lover: she qualifies Pyramus as *infelix* and calls herself, using a superlative, *miserrima* not only as "the cause of his death," but also as the "companion" (*comes*)—the key word used for Laodamia—"of this death." This seems to me a way of deploring the fact that she is forced to commit this fatal act.[27]

2.3.2   The Story of Pyramus and Thisbe in the light of the Entire Narrative Cycle Attributed to the Minyeides

Carole Newlands (1986) has put the love of Pyramus and Thisbe into perspective along with other stories told by the daughters of Minyas. The second story is the love affair of Mars and Venus, who are denounced to her husband, Vulcan, by the Sun, who is then punished by Venus. The Sun's love affair with Leuconoe is also denounced, this time by her sister, Clytie, to their father, who buries Leuconoe alive. Clytie, who is herself in love with the Sun, perishes because she cannot not satisfy her love. The third story is that of Hermaphroditus and Salmacis: the boy tries in vain to escape the desire of the nymph, who manages to unite with him until together they form a single body.

According to Newlands, all these stories validate the life choice made by the three sisters, the daughters of Minyas, who reject the passion and irrational forces that are associated with Bacchus and Venus. Regarding our storyteller, Newlands (1986, 150) speaks of her "stubborn, virginal exclusion of the life of

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27   In favor of this interpretation it can be added that *ad tua te manus … amorque / perdidit* (148–149) and *miserrima* (151) are perhaps an echo of the single word attributed by Vergil to Eurydice, which without a doubt is a word of regret: *"quis et me," inquit, "miseram et te perdidit, Orpheu / quis tantus furor?"* ("What madness, so great," she said, "destroyed me, miserable, and destroyed you, Orpheus?" *Geo.* 4.494–495).

the passions." I generally agree with her analysis. However, when a story is put into the mouth of a secondary narrator, two narrative levels must always be taken into account and a distinction must be made between the intention of the main narrator and the point of view attributed by him to the secondary narrator. Specifically, any intertextual game that may be in play must be ascribed to the main narrator.[28] This is certainly the case with the incongruous simile of the lead pipe, which refers to Lucretius and signifies Ovid's critical position regarding suicide for love.

We must also ascribe to Ovid the general construction of the cycle of stories narrated by the Minyeides and the choice of occasion for their serial narration, i.e. when the three girls are spinning. The construction of this small cycle seems to me to offer a variation on a pattern of which we have other examples in *Georgics* 4 and in Propertius 2.13. In these texts, the love affair of Mars and Venus serves as the generator or model for other love stories.[29] In the *Georgics*, Mars and Venus's affair occupies the first place in a series of stories that Clymene narrates to her companions, who are spinning: "in their midst she told of the useless care taken by Vulcan, the deceptions of Mars and the sweet, secret meetings, and she enumerated from Chaos the numerous loves of the gods" (*inter quas curam Clymene narrabat inanem / Volcani Martisque dolos et dulcia furta / aque Chao densos divom numerabat amores, Geo.* 4.345–347). Propertius includes the affair of Mars and Venus in the middle of a group of three stories illustrating the idea that the fame of beautiful women cannot be damaged, even when their loves are illicit. The divine protagonist of central history, Venus, clearly serves to guarantee that this principle holds true for the mortal women of the other stories, Helen and Oenone, as well. In a previous article on the reception of Empedocles in elegiac poetry, I argued that the Lucretian treatment of Mars and Venus, which refers to the philosophy of Empedocles (in accordance with allegorical interpretation of his Homeric source), would have had a determining influence on the genesis of the elegiac genre in the *Amores* of Gallus, and that Gallus must also have used Mars and Venus as an exemplum.[30] However Gallus chose to narrate or allude to this story, Ovid inscribes his treatment of it into a tradition to which Vergil and Propertius also belong. It is not impossible, however, that the *situation d'énonciation* chosen by Ovid for the narration of this tale, which is identical to that of Vergil (the women who

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28   Cf. n. 9 above.

29   Mars and Venus are "both caught fixed in the middle of their embrace" (*in mediis ambo deprensi amplexibus haerent, Met.* 4.184): a situation to which all lovers aspire. See Lucr. 4.1105–1111.

30   Fabre-Serris 2014, par. 13–19.

listen to the story are spinning), refers to a poem of Gallus. We actually find a variation on this scene in Tibullus 1.3, when the poet imagines that Delia, left alone, spends her time listening to *fabellas* (85) narrated by one of the two women sitting next to her and spinning. If in the *Metamorphoses* this small cycle of tales by the Minyeides is to be seen as a variation on a Gallan scheme, it seems significant to me that Ovid has chosen to tell a story of double suicide for love and that he adopts a position that is openly critical of this Gallan motif, as well.

Any variation implies that the meaning given to the elements taken from another text is different according to each of the authors. In the *Metamorphoses*, I agree with Carole Newlands (1986) that the lesson to be drawn from the Minyeides cycle has to do with its narrator. The significance of this cycle is related to the kind of life chosen by the daughters of Minyas. The story of Mars and Venus' love affair illustrates the general significance of the cycle. Consisting of two parts—the episode told by Homer and the story of the Sun in love— this narrative depicts the power of love and its destructive effects. This is not the place to analyze the entire issue in detail. Let it suffice to point out that the internal narrators, the three daughters of Minyas, highlight the role of the female protagonists, Venus, Clytie, Thisbe, and Salmacis. That is to be expected: they are women, too. Their preference is made clear in what is said about the good or bad use of delay, an issue that is consistent with the sisters' conception of the terrible power of love. It seems that men do not know how to make good use of delay: Pyramus is late, then he kills himself, *nec mora*, causing the death of Thisbe; the Sun, once struck by love, cannot restrain his desires (*nec longius ille moratus*, 230). On the other hand, Salmacis does manage to defer her desires, even if she does so with difficulty (*vixque moram patitur, vix iam sua gaudia differt*, "with difficulty she endures to delay, with difficulty she defers her pleasures," 350). And finally, she finds herself in the situation dreamed of by all lovers: never to be separated from being loved (*nulla dies a me nec me deducat ab isto!* "may no one day take us away, him from me and me from him!" 372), even if Hermaphroditus does not share her perspective.[31] Perhaps this conclusion ironically highlights the failure of the first story, that of Pyramus and Thisbe, after their double suicide, reunited ... in a single urn (*quodque rogis superest, una requiescit in urna*, "what remains from their funeral pyre rests in a single urn," 166)—a word that then resonates with a certain bitterness.

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31   I disagree with Fowler 2000, 163, who speaks of "Salmacis' intolerance of delay, *mora*," even if she does not defer pleasure for a long time.

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Ovidian Pathology, in Love and in Exile

Laurel Fulkerson

> Symptoms of disease are nothing but a disguised manifestation
> of the power of love, and all disease is only love transformed.
>
> THOMAS MANN, *The Magic Mountain*

⁝

Love, to the elegists, is permeated with metaphor. It is similar to any number of other unpleasant but potentially exciting things: like warfare, or various kinds of hunting, or slavery.[1] And love is also sometimes understood, by elegiac poets and by others, as a form of illness. This structural notion of elegiac love as disease has been discussed in the scholarship, but has received less sustained attention than other metaphors,[2] so this chapter first explores the ways illness functions metapoetically in elegy and especially in Ovidian elegy, and then it looks at the ways his exile poetry undermines that model—or rather, the ways it makes clear that the model had never worked in the first place: elegiac love, according to Ovid, is an incurable disease, and the closer the poet's exilic situation comes to resemble that relationship, the greater the chances that his situation will prove fatal. But also—because after all, this is Ovid—it will turn out that the metaphor of illness proliferates beyond control, leaving readers uncertain when it should be thought of as "real" and when as simply metaphor. My basic thesis, then, is that Ovid presents his life's narrative as one punctuated by a series of diseases: first love, then exile, and finally, barbarism, each more serious than the previous one, and with interesting political consequences (which I shall only hint at, toward the end of this chapter).

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1   For the use of metaphor in elegy, see Kennedy 1993; there have also been a wide variety of studies on particular *topoi*: for *servitium amoris*, see Copley 1947; Lyne 1979; Murgatroyd 1981; McCarthy 1998; Fulkerson 2013; for *militia amoris*, Murgatroyd 1975; Cahoon 1988; McKeown 1995; Gale 1997; Greene 1998.

2   See Müller 1952, 58–80 and Holzenthal, 1967; more recently, Caston 2006.

I explore the implications of this thesis to suggest that Ovid presents his own "diseased" condition in exile as indicative of the world at large.

1 Elegiac Descriptions of Illness

First, vocabulary: the elegiac poet regularly refers to his feelings about the *puella* using language that is better suited, or at least more obviously suited, to speaking of disease. He is *aeger*,[3] his love is a *morbus*[4] which causes him *dolor*,[5] and he craves to be *sanus*.[6] (There is of course much more to be said here, but this brief sketch is indicative of the larger topic.) The *topos* of love as a malady is by no means the invention of the Roman elegists; note for example Ennius' *Medea*: *Medea animo aegro amore saevo saucia* ("Medea, wounded in her diseased spirit by savage love," *trag.* 216 Jocelyn). And naturally it goes back even further, to Greek literature.[7]

Despite the antiquity of the "love as disease" metaphor, Ovid's *Amores* will provide a useful starting place, for any number of reasons (1.2.1–5):

> esse quid hoc dicam, quod tam mihi dura videntur
> strata, neque in lecto pallia nostra sedent,
> et vacuus somno noctem, quam longa peregi,
> lassaque versati corporis ossa dolent?
> nam, puto, sentirem, siquo temptarer amore.

> What shall I say this is, when my bed seems uncomfortable, and the covers will not stay on the bed, and I pass the ever-so-long night, without sleep, and the worn-out bones of my restless body are in pain? For I would recognize it, I think, if I were being assailed by some love or other.

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3 In the poets, *aeger* mostly signifies mental anguish of various sorts, e.g. Prop. 2.4.11–12, Ov. *Rem.* 109–110 and 313–314, *Tr.* 3.8.25 and 33 and *passim* in the exile poetry; *contra*, *aeger* at Tib. 1.3.3 and Ov. *Rem.* 228 seemingly of physical illness.

4 *Morbus* of metaphorical illness in elegy at Cat. 76.25, Tib. 2.5.109–110, [Tib.] 3.10.1, Prop. 2.1.58, Ov. *Ars* 2.323, *Rem.* 81. As with all of this vocabulary, it is not possible fully to distinguish between literal and metaphorical uses; the *Remedia* itself is an extended play on the double meaning of the concept.

5 For amatory *dolor*, see Tib. 2.4.7, 2.5.110.

6 For *sanus* as the situation of not being in love, see Cat. 83.4; Prop. 1.1.26, 2.12.12, 3.24.18; Ov. *Rem.* 43–48, 101–102, 316, 493, 504, 546, 621, 794; *Met.* 7.18, 8.35, 9.542, 9.600; *F.* 4.7.

7 See e.g. Cyrino 1995, esp. 165–168.

Here Ovid plays on the fact that the trope is so well known that he need not even explain it.[8] He has a mysterious and painful sleeplessness: it isn't love, or is it? This passage is very well-known, and indeed, its throwaway character adumbrates the point I wish to make about the notion of love as disease. Without even having to think about it, we find ourselves agreeing that Ovid's mystery ailment probably is (elegiac) love, and we are not in the least surprised to find that we are right as the book continues.

The metaphor of love as a form of illness permeates Ovid's work. It is probably most prevalent within the amatory elegies in the *Remedia amoris*, starting from the very title of that work. The poet presents himself throughout the *Remedia* as a doctor who can cure ill-fated loves, and the notion recurs regularly throughout the text as a transition between sections and as a running theme. At the same time, it is very much an open question whether following the advice given in the *Remedia* really could benefit a patient suffering from an erotic malady.[9] And this conceit gains point from the fact that we know, and the ancients also knew, that the body is never really separate from the mind, so that any opposition between "physical" and "emotional" is always an artificial one: long-term disease is debilitating to soul as well as to body, and depression can prove fatal.[10] There is, then, danger as well as charm in the identification of the two: elegiac love really can kill you—as, indeed, the *Remedia* starts off by reminding us: Ovid wrote the poem, he says, to prevent elegy-related deaths (15–22).

So far, so good: illness is a rich metaphor for the feeling of being in love, especially the kind of love that elegy specializes in, which is precarious and uncertain. Sometimes, however, a physical illness does actually seem to occur within an elegiac poem, and it is often left up to the reader to discern whether to understand that illness as a real illness or a metaphorical one. As an example, there is a conflation of the two in *Heroides* 11, where Canace struggles for some time to understand her disease. She finally comes to see that she is in love (25–32):

> ipsa quoque incalui, qualemque audire solebam,
>   nescio quem sensi corde tepente deum.
> fugerat ore color, macies adduxerat artus,
>   sumebant minimos ora coacta cibos;

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8   McKeown ad loc. focuses more on Ovid's sleeplessness than on his pain; he notes that Ovid's sleeplessness makes it "an easy inference" that he is in love (note too his citations of amatory insomnia).

9   See e.g. Fulkerson 2004.

10   See Toohey 1992.

> nec somni faciles et nox erat annua nobis
>> et gemitum nullo laesa dolore dabam.
> Nec cur haec facerem, poteram mihi reddere causam
>> nec noram quid amans esset; at illud eram.

> I was hot and I kept hearing something; I felt some god in my heated heart. The color fled from my face, thinness stretched out my limbs; my mouth took only the smallest amounts of food, when forced to; nor was sleep easy, and the nights lasted a year for me, and I emitted groans, hurt by no pain. Nor was I able to explain, even to myself, why I did these things, nor did I know what it was to be in love. But I was just that.

This is a classic elegiac description of the symptoms of love, and I am willing to bet that every first reader would see it as such. And yet, Canace's sufferings are not psychosomatic in any simple way: we discover five lines later that she is pregnant. Ovid has drawn a portrait of a girl so innocent she does not know what love is (rather like his own ironic self-portrait in *Amores* 1.2), and intertwined it with the symptoms of her pregnancy in such a way that we are not sure whether she is suffering from lovesickness or morning sickness. Indeed, so naïve is Canace that she seems to have become pregnant without knowing quite how it happened. I want to emphasize that my aim, here and throughout, is not to look at the symptoms detailed in particular poems and to match them up with those the Romans understood to be indicative of pregnancy, or of specific ailments. Quite the contrary—I am deeply suspicious of the assumptions that would lie behind such a procedure, and doubt that it is possible to map the literary-textual in this way. I hope instead to show that in Ovid's early poetry, and also in his later poetry, we can find a regular conflation of lovesickness with other more somatic forms of disease. I also want to make the case that because Ovid uses the vocabulary of illness in such a broad series of ways, we cannot always tell whether we should understand this vocabulary as reflecting "actual" diseases suffered by protagonists, or as metaphorical ways of talking about the love-relationship, or perhaps even the recalcitrant process of writing poetry. That is, the metaphor is irrevocably divorced from its referent, to such a degree that it becomes almost meaningless, capable of standing for anything. (This is probably the case for all metaphor, or, at least, all Ovidian metaphor.) On the other hand, following Kleinman, I am also interested in discovering the meaning that inevitably lies underneath discussions of illness.[11]

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11   Kleinman, 144: "Meaning is inescapable: that is to say, illness always has meaning."

So, for instance, there are a number of examples in which it seems to be the case that the *puella* is physically ill, but we could also usefully understand her as being lovesick.[12] And then there is this (*Am.* 2.2.21–22):[13]

> ibit ad adfectam, quae non languebit, amicam:
>   visat! iudiciis aegra sit illa tuis.

> She will go to an afflicted friend, who will not really be abed—let her go! Let that one be sick as far as you are concerned.

This passage is difficult to understand as pure metaphor (though it must be "fictional" in some sense, since the point of the lines is that illness is being used as a pretense for an illicit meeting). Some of the time elegiac sickness is obviously metapoetic and refers to love and love poetry, while at other times it can be fitted into this mold only with difficulty.[14] As Ovid's poetry progresses, this disjunction between words and their "real" meanings becomes more extreme, and his situation in exile results in a figural "loss of language" which we might also describe as a kind of disease, in which Ovid eventually catches whatever it is that the Tomitians have, but also, more disturbingly for his contemporary readership, suggests that this contagious disease has spread from the barbarous borders of empire to its very center.

The *Heroides* provide us with another way in which Ovid uses this metaphor. In *Heroides* 5, Oenone, herself a healer, makes the clichéd observation that love is one of those diseases that is not curable by normal medical means (147–150):

> quaecumque herba potens ad opem radixque medendi
>   utilis in toto nascitur orbe, mea est.
> me miseram, quod amor non est medicabilis herbis!
>   deficior prudens artis ab arte mea.

> Whatever plant, powerful to help, whatever root useful to a healer comes up in the whole world, it is mine. Poor me, because love is not curable with plants! I am knowledgeable in this art but disappointed by my own art.

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12   E.g. Tib. 1.5.9–20; [Tib.] 3.17; Prop. 2.9.25–28; 2.28; Ov. *Ars* 2.315–336.

13   Cf. too *Am.* 3.11.23–24.

14   Here I am operating along similar lines as James 2003, who has discussed some of the somatic effects of the elegiac life on *puellae*, most especially pregnancy.

Ovid will later use this variant of the *topos* to good effect in the *Metamorphoses*, when Apollo, god of healing, discovers the same sad truth, twice.[15] So in both Ovid's epic and his elegy, the boundaries between metaphor and reality remain fuzzy and indeterminate.

2   Illness in Exile

Thus far I have reviewed some of the wide variety of ways in which the elegists, especially Ovid, use the notion of disease in their poetry. Indeed, the conceit is so prevalent that whenever we see illness mentioned in an elegy, we should probably think of it as at least potentially referring to love and love poetry, as well as to a somatic illness; the metaphor is simultaneously specific and general, such that its meaning is never quite secure. This, I suggest, is also true in Ovid's exilic poetry, and it may well be the case that illness is the primary metaphor that makes this transition to Tomis because it is not a freely chosen "hobby" in the way that hunting and fishing are; its potency for Ovid lies in its ability to victimize everyone, not merely the idle rich. Nagle (1980) first drew attention to the similarity between Ovid's bodily ailments in exile and his erotic ailments in Rome, and her work has been picked up and expanded upon by a number of scholars.[16] As with many features of Ovid's previous life as seen through the distorting lens of exile, it is difficult to determine the location of the line between biography and artifice; what had once been fanciful playacting becomes, in the world of Tomis, deadly serious. Or perhaps it does not.

His exilic life, Ovid tells us, is punctuated by a series of debilitating illnesses. These diseases (or perhaps a single disease with multiply recurring episodes; pleurisy and bipolar disease have both been suggested) are both similar to and different from his earlier descriptions of sickness, not least because in their new context they raise questions about poetic persona and representations of reality. Then again, I have suggested that they also raise these questions in their old context. On the one hand, there may be nothing surprising about his bouts of illness in Tomis: we are assured by the poet that he lives in a perpetual win-

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15   Cf. *Met.* 1.523–524, 10.189.

16   Nagle 1980, 24–70, who terms the equivalence of *dolores exilii* to *dolores amoris* "not occasional or accidental but thorough and intentional" (63). Specific symptoms: weariness, sleeplessness, loss of appetite and weight, pallor (61–62). Videau-Delibes 1991 discusses the exilic changes to Ovid's body at 275–307, with illness treated at 316–331. See too Williams 1994, 124–127 and Colakis 1987 on love imagery in the exile poetry.

ter, forced to defrost his wine every day, clad in furs as a safeguard against the weather—who wouldn't catch a cold in such inhospitable circumstances? Not to mention that he is estranged from all he knows and loves and in fear for his personal safety. This alienating situation is likely to lead to depression, which might well lead to sickness. Further, if the poet is genuinely ill (whatever might be meant by "genuinely"), the all-encompassing nature of metaphor is such that he has no choice but to use language that had already been co-opted for erotic sufferings to describe his now physical symptoms.

But on the other hand, scholarship on the exilic poetry has begun to notice how Ovid regularly conflates aspects of his Tomitian life with his life at Rome: the exiled poet suggests that he cannot but write an entirely different kind of poetry given his different circumstances, but he does this in a meter which is identical to his pre-exilic favorite, and which contains numerous references both explicit and implicit to aspects of his earlier poetry. To take one of many examples, the poet who had cheerfully engaged in *militia amoris* now finds himself forced to take up real arms against the barbarian enemies of Rome.[17] Then there is Jeffrey Fish's reading of the exilic poetry as Ovid's attempt to put into action the advice he gave others in the *Remedia amoris*, in order to force himself to "fall out of love" with the city of Rome.[18] This fits in with my own understanding of the inescapable nature of the world of elegy. And the refashioning of the naughty elegiac *domina* into Ovid's sober if excessively timid wife is also a noteworthy development in Roman elegiac poetry, as is the brilliant casting of Augustus as the quasi-*puella* (or worse, the *ianitor*) keeping Ovid "locked out" of his beloved Rome.[19]

3   The Symptoms of the Disease

I want now to cast a medical eye over the ten or so exilic poems in which Ovid describes his own bodily sufferings using the language of illness. The short version is that Ovid's prognosis is not a good one. The nine books of "auto-biographical" exile poetry (i.e. not the *Ibis*) cast the poet as what we in the modern world we might term clinically depressed, and images of shipwreck,

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17   Williams 1994, 31, who notes that the military metaphors of elegy become for Ovid frighteningly real.
18   Fish 2004.
19   For bibliography on Augustus as *puella*, see Videau-Delibes 1991, 233–264 and Drucker 1977.

death, and funerals pervade the text.[20] But this chapter confines itself to passages that specifically mention bodily symptoms or use somatic metaphors, i.e. to disease in its narrowest and most explicit sense. Our method will be a casebook study: like the Hippocratic doctors or Galen, we shall scan the exilic poetry in the way a doctor scans a patient, alert for alarming symptoms, drawing connections between apparently disparate events.

At first all is well. Or rather, nothing is well, except Ovid himself. *Tristia* 1 details the journey outward, and *Tristia* 2 is an open letter to Augustus; neither contains a hint of physical deterioration. It is not until *Tristia* 3, when Ovid has had some time to adjust to his new life, that the theme of disease becomes prevalent. The beginning of *Tristia* 3.3 details the poet's illness (3.3.1–24):

> haec mea si casu miraris epistula quare
> > alterius digitis scripta sit, aeger eram.
> aeger in extremis ignoti partibus orbis,
> > incertusque meae paene salutis eram.
> quem mihi nunc animum dira regione iacenti
> > inter Sauromatas esse Getasque putes?
> nec caelum patior, nec aquis adsuevimus istis,
> > terraque nescioquo non placet ipsa modo.
> non domus apta satis, non hic cibus utilis aegro,
> > nullus, Apollinea qui levet arte malum,
> non qui soletur, non qui labentia tarde
> > tempora narrando fallat, amicus adest.
> lassus in extremis iaceo populisque locisque,
> > et subit adfecto nunc mihi, quicquid abest.
> omnia cum subeant, vincis tamen omnia, coniunx,
> > et plus in nostro pectore parte tenes.
> te loquor absentem, te vox mea nominat unam;
> > nulla venit sine te nox mihi, nulla dies.
> quin etiam sic me dicunt aliena locutum,
> > ut foret amenti nomen in ore tuum.
> si iam deficiam suppressaqua lingua palate
> > vix instillato restituenda mero,
> nuntiet huc aliquis dominam venisse, resurgam
> > spesque tui nobis causa vigoris erit.

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20   On the death imagery in 3.3, see Owen 1915 ad loc. and Evans 1983, 54–55 with reference to Tib. 1.3: funerals are women's job, but funerary imagery is also a regular topos of the unhappy elegist (see Petersen 2005, 22–25 for the two in the exile poetry).

If by chance you wonder why my letter is written by the hand of another, I have been sick—sick at the furthest end of the unknown world, uncertain of my safety. What do you think is my state of mind, lying in this dread region among the Sauromatae and the Getae? I cannot bear the weather, and I have not become used to this water, and the land itself is somehow displeasing. There is no house suitable, no food helpful to a sick man, nobody who might assuage my ills with the art of Apollo, no friend to console me, to beguile with talking the time, passing oh-so-slowly. Worn out, I lie among this remote people and in this remote place, and whatever is absent occurs to me in my weakened state. Everything occurs to me, but you, my wife, beat all, and you hold the biggest spot in my heart. I speak to you though you are not here, and my voice names only you. Neither night nor day comes without you. They say that when I was speaking strangely, your name came to my delirious mouth. If I were dying, tongue stuck to my palate and revived—barely—with a drop of wine, let someone announce that my lady has come: I shall rise up; hope of you will be a source of strength for me.

The letter, addressed to Ovid's wife, has been dictated to another, which was common practice in antiquity but here serves as an immediate cause for alarm: Ovid, who had bravely (or foolishly) continued to write his poetry and send it to Rome, is now silenced by his illness. We are reminded of his contingent status: despite grandiose claims of poetic immortality (e.g. *Met.* 15.878–879), the poet turns out to be encased in a frail human shell. But the opening lines also connect this poem to *Heroides* 15, which begins by worrying whether the handwriting, and with it the poet Sappho, is still recognizable to its addressee (15.1–4):

> ecquid, ut aspecta est studiosae littera dextrae,
>   protinus est oculis cognita nostra tuis?
> an, nisi legisses auctoris nomina Sapphus,
>   hoc breve nescires unde venire opus?

> Hey—when you looked at the letter written by my eager right hand, was it immediately recognizable to your eyes as mine? Or would you not have known whence this short work comes if you hadn't read the name of its author, Sappho?

Of course Ovid is not Sappho and of course his wife still knows him—how many correspondents does she have in Tomis, after all? But at the same time,

the Sapphic parallel suggests that Ovid has been so affected, so bodily altered, by his experiences on the edge of the world that, in the manner of his heroines and some of the victims of metamorphosis in his epic poem, he is no longer confident of his own identity and he needs his addressee to confirm it for him. This point prefigures a later part of my argument, in which Ovid's words themselves become subject to distortion. For now, at least, it is only their physical appearance, different from before, which causes alarm. The poet is sick, *aeger*, and *incertus salutis* (2–4). The former phrase we have seen before, but the latter is especially interesting, given that it is a phrase triply applicable to Ovid, who is, if we are to believe him, (1) suffering from a bodily ailment, (2) uncertain of his safety in his barbaric locale, and (3) hoping for, but uncertain of a relocation to some more salubrious spot. And given that he exists for his readers in Rome (and of course, for us too) only through language, it makes good sense that he is keenly aware, and is training his readers to be aware, of any verbal or visual miscues in that medium. Beyond this, Ovid's fretful "patient" persona is similar to the ways out-of-sorts elegiac lovers find fault with their surroundings (see e.g. *Amores* 1.6, where Ovid is cross with the *ianitor*, and *Amores* 1.12, where the tablets are to blame for a negative response). Then, toward the end of the passage from *Tr.* 3.3, the poet explores an alternate version of himself who is even more afflicted than he actually is at the moment, and then imaginatively brings his wife to Tomis, whereupon that very sick Ovid is miraculously restored to health. The topic of Ovid's wife in his exile poetry is a complex one,[21] and for our purposes perhaps all that need be said is that whatever is actually wrong with Ovid here, however authentically somatic his ailment may be, it is nonetheless still cured by the quintessential elegiac panacea, namely, some quality time with the *puella* in question. Much has changed, of course, from the elegiac lovesickness of Ovid's earlier work, but much has also remained the same: at this point in Ovid's exile, language still has the possibility of reflecting reality, and it also retains some capacity to shape reality.

Two years later, at least according to the traditional dating of the books, things are not much better. This time, however, through the sympathy which characterizes their exilic relationship, Ovid envisions his wife instead of himself as ill (*Tr.* 4.3.21–28):[22]

> ecquid, ubi incubuit iusto mens aegra dolori
> lenis ab admonito pectore somnus abit?

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21   For (mythic) wives in elegy, see Öhrman 2008, and for Ovid's wife, Petersen 2005.
22   See Öhrman 2008, 166 for discussion of this passage.

tunc subeunt curae, dum te lectusque locusque
        tangit at oblitam non sinit esse mei,
et veniunt aestus, et nox inmensa videtur,
        fessaque iactati corporis ossa dolent?
non equidem dubito, quin haec et cetera fiant,
        detque tuus maesti signa doloris amor.

And when your ailing heart broods upon your own grief, does gentle sleep
depart from your worried breast? Do cares arise, while the bed and the
location touch you, and forbid you to forget me; does fever come; does the
night seem endless; do the worn-out bones of your thrown-about body
ache? I do not doubt that these and other things happen, and that your
love gives you the signs of sorrowing grief.

Ovid's wife is now the one who is sleepless and aching. And the language with
which she tosses and turns in her empty bed is reminiscent of Sappho's love-
sickness in *Heroides* 15.[23] However discreet *this* poem may be (the other is
extremely explicit; cf. *Her*. 15.123–134), the windowpane reference suggests that
Ovid's wife suffers from the same sort of elegiac or erotic malady as does the
exiled poet himself, and the elegiac use of absence to provoke quasi-erotic fan-
tasies, seen already in *Tristia* 3.3, recurs in this poem.[24] The two quintessential
situations of elegy, love and suffering, are here tied together in a novel way.
Because of the physical distance between Ovid and his wife, language becomes
the sole method of demonstrating the "genuineness" of the relationship; it clar-
ifies the problem—separation—but also provides a temporary solution. It is
not a linear progression, but we might usefully characterize this as a further
step away from reality and toward language: Ovid's wife exists for us, and for
him, only as a refraction of his words, and because of the damaged nature of
his own poetry and person, he cannot envision her otherwise than as diseased.

Tristia 5.2, written again to Ovid's wife, details a sort of improvement, but
suggests that Ovid's illness is only in remission (5.2.1–10):

ecquid ubi e Ponto noua venit epistula, palles,
        et tibi sollicita soluitur illa manu?
pone metum, valeo; corpusque, quod ante laborum
        impatiens nobis invalidumque fuit,

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23   As Petersen 2005 notes.
24   Petersen 2005, 28.

sufficit, atque ipso vexatum induruit usu.
    an magis infirmo non vacat esse mihi?
mens tamen aegra iacet, nec tempore robora sumpsit,
    affectusque animi, qui fuit ante, manet.
quaeque mora spatioque suo coitura putavi
    vulnera non aliter quam modo facta dolent.

When my latest letter arrives from Pontus, do you grow pale, and is it opened by an anxious hand? Put aside your fear: I am healthy, and my body, which before could not suffer toils and was weak, now suffices, and, harassed, has grown tougher from the experience itself. Or is it rather that I do not have the leisure to be ill? But still, my mind lies ill, and it has not recovered strength over time, and the affliction of my soul which existed before, remains. And the wounds I thought would join together in their own time hurt no differently than as if they had just been made.

That he is not ill right at this moment, in fact, seems to come to the poet as a surprise. Still, 5.2 presents an Ovid who seems to find even illness an unaffordable luxury. A disjunction thereby arises again between mind and body: the poet's body is managing to recover, but his mind, which continues to be treated by Ovid as a semi-distinct entity with its own symptoms, is getting worse.[25] Note too that this poem starts with the hint that Ovid's malady, whatever it is, is so contagious that his wife may catch it simply by opening his letter.[26]

    Tristia 5.13 innovates in being, at least apparently, directed toward a particular individual who is not Ovid's wife (5.13.1–14, 33–34):

hanc tuus e Getico mittit tibi Naso salutem,
    mittere si quisquam, quo caret ipse, potest.
aeger enim traxi contagia corpore mentis,
    libera tormento pars mihi ne qua vacet.
perque dies multos lateris cruciatibus uror;
    scilicet immodico frigore laesit hiems.
si tamen ipse vales, aliqua nos parte valemus:
    quippe mea est umeris fulta ruina tuis.
quid, mihi cum dederis ingentia pignora, cumque
    per numeros omnes hoc tueare caput,

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25   We might even compare Ovid's plight to Propertius' in 1.1.7–8, where a whole year has passed without respite from his Cynthia-caused illness.

26   See Petersen 2005, 35 on the ways this poem too is reminiscent of the *Heroides*.

quod tua me raro solatur epistula, peccas,
　　remque piam praestas, sed mihi verba negas?
hoc, precor, emenda: quod si correxeris unum,
　　nullus in egregio corpore naevus erit.
…
accipe quo semper finitur epistula verbo,
(atque meis distent ut tua fata!) "vale."

"Health," your Naso sends you from the Getic land, if anyone can send
what he himself has not. Ill, I drew the contagion of my mind into my
body, lest any part of me, lacking in torment, be free. For days now I have
suffered tortures in my side, which the winter harms with its immoder-
ate cold. But if you are well, then I also am, in part, insofar as my ruin
was shored up on your shoulders. But although you have given me lavish
pledges, when you have looked after me in every way, you do me a wrong
in that only rarely does a letter from you console me: you offer a pious
deed but deny to me its documentation. I beg you, repair this: and if you
correct this alone, there will be no blemish on your outstanding body ….
Take this word with which a letter always ends—and let your fates differ
from mine—be well.

The poet's disease has now spread back from the mind to the body, afflict-
ing him in particular in his side, *latus*. This provides some of the evidence
for those who diagnose Ovid as suffering from pleurisy (*OLD* 1d), but I, like
Williams (1994, 123–124), am more suspicious, remembering that in *Amores*
1.5.22 Ovid was especially taken with the *puella*'s *latus* and that in 1.13.5–6 he
has her pressed against his own *latus*.[27] So too, the *egregio corpore* of this poem
(14) is not quite the same as *in toto nusquam corpore menda* of *Amores* 1.5.18,
but the metaphor here is strained enough to draw attention to itself, and to
provoke questions about the identity of the poem's addressee, and of Ovid's
relationship with that person. Ovid seems here to be caught in an erotic and
linguistic trap that he has himself laid.

When we move to the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid begins to name his addressees,
and many scholars think they find in this collection an increasing resignation
on the part of the poet to his fate. In this corpus, the notion of exile as dis-
ease continues, with some important changes. For instance, *Ex Ponto* 1.3 has

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27　See too Nagle 1980, 62: "In *Tr.* 5.13 Ovid uses diction appropriate to love-sickness in telling
　　a friend that the cold weather has made him ill." The ambiguity of *Am.* 1.13.5 is more or
　　less resolved by 1.13.6, but the misleading vocabulary remains.

Ovid imagining himself as a wounded Philoctetes, healed through the words of Rufinus (1.3.5–10, 15–22):[28]

> utque Machaoniis Poeantius artibus heros
>   lenito medicam vulnere sensit opem,
> sic ego mente iacens et acerbo saucius ictu
>   admonitu coepi fortior esse tuo:
> et iam deficiens sic ad tua verba revixi,
>   ut solet infuso vena redire mero.
> ...
> tempore ducetur longo fortasse cicatrix:
>   horrent admotas vulnera cruda manus.
> non est in medico semper relevetur ut aeger:
>   interdum docta plus valet arte malum.
> cernis ut e molli sanguis pulmone remissus
>   ad Stygias certo limite ducat aquas.
> afferat ipse licet sacras Epidaurius herbas,
>   sanabit nulla vulnera cordis ope.

> As the hero, son of Poias, felt medical aid on his soothed wound from the art of Machaon, so I, lying wounded in my soul by a harsh blow, begin to grow strong at your warning, and, already failing, I nonetheless came back to life at your words, just as the pulse usually revives when wine is applied .... Perhaps a scar will form in time: new wounds shrink from the application of hands. A sick man cannot always be cured by a doctor: sometimes suffering is greater than the learned art. You see how the blood from a tender lung leads to the Stygian waters on a straight route. Even if the Epidaurian himself brings sacred herbs, he will be able to cure with his skill no wounds of the heart.

In this poem, despite a certain degree of optimism, Ovid makes clear that he does not see genuine healing, or even a more permanent amelioration, as a real possibility.[29] Unless, of course, he is permitted to leave Tomis, the locus of

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28   As Evans notes (1983, 131), the imagery in this poem is sometimes interpreted to signify that Rufinus was involved in the medical profession; I would suggest instead that it is part of Ovid's larger point throughout the exile poetry.

29   See too *Pont.* 1.3.87–88, where he says that if he could be healed, Rufinus' teaching would do it. The implication, of course, is that he cannot be healed. See too below, n. 40, for more on Philoctetes' importance to the exile poetry.

his misery. Surprisingly, *docta arte* in line 18 of this poem refers to medicine rather than words, which raises the disturbing suggestion that poetry—Ovid's poetry, touted since at least the *Remedia amoris* as the one failsafe means of recovery from erotic maladies—is no longer efficacious, or perhaps, is finally recognized as never having been efficacious (see Hejduk 2011). Finally, and in a related vein, this poem, by substituting Rufinus for the *puella* or for Ovid's wife, suggests that the elegiac paradigm is wearing thin, that Ovid's attempts at curing himself through elegiac means have become increasingly frantic—and even less efficacious.[30] And it may also reinforce the impression that Ovid is losing control over his language (as, indeed, does the reference to Philoctetes, who became inarticulate through his sufferings). It will be clear that I disagree with those who see this poem as displaying signs of improvement in Ovid's condition.

Later in that same book, in *Ex Ponto* 1.10, Ovid explains his symptoms to Flaccus (1.10.1–14, 21–34):

> Naso suo profugus mittit tibi, Flacce, salutem,
>   mittere rem si quis qua caret ipse potest.
> longus enim curis vitiatum corpus amaris
>   non patitur vires languor habere suas.
> nec dolor ullus adest nec febribus uror anhelis,
>   et peragit soliti vena tenoris iter.
> os hebes est positaeque mouent fastidia mensae
>   et queror, invisi cum venit hora cibi.
> quod mare, quod tellus appone, quod educat aer,
>   nil ibi, quod nobis esuriatur, erit.
> nectar et ambrosiam, latices epulasque deorum,
>   det mihi formosa nava Iuuenta manu:
> non tamen exacuet torpens sapor ille palatum,
>   stabit et in stomacho pondus inerte diu.
> ...
> is quoque qui gracili cibus est in corpore, somnus,
>   non alit officio corpus inane suo.
> sed vigilo vigilantque mei sine fine dolores,
>   quorum materiam dat locus ipse mihi.

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30   On this poem, see Nagle 1980, 62: "Ovid equates his homesickness with frustrated erotic desire by using the theme of love as an incurable disease" (note too her reference to Prop 2.1.57–58).

vix igitur possis uisos agnoscere uultus
    quoque ierit quaeras qui fuit ante color.
parvus in exiles sucus mihi peruenit artus
    membraque sunt cera pallidiora nova.
non haec inmodico contraxi damna Lyaeo:
    scis mihi quam solae paene bibantur aquae.
non epulis oneror: quarum si tangar amore,
    est tamen in Geticis copia nulla locis.
nec vires adimit Veneris damnosa voluptas:
    non solet in maestos illa venire toros.

Naso the exile sends health to you, Flaccus, if anybody can send a thing which he lacks. Lengthy languor has not allowed my body, worn-out by bitter cares, to regain its accustomed strength. There is no pain, nor do I burn with panting fevers, and my pulse takes its journey with the accustomed rhythm. My mouth is sluggish, and I feel disgust for meals placed in front of me, and I complain when the time for wretched food comes. Place before me whatever the sea, the land, the air provide, and none of it will I hanker after. Let diligent Juventas give me nectar and ambrosia with her beautiful hand, refreshment and feasts of the gods: that flavor will not sharpen my lethargic taste-buds, and it will sit for a long time, a solid weight in my stomach. […] Sleep, like food to a thin body, does not support my meagre body by doing its work. I am awake, and my pains are awake too, always, and my very location gives them substance. Barely would you recognize my face, if you saw it, and you would ask where my color has gone, which was formerly there. A meager sap makes its way through my emaciated limbs, and they are paler than new wax. I have not brought this harm upon myself by too much wine: you know I drink pretty much only water. Nor am I weighed down by banquets—and even if I were touched by such desire, there's no abundance in Getic locales. Nor does the ruinous pleasure of Love take my strength: she does not usually come to sad beds.

In this poem, the poet complains that he does *not* suffer from various physical complaints. Rather, his disease is mental or emotional, but, he clarifies, it has nothing to do with love.[31] Yet the allusions to Sappho's fragment 31 in

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31   See Evans 1983, 137 for the argument that Ovid's focus here on loss of appetite reflects Flaccus' own reputation for gluttony.

lines 27–28, and indeed, even the explicit disavowal of love at the end of the passage I have quoted, do not quite dispel suspicions.[32] Language itself has been irrevocably contaminated by Ovid's previous poetry, and this contamination continues to ramify in ways he is no longer master of. Like his physical *corpus*, ailing and isolated, Ovid's exilic *corpus* is starting to show signs of deterioration. This is, of course, a variation on Williams' 1994 argument that Ovid (ironically) presents himself as progressively losing the ability to write Latin, but I think it is also a sign of a more profound disturbance which the poet perceives in his world.

Ovid's illness next recurs in *Ex Ponto* 3.1, once again addressed to the poet's wife (3.1.67–72):

> cumque ego deficiam nec possim ducere currum,
>   fac tu sustineas debile sola iugum.
> ad medicum specto venis fugientibus aeger:
>   ultima pars animae dum mihi restat, ades;
> quodque ego praestarem, si te magis ipse valerem,
>   id mihi, cum valeas fortius ipsa, refer.

> And since I am failing, and am not able to lead the chariot, make sure you alone hold up the feeble yoke. I, sick, look at the doctor with my pulse failing: be here as the last part of my life remains to me; and what I would offer, if I were stronger than you, since you are stronger, bring it to me yourself.

This poem has received more scholarly attention than is characteristic of the exile poetry, for it threatens Ovid's wife, apologizes for its tone, begs her to entreat Livia and instructs her how to do so, and simultaneously suggests that her place is not in Rome but in exile with her husband.[33] The lines above contain what we could call his dying request, that she be present at his deathbed. But Ovid has already made clear, in *Tristia* 3.3.24, that his wife's presence would instantly cure him even from death: note in particular the repetition of *deficiam* (67) from the earlier poem (21). Interestingly, the metaphor he uses for his impending death, *ducere currum* (67), is one that had served him (and other

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32   As Evans notes, "Ovid states that his deterioration is not the result of excessive eating and drinking or of love (a direct acknowledgement that he is playing with elegiac themes), but of the bad weather and atmosphere" (1983, 137–138).

33   Among others, see Petersen 2005, 55–59, Westerhold 2016, and Öhrman 2008, 181–187.

poets, naturally) to structure a poetic journey, particularly in the *Ars amatoria*. Once again, Ovid's poetry and his body are conflated.[34]

The next poem, and our final one, is addressed to Cotta (*Pont.* 3.2.1–4, 13–14):

> quam legis a nobis missam tibi, Cotta, salutem.
> > Missa sit ut vere perveniatque, precor.
> namque meis sospes multum cruciatibus aufers
> > utque sit in nobis pars bona salva facis.
> ...
> quis non e timidis aegri contagia vitat
> > vicinum metuens ne trahat inde malum?

> The health you read sent to you by me, Cotta, I pray that it really reach you. For knowing that you are safe takes away much from my tortures, and you make it that the best part of me is healthy .... Who among timid men does not flee the contagion of the sick, fearing lest he himself contract a nearby disease from there?

This poem begins with a standard pun on the Latin formula of greeting (*salutem*, also the word for health; see Williams 1994, 122–123 with notes), and this authorizes attention to the main subject of the poem, which is the story of Orestes and Pylades, told to him by a Gete. In the course of this poem, Ovid admits to having learned the language of the barbarians (note *Tr.* 5.7.56, one of his ethnographic poems, which has him speaking *Sarmatico ... more*).[35] Given that this poem contains an explicit foray into Tomitian mythology, we might, indeed, identify it as the place in which Ovid discovers that he has caught the final, fatal illness, that of becoming a barbarian himself. Eventually, or so the much-debated *Ex Ponto* 4.13 tells us, Ovid succumbs to his disease and writes a Getic panegyric (4.13.17–22):[36]

> nec te mirari, si sint vitiosa, decebit
> > carmina, quae faciam paene poeta Getes.
> a, pudet, et Getico scripsi sermone libellum,
> > structaque sunt nostris barbara verba modis:

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34 See Natoli 2017 on speech and speech-loss as essential to Ovid's exilic persona.

35 See again Williams 1994 on the ways Ovid figures his "poetic decline" in exile as a loss of *vires* and *ingenium*, which leads to linguistic deterioration, and Casali 1997 on the inevitable convergence of barbarian locale and barbarian poet.

36 See Williams 1994, 91–99 on this question.

> et placuere (gratare mihi) coepique poetae
>   inter inhumanos nomen habere Getas.

> Nor will it suit you to be astonished, if the poems are terrible, which I,
> practically a Getic poet, have made. O I am ashamed—I have written a
> booklet in the Getic language, and barbarian words have been fitted to our
> metre, and I have begun to find favor—congratulate me!—and to have the
> name of poet among the inhuman Getes.

In just the same way as diseased elements in a body can take over from healthy
ones, Ovid's Getic voice comes to silence his Latin one—or so the silence after
Ex Ponto 4 encourages us to think.

4   Decline and Fall

I offer a few thoughts by way of conclusion. Ovid's decision to continue writing
poetry from Tomis means that readers are almost certain to compare his past
with his present. And he encourages the comparison by engaging with language
that had been meaningful in an elegiac context, and which subtly changes its
referents in the exilic context. The poet who was once willing to tell readers
everything, even about his own impotence, continues to bare all, writing what
look like personal poems about debility to his wife and a few close friends. He
allows these figures to experience his illness vicariously, and tries them vari-
ously out in the role of the *puella*, the only one who can cure him.[37] And yet,
these exilic poems are *not* personal letters, they are public pronouncements:
Ovid is broadcasting to the whole world his disease, the disease of losing Rome
and then losing *Romanitas*. As is typical, the poet simultaneously manages to
have things both ways: using the metaphors of love and disease, he eloquently
proclaims his own voicelessness. Readers must be suspicious, not least because,
as Elaine Scarry notes, it is always difficult for us to believe in the pain of others
(1987, *passim*).
    The incantatory quality of Ovid's exilic *carmina* is also at play here: Ovid, we
might say, has attempted to switch remedial treatments, only to discover (as
had his elegiac lover-pupil from the *Ars* and the *Remedia*) that they are all really
the same. Perhaps too, like (Ovid's version of) Apollo, we are meant to see Ovid

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37   See n. 19 for the intermittent ways Augustus also fills this role. The question of Ovid's
      intent—does he really think writing (these) poems will change his circumstances?—is
      a vexed one, and too complex for treatment here.

as a figure who cannot heal himself through poetry or medicine, which also turn out to be the same thing. Matters are confused even further by the ways the letter serves as an absent presence throughout antiquity, drawing attention to physical distance as it attempts to bridge it: for Ovid, who can only be healed by return to his community, the act of writing may exacerbate his condition, rather than mitigating it.[38]

So too, the exile poetry offers, through the metaphor of illness, a doubled vision of Tomis as an anti-Rome, exactly the opposite of the way the world should be, but simultaneously bearing disturbing similarities to the world from which Ovid has been excluded; everything is eerily familiar despite its apparent difference. Just as, in Susan Sontag's words, disease "comes without knocking," so Ovid's arbitrary repositioning in the world can be seen as the first of a series of corporeal assaults. In the poetry written from exile, Ovid reacts to this disorder, refracting his new somatic reality through the language of disease and decay.[39]

The eerie similarities between Rome and Tomis, between Ovid before the fall and Ovid after it, lead me to conclude that the poet is offering himself up not simply as a negative exemplum, but as a symptom of what the world has become. We might understand his own increasing debility as the inevitable, if unforeseen, result of doing something foolish: if you mess with Augustus, you will get frozen out, literally. But Ovid's disease(s) can also be seen as metonymic for the increasing abnormality in the order of things under Augustus. And it is not simply barbarism that Ovid experiences at the edges of the world, but an entirely new corporeal reality. Given the poet's lifelong interest in the plasticity of the human body and his own exilic focus on lived realities, we might even want to see this relentless depiction of debility and suffering as a claim that, even at Rome, even for the "normal," life has now become impossible.[40] Ovid's bodily and textual *corpora* both, we are told, reflect his own aberration, but, more horrifyingly, they may also suggest that there is nothing left but

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38   For the importance of letters as simultaneously increasing and decreasing closeness in Ovid's poetry, see Labate 1984 and Hardie 2002.

39   This is parallel to the case Williams 1996 makes about Ovid's mental debility (and its root causes in Augustus' cruelty). We may also want to think through the implications of Ovid's focus on bodies for the Neronian, and especially the Senecan, interest in the functions of suffering (see e.g. Edwards 1999, 252–253 for further thoughts on this).

40   See too Worman 2000 on the similar way Sophocles' Philoctetes is situated: he is the disabled/diseased/voiceless one, which has led to his loss of community, and yet his abnormality is shown to be preferable to the "normal" Greek way of doing things. It is surely no accident that Ovid invokes Philoctetes in *Pont.* 1.3, where I have suggested that he undermines a "happy" ending to that story.

aberration. And it is only fair, given Ovid's repeated and repetitive portrayal of bodies that are transformed against their wills, and his own relentless interest in his personal corporeality,[41] that he eventually occupies the role of one of his own metamorphosed characters, forever—and horrifically—altered but perhaps not, despite what he might claim, entirely silenced.

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41   See Hexter 1999 on Ovid's fascination with his own body.

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PART 2

Death and the Artist

∴

Frigid Landscapes and Literary Frigidity in Ovid's Exile Poetry

Alison Keith

Scholarly discussion of the landscape of Ovid's Tomitan exile, and in particular the extensive description in *Tristia* 3.10, has primarily taken the form of biographical criticism out of an interest in the material conditions of Ovid's exile; in the cross-cultural contacts between uncivilized Getans, cultured Greeks, and imperial Romans; in the dangers of sailing and travel on the margins of the Roman empire; etc.[1] A welcome development of the last twenty-five years or so, however, has been to turn away from this sort of biographically-inflected criticism towards a more nuanced literary criticism, in an exploration of the poetics of Ovid's *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.[2] My study continues the contemporary investigation of the literary metaphors at play in the exile poetry, but from the perspective of rhetorical theory, which I take to be complementary rather than antithetical to poetic and literary theory.[3] Here I consider Ovid's deployment of rhetorical terminology in the third book of *Tristia* in relation to his poetics of exilic composition, especially as they are set out in the programmatic opening and closing poems of the book (*Tr.* 3.1, 14). Five related themes of the exile poetry, which have been much discussed in the critical literature on the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, will particularly engage our attention: 1) the supposed monotony of tone and subject in the exilic collections;[4] 2) Ovid's isolation as a Latin-speaker in Getic Tomis and the resulting decline of his Latin;[5] 3) the harsh cold of the land to which the poet has been relegated, the perpetual winter of Tomis;[6] 4) the poet's ill health in this insalubrious setting;[7] and 5) the

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1 Syme 1978; Podosinov 1981 and 1987.

2 Nagle 1980; Evans 1983; Helzle 1988; Claassen 1990; Williams 1994.

3 Cf. Cic. *de Orat.* 1.16.70, *Orat.* 97–99; Sen. Rhet. *Contr.* 2.2.8, 9.6.16. For the close links between rhetorical and poetic theory and practice, see Selden 1992; Keith 1999.

4 *Tr.* 3.1.9–10; 3.14.27–36.

5 *Tr.* 3.1.17–18; 3.3.46, 63–64; 3.4.49–50; 3.8.37–38; 3.9.1–2; 3.10.1–6; 3.11.7–10; 3.12.39–54; 3.14.29–52.

6 *Tr.* 3.2.1–8; 3.4.47–52; 3.8.29–30; 3.10.7–50; 3.12.1–4, 27–30; 3.13.11–12.

7 *Tr.* 3.2.; 3.3; 3.8; on the theme of the poet's health, see chapter 5 by Fulkerson in this volume.

resulting decline in the quality of his poetic talent.[8] All these themes, introduced in the third book of the *Tristia* and repeatedly sounded throughout the last two books of the *Tristia* and the four subsequent books of the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, correlate significantly to contemporary discussion of rhetorical "Asianism." I argue that Ovid deploys this rhetorical lexicon in the poetry composed in Tomis to mark a new stylistic "excess" appropriate to the geographical location of its production, in a departure from or, at the least, a qualification of, the standards of Callimachean elegance and restraint to which his earlier elegiac poetry adhered.[9]

1   Ovid's Exile

I begin by noting the traditional biographical readings of Ovid's exile poetry in order to lay the groundwork for a rhetorico-literary interpretation of *Tristia* 3. Until the early 20th century, no one doubted the historicity of Ovid's exile on the evidence of his so-called exile poetry—the five books of *Tristia* and four books of *Epistulae ex Ponto*—in which the poet represents himself as having been banished from Rome towards the end of 8 CE by the emperor Augustus and relegated to Tomis, modern Costanza in Romania, a superficially Hellenized city on the Black Sea that had come under Roman control only late in the 1st century BCE and was located about as far away from the imperial capital as was geographically possible at the time. In antiquity, the elder Pliny, Statius, Jerome, and pseudo-Aurelius Victor all mention Ovid's relegation in 8 CE, but in the 20th century several scholars have voiced skepticism concerning the fact of Ovid's exile on the Black Sea, adducing a variety of reasons for disbelief.[10] Despite my confidence in the historicity of Ovid's exile, I am

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8   *Tr.* 3.14.

9   On the Asianist controversy, see Leeman 1963; van den Berg 2021. On the elegists' interest in Atticism, see Keith 1999.

10   In 1923, the Dutch scholar J.J. Hartman denied altogether that Ovid had been relegated. His skepticism was endorsed by F. Lenz (1934) and has been accepted by a long line of Dutch scholars. Fr. Dr. O. Janssen (1951) argued that Ovid's exile was fiction rather than historical fact, while another Dutch scholar, Cornelis Verhoeven (1979), "devoted a whole chapter (172–197) [of his book *De schaduw van één haar* (= *The Shadow of One Hair*)] to the poetry of Ovid, and strongly pleaded for a fictional reading of Ovid's poems from exile" (Hofmann 1987). J.C. Thibault in his exhaustive consideration of *The Mystery of Ovid's Exile* hints at his acceptance of this theory (Hartman 1923a, 1923b; Lenz 1934. col. 1273; Thibault 1964, 142 n.) but the English scholar A.D. Fitton-Brown (1985) has put the case most fully, arguing that Ovid's poetry betrays no actual first-hand knowledge of the historical Tomis and that ancient authors like Tacitus and Suetonius would have mentioned his relegation if it had

not altogether unsympathetic to the skepticism of these 20th-century scholars. For while I find their conclusions misguided, they have well and amply documented the pervasively literary texture of Ovid's exile poetry in general and the rhetoricity of his descriptions of Tomis in particular. As Fitton-Brown himself remarks, concerning the incoherent account of Ovid's trip from Italy to the Black Sea in the poems of the first book of *Tristia*, "there were rhetorical and literary advantages in depicting the voyage as he does" (1985, 19). Indeed, J.-M. Claassen describes the plot of *Tristia* 1, composed in his first year of exile, purportedly on the journey from Rome to Tomis (December of 8 CE to the summer of 9 CE), as "an elegiac epic."[11] Ovid's determinedly literary focus in *Tristia* 1 is conspicuously continued in the second work from exile, *Tristia* 2, composed in the fall/winter after his arrival in Tomis (9–10 CE), which offers an *apologia* not so much *de vita sua* as *de carmine suo*, with comparanda drawn from a wide range of Latin literary works. We should therefore approach the third book of Ovid's exile poetry, *Tristia* 3—his first book of poetry actually set in Tomis and ostensibly about his life in exile, composed in the spring and summer of 10 CE—with similar expectations. For in this book too, I suggest, Ovid's literary concerns are cast in highly rhetorical form.

2   Ovid's Rhetorical Education

In order to substantiate my thesis of the rhetorical allegory at play in *Tristia* 3, it will be useful at this point to review Ovid's education in some detail. Like all education in antiquity, our poet's was primarily in rhetoric and we are remarkably well informed about it. Ovid himself tells us in the exile poetry that he was

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really occurred. Fitton-Brown argues that Ovid's account of the climate and geography of Tomis is glaringly incorrect (18–19); the poet gives no "rational account" (19) of his journey nor can we "conjecture a plausible reason" (20) for his exile; there is "nothing in the so-called exilic poems which suggests Ovid's personal acquaintance with Tomis as opposed to an intelligent gathering of information available in Rome" (21); and, indeed, it is far from unthinkable that a poet who would make up a fictional inamorata in his earliest poetry (Corinna in the *Amores*) "might choose to indulge in a fantasy of exile" in his last poetry.

11   Claassen 1990, 66: "The first book of the *Tristia* is an 'elegiac epic' in miniature, replete with flashbacks and narration of a heart-rending parting, another fall of Troy (*Tristia* 1.3.25 f.): *si licet exemplis in parvis grandibus uti, | haec facies Troiae, cum caperetur, erat* ("If one may use great illustrations for humble topics, Troy looked just like this when it was taken"). The exile's journey is presented in epic terms. The exile is an epic hero, a combined Odysseus-Aeneas hounded by the supreme god Augustus-Jupiter, who bestrides Olympus like a colossus, to the exclusion of the gods whose temples and cults Augustus had striven to restore."

educated for a career in law and the Senate, i.e. in rhetoric, but that he aban-
doned public life at an early age to devote himself to poetry (*Tr.* 4.10.15–40). The
elder Seneca supplements the evidence of this sketch, preserving the informa-
tion that Ovid studied declamation with the rhetorician Arellius Fuscus and
that he also admired Porcius Latro, Seneca's great friend and fellow Spaniard
(*Contr.* 2.2.8):

> Hanc controversiam memini ab Ovidio Nasone declamari apud rhetorem
> Arellium Fuscum, cuius auditor fuit; nam Latronis admirator erat, cum
> diversum sequeretur dicendi genus. habebat ille comptum et decens et
> amabile ingenium. oratio eius iam tum nihil aliud poterat videri quam
> solutum carmen. adeo autem studiose Latronem audit ut multas illius
> sententias in versus suos transtulerit.

> I remember that Ovidius Naso declaimed this case at the school of the
> rhetor Arellius Fuscus, whose student he was; he was also an admirer of
> Latro, though he followed a different style of speaking. He had a smooth,
> elegant, and engaging talent. His speech even then could seem like noth-
> ing other than loose verse. But he attended Latro's lectures so zealously
> that he transferred many of his epigrams into his own verses.

According to Seneca, Ovid showed real talent for declamation (*Contr.* 2.2.9):

> Tunc autem cum studeret habebatur bonus declamator. hanc certe con-
> troversiam ante Arellium Fuscum declamavit, ut mihi videbatur, longe
> ingeniosius, excepto eo quod sine certo ordine per locos discurrebat.

> But at the time when he was a student, he was considered a good
> declaimer. He certainly declaimed this case before Arellius Fuscus very
> ably, as it seemed to me, except that he ran through the commonplaces
> without any order.

Ovid preferred, however, to declaim *suasoriae*, display pieces offering advice
to a public figure in a critical situation, rather than *controversiae*, legal cases
(*Contr.* 2.2.12):

> Declamabat autem Naso raro controversias et non nisi ethicas; libentius
> dicebat suasorias: molesta illi erat omnis argumentatio. verbis minime
> licenter usus est nisi in carminibus, in quibus non ignoravit vitia sua
> sed amavit …. ex quo adparet summi ingenii viro non iudicium defuisse

ad compescendam licentiam carminum suorum sed animum. Aiebat interim decentiorem faciem esse in qua aliquis naevos esset.

Naso, however, used to declaim legal cases infrequently and only ethical ones; he used to deliver persuasive speeches with more pleasure; all argument was tiresome to him. He used words with the least license, except in his poems, in which he was not unaware of his faults but indulged them …. From which it will be clear that a man of the greatest talent lacked not judgment but the will to restrain his license in his poetry. He occasionally used to say that a face was the more beautiful in which there was some blemish.

Seneca links Ovid's preference for declaiming speeches of advice, rather than legal cases, to a certain linguistic self-indulgence in his poetry. In this connection, he recalls the declaimer Scaurus' derogatory comparison of the orator Montanus to Ovid, because he found both orator and poet careless and self-indulgent (*Contr.* 9.5.17):

Habet hoc Montanus vitium: sententias suas repetendo corrumpit; dum non est contentus unam rem semel bene dicere, efficit ne bene dixerit. et propter hoc et propter alia quibus orator potest poetae similis videri solebat Scaurus Montanum inter oratores Ovidium vocare; nam et Ovidius nescit quod bene cessit relinquere.

Montanus had this fault: he ruined his epigrams by repetition; as he was not content to say a single thing well once, he effectively prevented himself from speaking well. And because of this and other issues which can make an orator seem like a poet, Scaurus used to call Montanus the Ovid among orators; for Ovid too does not know how to leave off what he has done well.

Of particular interest is Seneca's notice that Ovid, although an admirer of Latro, was actually a pupil of Arellius Fuscus, for the latter is the only Latin declaimer whom Seneca explicitly labels "Asianist" in his rhetorical technique (*Contr.* 9.6.16; cf. *Contr.* 9.1.12–13). Janet Fairweather has characterized the "chief peculiarity" of Fuscus' style as "his habit of diversifying an otherwise dry declamatory manner with extraordinarily florid descriptive passages, unmanly in *compositio* [arrangement or rhythm] and outrageously bold in diction."[12]

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12   Fairweather 1981, 246.

The elder Seneca complains of Fuscus' excessive use of digressions and effusive license (*Contr.* 2 *pr.* 1):

> Erat explicatio Fusci Arelli splendida quidem sed operosa et implicata, cultus nimis adquisitus, conpositio verborum mollior quam ut illam tam sanctis fortibusque praeceptis praeparans se animus pati posset; summa inaequalitas orationis, quae modo exilis erat, nimia licentia vaga et effusa: principia, argumenta, narrationes aride dicebantur, in descriptionibus extra legem omnibus verbis dummodo niterent permissa libertas; nihil acre, nihil solidum, nihil horridum; splendida oratio et magis lasciva quam laeta.

> Arellius Fuscus' development was certainly brilliant, but highly wrought and involved, his ornamentation too contrived, his arrangement of words more effeminate than a mind training itself for such hallowed and vigorous precepts could tolerate; his oratory was extremely uneven, now thin, now digressive and diffuse from excessive freedom: proems, arguments, narratives he declaimed dryly, while in descriptions license beyond the rule was offered to his every word, provided they sparkled; there was nothing sharp, nothing of substance, nothing shaggy; his oratory was brilliant, and more wanton than rich.

The final feature of the elder Seneca's assessment of Fuscus' rhetorical style finds a striking parallel in Quintilian's assessment of Ovid's achievement in epic: *lascivus quidem in herois quoque Ovidius et nimium amator ingenii sui, laudandus tamen partibus.* ("Ovid is also wanton even in heroic measures, and too much in love with his own talent, though he is praiseworthy in places," *Inst. Or.* 10.1.88) He lays a similar charge against Ovid when he writes elegy: *elegia quoque Graecos provocamus, cuius mihi tersus atque elegans maxime videtur auctor Tibullus. sunt qui Propertium malint. Ovidius utroque lascivior.* ("In elegy too we challenge the Greeks, of whom the author Tibullus seems to me especially polished and elegant, but there are some who prefer Propertius. Ovid is more wanton than either of them," 10.1.93)

The elder Seneca's broader characterization of Arellius Fuscus' style resonates still more broadly with Cicero's characterization in the *Brutus* and *Orator* of rhetorical Asianism a generation earlier. Cicero characterizes the Asiatic orator as *amplus, copiosus, gravis, ornatus, acer*, and *ardens* (*Or.* 97–99).[13] The

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13   Cf. Cic. *Brut.* 325–326.

hallmark of the grand style to which the Asiatic orator aspired seems to have been a febrile emotionality that the speaker both exemplified and endeavored to incite in his hearers. Thus Asianism "possesses *vis* [force], stirs the emotions (*tractare animos, permovere*), and changes opinions (*inserit novas opiniones, evellit insitas*)."[14] But the orator who employs the *genus vehemens* runs the risk of himself appearing to be possessed by the very emotions he wishes to inspire in his audience, and if he fails to win over his audience he himself will seem "like a madman or a drunkard among the sane and sober," as Cicero puts it (*Orat.* 99).[15] Quintilian reports that Cicero himself was attacked for precisely these failings by younger contemporaries, presumably Brutus and Calvus (cf. *Inst. Or.* 12.10.24), the proponents of the so-called Attic style (Quint. *Inst. Or.* 12.10.12, trans. Austin 1948):

> at M. Tullium … quem tamen et suorum homines temporum incessere audebant ut tumidiorem et Asianum et redundantem et in repetitionibus nimium et in salibus aliquando frigidum et in compositione fractum, exsultantem, ac paene, quod procul absit, viro molliorem.

> And yet even his own contemporaries ventured to attack him on the ground that he was too bombastic, Asiatic, redundant, given to excessive repetition, frigid (i.e., flat) at times in his witticisms, mincing in his rhythmic structure, extravagant, and (heaven help us!) practically emasculate.[16]

To his Atticist opponents, Cicero (from whom most of our evidence derives) attributes a preference for the "humble" style of oratory (*genus humile*, *Or.* 76–90), which alone among the three styles of oratory they endorsed as "Attic" (*Or.* 75). He relates (*Orat.* 75–78) that contemporary Atticists imitated everyday speech (*consuetudo*) and claimed that their style exhibited good health, both physical and mental (*valetudo, sanitas*), a certain looseness that nonetheless did not degenerate into digression (*solutum quiddam sit nec vagum tamen*),

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14   Leeman 1963, 147; updated in van den Berg 2021.

15   Leeman 1963, 147.

16   The continuity of this grand "Asian" style (and the criticism it engendered) is well illustrated by Petronius' characterization of Asiatic style a hundred years later (Petr. *Sat.* 2.8): *nuper ventosa istaec et enormis loquacitas Athenas ex Asia commigravit animosque iuvenum ad magna surgentes veluti pestilenti quodam sidere afflavit, semelque corrupta eloquentiae regula stetit et obmutuit.* ("Recently this windy and shapeless garrulity moved to Athens from Asia and infected the spirits of our youth rising to great things just like a plague-ridden star, and the rule of eloquence once corrupted stood changed.")

and a studied carelessness (*neglegentia diligens*). Cicero also reports that the Atticists paid extremely close attention to Latinity, clarity, and propriety, which constituted the three chief goals of this style (*Orat.* 79). A fragment of the late-Republican polymath Varro supplements the evidence of Cicero in this regard (Varro fr. 41 Wilmann): *Latinitas est incorrupte loquendi observatio secundum Romanam linguam.* ("Latinity is the observance of speaking without corruption according to the Roman tongue.") Mark Williams observes that, in this definition of Latinity, Varro "implies an Atticist opposition between *Latinitas* [Latinity] and *frigus* [frigidity or flatness] founded upon a preference for purity and simplicity of diction against Asiatic bombast."[17] Immersed in this rhetorical culture, and privy to the debate between Atticists and Asianists that continued into his own day, as the elder Seneca demonstrates, Ovid exploits the techniques and technical terms of declamation throughout his poetry, in order to underscore the insalubrious effect of relegation to Tomis on his poetic technique.[18]

3   Asianist Rhetoric in Ovid's Pontic Poetry

I turn now, therefore, to explore Ovid's application of the terms of this rhetorical debate to the circumstances of his exile in *Tristia* 3. From the start of the book, we find the poet insisting that the unrelievedly gloomy tone and subject-matter of his poetry is appropriate to the circumstances of its composition in Pontus: *inspice quid portem: nihil hic nisi triste videbis,* | *carmine temporibus conveniente suis* ("Look at what I bring: you will see nothing here except sadness, with poetry suited to its circumstances," 1.9–10). Ovid details his dismal situation in Pontus throughout the collection, summarizing his unhappy circumstances and their relation to his poetic production thus in the final poem: *quod quicumque leget—si quis leget—aestimet ante,* | *compositum quo sit tempore quoque loco.* | *aequus erit scriptis, quorum cognoverit esse* | *exilium tempus barbariamque locum* ("But whoever will read [my book]—if anyone will read it—let him judge beforehand in what circumstances and place it was written. He will be fair to writings whose circumstances he recognizes to be exile and place a barbarian land," 14.27–30) The Pontic provenance of the collection has several implications. Ovid's assimilation of Pontus to Scythia in the exile poetry (e.g. 2.1–11, 4.46; cf. *Tr.* 4b.47–52, 10.7–8, 12.51–52, 14.47–50) has been fre-

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17   Williams 1988, 130.
18   Kenney 1969; Keith 1999.

quently studied, and the extensive allusions to Vergil's description of Scythia as the northern extreme of Roman *imperium* in *Georgics* 3 well discussed;[19] this theme will be relevant to our discussion of Ovid's emphasis on the extreme cold of the climate at Tomis. But we should bear in mind as well Horace's reference to Scythia as the *eastern* extreme of Roman rule: *Quid bellicosus Cantaber et Scythes*, | *Hirpine Quincti, cogitet Hadria* | *divisus obiecto, remittas* | *quaerere nec trepides in usum* | *poscentis aevi pauca* ("What the warlike Spaniard and Scythians plan, Quinctius my central Italian friend, separated as they are by the Adriatic sea, you should forbear to inquire, nor should you worry concerning the sustenance of a life-span that requires but little," *C.* 2.11.1–5). Horace here balances the western threat of Cantabrian wars in Spain by the eastern threat of war in Scythia.[20] The specifically eastern setting of Ovid's exilic poetry emerges more clearly when read against the evidence of the Horatian passage and, indeed, our poet occasionally plays up the Asian setting of his exile in his use of near eastern mythological exempla in *Tristia* 3: the legendary feats of Achilles in the Trojan war (3.27–28, 5.37–38, 11.27–28); Phaethon's interest in his descent from the Sun (3.29–30); Alexander's eastern conquests (5.39–40); the wealth of Croesus (7.42); the foundation of Tomis from Medea's murder of her brother Absyrtus as she fled the pursuing ships of the Colchians (3.9); Leander's death in a storm on the Bosphorus (10.41–42); and the poet's self-characterization as an Aeneas among the barbarians.[21] That these Asiatic exempla are the products of a deliberate rhetorical agenda seems clear from a comment the poet makes regarding the impropriety of including a Sicilian mythological exemplum (11.39–54) in the context of his newly Pontic poetry: *quid mihi cum Siculis inter Cizigasque Getasque?* ("What have I to do with Sicilians amid Cizigae and Getans?," 11.55).

These hints of a new tendency towards Asianism in the exilic poetry are more fully developed in Ovid's repeated complaint that he suffers so much from linguistic isolation in Tomis that he is in danger of forgetting his Latin altogether: *dicere saepe aliquid conanti—turpe fateri*!—| *verba mihi desunt dedidicique loqui.* ("often words fail me as I try to say something—shameful to confess!—and I have forgotten how to speak," 14.49–50).[22] In the first poem of the book, Ovid explicitly connects the impurity of his Latin with the barbarous land to which he has been relegated: *siqua videbuntur casu non dicta Latine*, | *in qua scribebat, barbara terra fuit* ("if, perchance, anything seems not to have

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19   Claassen 1990; Williams 1994.
20   Nisbet and Hubbard 1978, 167, 169–170 ad loc.
21   Williams 1994, 22–23.
22   cf. *Tr.* 3.1.17–18, 3.63–64, 4b.49–50, 8.37–40, 9.1–2, 10.1–6, 11.7–9, 12.39–44, 14.39–50.

been spoken in Latin, the land in which he was writing was foreign," 1.17–18); and he offers self-conscious commentary on the barbarous names he admits to his verse at several points in the book (3.63–64, 4b.49–50, 9.1–2). A particularly telling passage occurs at the outset of *Tristia* 3.10 (verses 1–6):

> siquis adhuc istic meminit Nasonis adempti,
> > et superest sine me nomen in Vrbe meum
> suppositum stellis numquam tangentibus aequor
> > me sciat in media vivere barbaria.
> Sauromatae cingunt, fera gens, Bessique Getaeque,
> > quam non ingenio nomina digna meo!

> If anyone there still remembers banished Naso and my name survives without me in the City, let him know that I live in the midst of barbarian lands beneath the stars that never touch the sea. The Sauromatae, a fierce people, the Bessi and Getae—names how unworthy of my talent!—surround me.

Eugène Lozovan has shown that Ovid's Latinity is, in fact, as refined as ever in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*[23] and, indeed, the metrical versatility of our poet is such that he can even admit the names of all those barbarian tribes to his limpid elegiacs (10.5–6); but it is the very admission of these barbarous words to his verse that constitutes the chief evidence of the "declining" Latinity (in strict terms) of the exile poetry. Thus even the line we considered earlier (*quid mihi cum Siculis inter Cizigasque Getasque*, 11.55), does double duty in its elaboration of an Ovidian rhetoric of exile, as it testifies not only to the cultural distance but also to the linguistic distance from Rome of Tomis where the poet lives *inter Cizigasque Getasque*.

   If the barbarous location of his exile has undermined the "purity" of Ovid's Latinity, the frigid climate has weakened him and made him ill. The second poem in the book contrasts the rigors of life in "frost-bound Pontus" with the poet's formerly soft and easy life in Rome (3.2.1–11):

> ergo erat in fatis Scythiam quoque visere nostris,
> > quaeque Lycaonio terra sub axe iacet,
> nec vos, Pierides, nec stirps Letoïa, vestro
> > docta sacerdoti turba tulistis opem.

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23   Lozovan 1959, 364; cf. Lozovan 1958.

nec mihi, quod lusi vero sine crimine, prodest,
     quodque magis vita Musa iocata mea est,
plurima sed pelago terraque pericula passum
     ustus ab adsiduo frigore Pontus habet.
quique fugax rerum securaque in otia natus,
     mollis et inpatiens ante laboris eram,
ultima nunc patior.

And so it was fated for me to visit Scythia too, a land that lies beneath Lycaon's pole; neither you, Pierian Muses, a learned crowd, nor Leto's offspring, have brought your priest aid. Nor does it help me that I sported in my poetry without true crime, or that my Muse was more jocular than my life; but the Black Sea, wasted from constant cold, possesses me after I have suffered innumerable dangers by land and sea—I, who once fled worldly affairs, born for easy leisure, soft and unable to endure toil before, now suffer extremes.

The cold climate of Tomis is a recurrent theme of the book (4.47–52; 8.29–30; 12.1–2, 27–30; 13.11–12). It is also the subject of a celebrated poem, *Tristia* 3.10, in which Ovid contrasts the sterility of the frozen Pontic landscape with the fertility of Rome's Mediterranean empire (3.10.70–78):

     cessat iners rigido terra relicta situ.
non hic pampinea dulcis latet uva sub umbra,
     nec cumulant altos fervida musta lacus.
poma negat regio, nec haberet Acontius in quo
     scriberet hic dominae verba legenda suae.
aspiceres nudos sine fronde, sine arbore, campos:
     heu loca felici non adeunda viro!
ergo tam late pateat cum maximus orbis,
     haec est in poenam terra reperta meam!

The earth, left to stark neglect, lies unworked. Not here does the sweet grape lie concealed beneath the shade of the vines, nor do the frothing lees mount in the deep vats. The region denies fruit, nor would Acontius have anything on which to write words for his mistress to read here. You could see bare fields, without foliage, without a tree: places, alas, that should not be visited by a happy man! And so, though the greatest expanse of the world spreads so widely, this land has been discovered for my punishment!

In Ovid's rhetorical hyperbole, the frigid climate of Tomis is such that winter lasts for two years at a time: *nix iacet, et iactam ne sol pluviaeque resolvant, / indurat Boreas perpetuamque facit. / ergo ubi deliciit nondum prior, altera venit, / et solet in multis bima manere locis* ("The snow falls and neither sun nor rain melts it once fallen, but Boreas hardens it and makes it everlasting. And so when an earlier snowfall has not yet melted, another comes, and in many places usually stays for two years," 13–16). Indeed the book as a whole testifies to the icy grip of winter's cold on the poet's verse, since it is only in the antepenultimate poem that we hear of spring coming to Tomis: *frigora iam Zephyri minuunt, annoque peracto / longior antiquis vim moderatur hiems* ("Now the west winds lessen the cold, and with the completion of the year a winter, longer than those of old, tempers its force," 12.1–2) Even when describing the spring thaw, however, the poet charts not the renewal of warmth but the retreat of winter: *at mihi sentitur nix verno sole soluta, / quaeque lacu durae non fodiantur aquae; / nec mare concrescit glacie, nec, ut ante, per Histrum / stridula Sauromates plaustra bubulcus agit* ("But I feel the snow melted by the spring sun, and waters which are not dug all hard from the lake; neither does the sea now grow hard from ice nor does the Sauromatian bullock, as before, draw creaking wagons across the Ister," 12.27–30).

Unrelenting cold pervades the imagery of *Tristia* 3 elsewhere too, as Ovid depicts his copious tears on arrival in Tomis as analogous to snow in springtime (3.2.13–20):

> suffecitque malis animus; nam corpus ab illo
> > accepit vires vixque ferenda tulit.
> dum tamen et terris dubius iactabar et undis,
> > fallebat curas aegraque corda labor:
> ut via finita est et opus requievit eundi,
> > et poenae tellus est mihi tacta meae,
> nil nisi flere libet, nec nostro parcior imber
> > lumine de verna quam nive manat aqua.

> And my spirit has risen to the challenge of my ills; for my body has taken on strength from it and has endured what could scarcely be borne. Yet while I was being buffeted by doubt on land and sea, toil beguiled my cares and sick heart: when the journey was over and the work of travel at rest, and I touched the land of my punishment, I could do nothing but weep, nor did the tears drip from my eyes more sparingly than the flood from spring snow.

This image recalls Cicero's characterization of the orator of the forceful style (*genus vehemens*) who sweep[s] his audience away "with a flood of words and phrases" (*nec flumine solum orationis, sed etiam exornato et faceto genere uerborum, Brut.* 325).[24] Indeed, "fullness of expression, elaboration, amplification, and redundancy"[25]—all features of Ovid's description of Pontic cold (*frigus*) in *Tristia* 3.10—are characteristic of the Asiatic oratorical style censured by the Atticists in the testimony of Cicero himself and related to the charge of rhetorical "frigidity" (*frigus*) or "flatness" that they lodged against him, as we saw in Quintilian (*Inst. Or.* 12.10.12, quoted above).

The technical term in Greek rhetoric for any stylistic fault in oratory was ψυχρότης, of which *frigus* was the Latin translation, and the charge was frequently leveled against the grand style in particular.[26] Aristotle, for example, censured the use of elaborate compounds, obscure words (e.g. foreign and archaic expressions), and ornamental or descriptive additions such as epithets and metaphors—all of which tend to turn prose into poetry—as faults of taste (*Rhet.* 3.3.1–4), while Theophrastus and the Hellenistic author of the treatise "On Style," who treats "frigidity" at length ([Dem.] 114–127), both associate ψυχρότης especially closely with hyperbole ([Dem.] 114–115):

> Ὥσπερ δὲ παράκειται φαυλά τινα ἀστείοις τισίν, οἷον θάρρει μὲν τὸ θράσος, ἡ δ᾽ αἰσχύνη τῇ αἰδοῖ, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ τῆς ἑρμηνείας τοῖς χαρακτῆρσιν παράκεινται διημαρτημένοι τινές. πρῶτα δὲ περὶ τοῦ γειτνιῶντος τῷ μεγαλοπρεπεῖ λέξομεν. ὄνομα μὲν οὖν αὐτῷ ψυχρόν, ὁρίζεται δὲ τὸ ψυχρὸν Θεόφραστος οὕτως, ψυχρόν ἐστι τὸ ὑπερβάλλον τὴν οἰκείαν ἀπαγγελίαν ... γίνεται μέντοι καὶ τὸ ψυχρὸν ἐν τρισίν, ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ μεγαλοπρεπές ...

> Every attractive quality has as its neighbor a specific weakness: rashness is close to bravery, and shame is close to respect; similarly, successful styles have certain faulty styles lurking nearby. We shall deal first with the fault that borders on the grand style. We call it frigidity, and Theophrastus defines the frigid as that which overshoots its appropriate expression ... Frigidity, like grandeur, arises in three ways ...

The currency of the charge in late-Republican Rome is illustrated by Catullus' poem 44, which makes the orator Sestius the butt of a literary joke for having made a "frigid" speech (44.10–21):[27]

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24   Williams 1988, 130–131.
25   Williams 1988, 130.
26   On the Greek tradition, see Van Hook 1917; Gutzwiller 1969.
27   On the rhetorical joke, see Buchheit 1959, 313–315; Jones 1968, 379–383; de Angeli 1969, 354–356; and George 1991.

nam, Sestianus dum volo esse conviva,
orationem in Antium petitorem
plenam veneni et pestilentiae legi.
hic me gravedo frigida et frequens tussis
quassavit usque, dum in tuum sinum fugi,
et me recuravi otioque et urtica.
quare refectus maximas tibi grates
ago, meum quod non es ulta peccatum.
nec deprecor iam, si nefaria scripta
Sesti recepso, quin gravedinem et tussim
non mi, sed ipsi Sestio ferat frigus,
qui tunc vocat me, cum malum librum legi.

For, while I wanted to be Sestius' fellow-diner, I read his speech *Against the candidate Antius*, full of poison and plague. Hereupon a shivering cold and frequent cough shook me until I fled to your bosom and restored myself with leisure and stinging nettle. Thus refreshed, I thank you very much because you did not punish my lapse. And I freely consent, if I take up Sestius' noxious writings again, that their frigidity give a cold and cough not to me but to Sestius himself, who invites me when I have read his bad book.

Catullus literalizes the "frigidity" of Sestius' speech into the "chill" reading it gives him; but the charge of frigidity could also be applied to poetry. Thus Aulus Gellius reports that an ignorant critic labeled Catullus' own poem 92 *frigidissimos versus* because he misinterpreted a word as inappropriate and overblown (*NA* 7.16),[28] and Alessandro Barchiesi has recently documented a

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28 Cited by Williams 1988, 130 n. 10: *eiusmodi quispiam, qui tumultuariis et inconditis linguae exercitationibus ad famam sese facundiae promiserat neque orationis Latinae usurpationes ⟨rationes⟩ve ullas didicerat, cum in Lycio forte vespera ambularemus, ludo ibi et voluptati fuit. nam cum esset verbum "deprecor" doctiuscule positum in Catulli carmine, quia id ignorabat,* **frigidissimos** *versus esse dicebat omnium quidem iudicio venustissimos, quos subscripsi:*

    Lesbia mi dicit semper male nec tacet umquam
        de me: Lesbia me dispeream nisi amat.
    quo signo? quia sunt totidem mea: deprecor illam
        assidue, verum dispeream nisi amo. [Cat. 92]

"Deprecor" hoc in loco vir bonus ita esse dictum putabat, ut plerumque a vulgo dicitur, quod significat "valde precor" et "oro" et "supplico," in quo "de" praepositio ad augendum et cumulandum valet. quod si ita esset, **frigidi** *sane versus forent. nunc enim contra omnino est: nam "de" praepositio, quoniam est anceps, in uno eodemque verbo duplicem vim capit. sic enim*

similar charge of "frigidity" leveled against a line of Vergil's *Georgics*.[29] In the context of the rhetorical standards of "frigidity" to which Catullus, Vergil's anonymous critic, and Aulus Gellius attest, Ovid's repeated emphasis on the cold of Pontus can be seen to contribute to the ongoing characterization of his poetry from Pontus as Asiatic (i.e. overblown and redundant) in style.[30]

Although Ovid denies that the weight of his misfortunes has broken him (*Tr.* 3.2.13–14), this claim is belied almost immediately by his self-representation as sick at heart already on the voyage to Tomis (15–16). In the following poem, moreover, the first in the exilic collection set specifically in Tomis, the poet documents his illness on arrival in Pontus (3.3.1–14):[31]

> haec mea si casu miraris epistula quare
> alterius digitis scripta sit, aeger eram.
> aeger in extremis ignoti partibus orbis,
> incertusque meae nempe salutis eram.
> quem mihi nunc animum dira regione iacenti
> inter Sauromatas esse Getasque putes?
> nec caelum patior, nec aquis adsuevimus istis,
> terraque nescio quo non placet ipsa modo.

"deprecor" a Catullo dictum est, quasi "detestor" vel "exsecror" vel "depello" vel "abominor."

(As we chanced to be strolling one evening in the Lyceum, we were furnished with sport and amusement by a certain man, of the kind that lays claim to a reputation for eloquence by a superficial and ill-regulated use of language, without having learned any of the usages and principles of the Latin tongue. For while Catullus in one of his poems had used the word *deprecor* rather cleverly, that fellow, unable to appreciate this, declared that the following verses I have quoted were **very flat**, although in the judgment of all men they are most charming:

Lesbia speaks ill of me all the time and is never silent: may I perish if Lesbia isn't in love with me. On what evidence? Since she talks about me all the time: I curse her constantly, but may I perish if I'm not in love with her.

Our good man thought that *deprecor* in this passage was used in the sense that is commonly given the word by the vulgar; that is, "I pray earnestly," "I beseech," "I entreat," where the preposition *de* is used intensively and emphatically. And if that were so, the verses would indeed be **flat**. But as a matter of fact the sense is exactly the opposite; for the preposition *de*, since it has a double force, contains two meanings in one and the same word. For *deprecor* is used by Catullus in the sense of "denounce, execrate, drive away," or "avert by prayers.")

29   Barchiesi 2004.

30   Barchiesi 2004 collects other instances of the charge of "frigidity" among Latin critics, including Plin. *Ep.* 6.15 and Sen. *Ep.* 122.10–13, and discusses them in connection with the contemporary reception of Vergil, *Geo.* 1.299.

31   On what follows see Fulkerson, chapter 5 in this volume.

non domus apta satis, non hic cibus utilis aegro,
        nullus, Apollinea qui levet arte malum,
non qui soletur, non qui labentia tarde
        tempora narrando fallat, amicus adest.
lassus in extremis iaceo populisque locisque,
        et subit adfecto nunc mihi, quicquid abest.

> If perchance you wonder why this letter has been written by another's
> hand, I was ill. Ill at the remotest part of the unknown globe, I was indeed
> unsure of my safety. What spirit do you think I now had lying in this dread
> land amid Sauromatians and Getans? Neither can I endure the heavens,
> nor could I accustom myself to these waters, and the land itself, I know
> not why, does not please me. There is not a house suitable enough for a
> sick man here, or edible food, no friend at hand to relieve my illness with
> Apollo's skill, none to console, none to while away time as it slips slowly
> by with a story. At the ends of the world I lie faint and whatever is not here
> comes to my mind so afflicted.

Here Ovid explicitly attributes his ill health to the insalubrious setting—at the
edge of the world, among barbarian hordes (*Tr.* 3.3.5–14). This picture is further
developed in *Tr.* 3.8, where Ovid reports that he has been ill in both body and
mind ever since arriving in Tomis (3.8.23–34):

nec caelum nec aquae faciunt nec terra nec aurae;
        ei mihi, perpetuus corpora languor habet!
seu vitiant artus aegrae contagia mentis,
        sive mei causa est in regione mali,
ut tetigi Pontum, vexant insomnia, vixque
        ossa tegit macies nec iuvat ora cibus;
quique per autumnum percussis frigore primo
        est color in foliis, quae nova laesit hiems,
is mea membra tenet, nec viribus adlevor ullis,
        et numquam queruli causa doloris abest.
nec melius valeo, quam corpore, mente, sed aegra est
        utraque pars aeque binaque damna fero.

> Neither climate nor water nor land nor air suit me; ah me, constant weak-
> ness grips my body. Whether the contagion of a sick mind enfeebles my
> limbs or the cause of my problem is in the region, since I reached Pon-
> tus, sleeplessness harries me, my wasting flesh scarcely covers my bones,

and food does not please my lips. The pallor of leaves touched by the first frost of autumn and marred by the new winter grips my limbs, nor am I strengthened by any forces; reason for mournful grief is never absent. Nor am I stronger in mind than in body, but each part equally is sick and I suffer double harm.

We may relate the poet's professed ill health to the rhetorical convention that ascribed good health to Atticist oratory (cf. *integra valetudine*, Cic. *Orat.* 76). By implication, the frigid Asiatic style is unhealthy as, indeed, in Catullus 44, where the poet claims to have contracted a cold and cough from reading Sestius' frosty rhetoric.

The foremost symptom of Ovid's illness in Tomis is his failing voice: *sit iam deficiens suppressaque lingua palato | vix instillato restituenda mero* ("though my tongue were already failing and, stuck to my palate, could scarcely be restored by a trickle of wine," 3.21–22). Indeed *Tr.* 3.3 concludes with a reference to the poet's broken voice, a metaphor for closure in this particular poem, but also for Ovid's declining standards of poetic composition in the exile poetry more generally: *scribere plura libet: sed vox mihi fessa loquendo | dictandi vires siccaque lingua negat. | accipe supremo dictum mihi forsitan ore, | quod, tibi qui mittit, non habet ipse, "vale"* ("I would write more but my voice, tired out by speaking, and dry tongue deny the strength for dictation. Receive perhaps the last word from my mouth, which he who sends it to you does not himself have, 'Be well!'," 85–88).

Even when not claiming to be ill in Pontus, moreover, Ovid repeatedly refers to the new physical, spiritual, and literary weakness that afflicts him in exile. Thus, in assailing an unnamed enemy, he contrasts his enemy's eloquence with his own shattered strength: *et tamen est aliquis, qui vulnera cruda retractet, | solvat et in mores ora diserta meos. | in causa facili cuivis licet esse diserto, | et minimae vires frangere quassa valent* ("And yet there is someone to renew my raw wounds, to release their eloquent lips against my character. In an easy case anyone at all can be eloquent and the least strength prevails to break what has been shattered," 11.19–22). Moreover in the final poem of the book, to an unnamed friend, Ovid complains that his misfortunes have broken his talent altogether (3.14.27–36):

> quod quicumque leget—si quis leget—aestimet ante,
> > compositum quo sit tempore quoque loco.
> aequus erit scriptis, quorum cognoverit esse
> > exilium tempus barbariamque locum,
> inque tot adversis carmen mirabitur ullum
> > ducere me tristi sustinuisse manu.

> ingenium fregere meum mala, cuius et ante
>   fons infecundus parvaque vena fuit.
> sed quaecumque fuit, nullo exercente refugit,
>   et longo periit arida facta situ.

> But whoever will read [my book]—if anyone will read it—let him judge
> beforehand in what circumstances and place it was written. He will be
> fair to writings whose circumstances he recognizes to be exile and whose
> place is a barbarian land, and in so many adversities he will wonder that I
> endured producing any poem with my sad hand. Misfortunes have broken
> my talent, whose source even before was not abundant, a small stream.
> But whatever it was, with none to train it, it has shrunk and perished, dried
> up by long neglect.

These references to the poet's shattered tongue and talent recall the elder
Seneca's reference to the "effeminate rhythm" (*fracta conpositio*, literally "bro-
ken arrangement"), of Arellius Fuscus' Asiatic oratory (*Suas.* 2.23):

> Sed ne vos diutius infatuem, quia dixeram me Fusci Arelli explicationes
> subiecturum, hic finem suasoriae faciam. quarum nimius cultus et fracta
> conpositio poterit vos offendere cum ad meam aetatem veneritis; interim
> ⟨non⟩ dubito quin nunc vos ipsa quae offensura sunt vitia delectent.

> But in order not to drive you crazy any longer, I will make an end of the
> *suasoria* here, since I had said I would adduce Arellius Fuscus' expla-
> nations. Their excessive decoration and effeminate rhythm will cause
> offence when you reach my age; in the meantime I do not doubt that you
> will now delight in the very faults that will come to offend you.

Quintilian later employs the same phrase in a discussion of faulty style (*Inst.
Or.* 8.3.56–57):

> cacozelon, ⟨id⟩ est mala adfectatio, per omne dicendi genus peccat; nam
> et tumida et pusilla et praedulcia et abundantia et arcessita et exultantia
> sub idem nomen cadunt. denique cacozelon vocatur quidquid est ultra
> virtutem, quotiens ingenium iudicio caret et specie boni fallitur, omnium
> in eloquentia vitiorum pessimum: nam cetera parum vitantur, hoc peti-
> tur. est autem totum in elocutione. nam rerum vitia sunt stultum com-
> mune contrarium supervacuum: corrupta oratio in verbis maxime inpro-
> priis, redundantibus, compressione obscura, compositione fracta, vocum
> similium aut ambiguarum puerili captatione consistit.

> *Cacozelon*, or perverse affectation, is a fault in every kind of style: for it includes all that is turgid, trivial, luscious, redundant, far-fetched or extravagant [i.e., all the faults of Asiatic style], while the same name is also applied to virtues carried to excess, when the mind loses its critical sense and is misled by the false appearance of beauty, the worst of all offences against style, since other faults are due to carelessness, but this is deliberate. This form of affectation, however, affects style alone. For the employment of arguments which might equally well be advanced by the other side, or are foolish, inconsistent or superfluous, are all faults of matter, whereas corruption of style is revealed in the employment of improper or redundant words, in obscurity of meaning, effeminacy of rhythm, or in the childish search for similar or ambiguous expressions.

This definition of the faulty style reads like a primer of Asiatic rhetorical excess; we may compare Quintilian's report of the Atticists' criticisms of Cicero (*Inst. Or.* 12.10.12).[32] Especially interesting is the close proximity of Quintilian's charges of frigidity and choppy or broken rhythm (*et in salibus aliquando frigidum et in compositione fractum*), for Hellenistic writers censure composition as frigid when lacking either in good rhythm or in rhythm altogether ([Dem.] 117), and we have seen the close link Ovid effects between the coldness of the region to which he has been exiled and its shattering effect on his talent (*ingenium fregere meum mala*, "misfortunes have broken my talent," *Tr.* 3.14.33).

Ovid's depiction of the landscape of Tomis and its crushing impact on his physical, emotional, and literary well-being is sketched throughout *Tristia* 3 by reference to contemporary Augustan debate about rhetorical style, so that the poetry from exile epitomizes the stylistic vices conventionally attributed to Asiatic rhetoric. Ovid repeatedly characterizes the quality of his poetry from Pontus as having suffered a drastic "decline" because of the disastrous circumstances of his exile, and he documents this decline by dramatizing the infection of his poetry, appropriately enough, with all the flaws of Asiatic style. As critics such as Martin Helzle and Gareth Williams have recently argued, however, the very creativity of the poet's literary response to the conditions of exile in Tomis suggest that we should be cautious about accepting Ovid's assessment of the exile poetry at face value. While his manipulation of rhetorical terminology in this collection coheres with his ostensible rejection of the Callimachean aesthetic of elegance and stylistic restraint to which he adheres in his ear-

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32   On the faulty style, see further Jocelyn 1979.

lier poetry, his adaptation of such Callimachean *topoi* as the *recusatio* and the image of the elegiac speaker wasted by grief to his new circumstances in exile on the Black Sea reveal the continuing subtlety and sophistication of Ovidian poetry.

Acknowledgements

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Fantasies of Death in Ovid's Poetry of Exile

Luigi Galasso

In Book 3 of the *Tristia*, Ovid defines the features of the world in which now, as an exile, he happens to find himself. In the second elegy he speaks of his dismay in coming to his place of exile and wonders why he has survived so many trials. He therefore prays to the gods, who are excessively constant in their enmity, and who share the wrath of a single god, to allow him to die.[1] His wish is almost fulfilled in the following elegy (its position creates a significant syntagmatic connection), in which Ovid writes to his wife, telling her that he is sick and near death.[2] In the first book of the *Tristia*, the metaphor of exile as the end of life had already been introduced; now, in Book 3, death can really happen, thanks to an actual illness. Already in this statement we can see how Ovid shapes a complex relationship between the "literary" and the "real."

The third elegy, which draws many features from the *Amores* and the *Heroides*, is also an important moment in the development of Ovid's exilic production because we can clearly discern, at least in part, its constitutive elements. Vocabulary, images, and motifs are provided by the texts of Tibullus and Propertius, particularly Tibullus 1.3, starting from the setting of the disease and the possibility of death in a distant land. To this we must add another passage from Tibullus, 1.1.59–68, a representation of the poet's funeral, which itself looks to Propertius 1.17 and 19 and is looked to in turn by Propertius 2.13b, which presupposes the first book of Tibullus. The dialogue, as we can properly call it, among these texts is well analyzed in a paper by Oliver Lyne which highlights above all Propertius' influence on Tibullus in the direction of melodrama (with ironic implications).[3]

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1 In addition, this makes the poet different from the great heroes of the myth, who always had some divine power on their side, a point developed extensively in *Tr.* 1.2.3–12, with words that are explicitly defined as wasted (*verba miser frustra non proficientia perdo*, "a wretch, I am wasting profitless words in vain," 13).

2 The model of Ulysses personified by Ovid can be replaced in *Tr.* 3.3 by that of Orpheus, which is activated in the words *te loquor absentem, te vox mea nominat unam; / nulla venit sine te nox mihi, nulla dies*, "I address you though you are absent, my voice names you alone; / no night, no day comes to me without you" (17–18), and which is accompanied by the evocation of that of Ceyx and Alcyone: cf. *in ore, Met.* 11.544, 562, and on *Tr.* 3.3.20 see Hardie 2002, 288.

3 Lyne 1998, 527–558 = Lyne 2007, 260–274 an important study that shows in a very concrete

A further element of complexity lies in the fact that in *Amores* 3.9 Ovid had mourned the death of Tibullus, saying that the poet's actual death was preferable to the one that would have occurred in the conditions narrated by Tibullus 1.3, when the poet lay ill in Phaeacia, and repeating the same elements, with numerous references to Tibullus' elegies.[4] *Amores* 3.9 is presented as the fulfillment of what Tibullus had expressed as simple fear. It therefore implies a reflection on the reality of elegiac poetry in which the original etymology of *elegia* (*e, e legein*) is clearly made concrete. To put it simply, one could say that Ovid shows in *Amores* 3.9 how a "true" reality arises from a fictitious one.[5] Now, in the *Tristia*, this experience and this text enable Ovid to define his existence in the world of exile, a world in which he, too, has met a metaphorical death that threatens to become real. Again, the poet offers us a reflection on the functioning mechanisms of reality and of literary works that intend to express and construct it. Hence the density of *Tristia* 3.3.[6]

The dialogue between the texts of which we have just spoken proceeds step by step throughout these elegies, but we can limit ourselves to a few examples.

Propertius in poem 1.17 complains of having departed from Cynthia to go on a sea voyage. If he had stayed with her, in the event that he died he would have received the traditional offer of her hair (21–22):

> illa meo caros donasset funere crinis,
>   molliter et tenera poneret ossa rosa.

> she would have offered me her beloved hair during the funeral,
>   gently holding my bones among delicate roses.

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way the interrelation between the two authors and illustrates the consequences. Ovid intervenes in this complex dialogue, developing it with conceptual and paradoxical results.

4   On the ways in which this composition relates to *Am.* 1.15 and 2.6 (the death of the parrot of Corinna) in dealing with the theme of the survival of poets, which also has implications for the exile poetry, see Boyd 1997, 165–190, with bibliography. For a collection of the Tibullan presences in *Am.* 3.9, see Perkins 1993; Hübner 2010–2011; for contacts between the Tibullan elegies, *Am.* 3.9, and *Tr.* 3.3, see Huskey 2005.

5   Bretzigheimer 2001, 181. After all this same experience of "realism" had suggested the re-adaptation of Tibullus' elegy, with a didactic function and as an experience actually lived, in *Tr.* 2.447–464: see Barchiesi 1993, 171–173.

6   Another passage in which *Am.* 3.9 is of particular importance for the elegy of exile is the representation of Love itself with the signs of mourning (7–12), which is evoked in *Pont.* 3.3.13–20 and which makes use of the descriptions of Love punished but above all in mourning that we have, for example, in Bion's *Epitaph of Adonis* when he cries for the death of the young lover of Venus (80–85, verses to which Ovid also alludes, combining them with passages of the elegies of the same Tibullus).

Tibullus in poem 1.1 contrasts his choice of the life of love with that of the soldier. The task of fighting on land and by sea belongs to Messalla (53); Tibullus will remain close to Delia, and so she will be able to mourn his death (a situation that is therefore mirrored with respect to that of Propertius), which is presented in particularly melodramatic tones (67–68):

> tu manes ne laede meos, sed parce solutis
>   crinibus et teneris, Delia, parce genis.

> you do not wrong my shadow, but spare your loosened
>   hair, and spare, Delia, your soft cheeks.

Tibullus asks Delia to put a limit to her mourning, manifestations of which would damage her beauty—and this the poet does not want. Therefore, she must not tear her hair or rend her cheeks. In contrast, Propertius in poem 2.13b imagines his funeral and addresses to Cynthia the request *not* to spare herself in the exhibition of pain (27–28):

> tu vero nudum pectus lacerata sequeris,
>   nec fueris nomen lassa vocare meum.

> You will follow me tearing your naked breast
>   and you will never be tired of invoking my name.

And here is Ovid, *Tr.* 3.3.51–52:

> Parce tamen lacerare genas, nec scinde capillos:
>   non tibi nunc primum, lux mea, raptus ero.

> But don't scratch your cheeks or tear your hair:
>   now will not be the first time I am torn from you, my love.

As in Propertius 1.17 and Tibullus 1.3, Ovid foresees his own death, far from his wife, from whom he expects manifestations of mourning. The reason why he says she should not present herself in the usual gestures of grief is no longer a gallant one, but is due to the fact that he is already dead at the time of exile, as is clearly shown in *Tristia* 1.3 on his last night in Rome, in which a real funeral rite is staged. The images of death are therefore distorted: what Ovid wants to show us is the definitive death of someone who is already dead, and in order to do so he evokes prospectively key texts of the elegiac tradition.

What, then, is the relationship with *Amores* 3.9 as far as this issue is concerned? Tibullus died prematurely, but at least this happened in his fatherland, and the presence of his loved ones (including the two women he loved, Delia and Nemesis) brought him consolations at the end, while for Ovid this is not possible. In Tibullus' case, insistence on the funeral rite is necessary, although the hair that is torn on that occasion belongs to his sister (51–52):

> hic soror in partem misera cum matre doloris
>   venit inornatas dilaniata comas.

> Here, along with my poor mother, my sister
>   performs the rites of grief, having rent her unadorned locks.

Therefore, Delia and Nemesis do not need to impair their beauty. In *Amores* 3.9 death coincides with the consecration of the poet, and the ways in which the elegiac poet consoled himself for the cruelty of his woman, shown to him in tears at his funeral, are no longer merely prefigured. There are even two women at Tibullus' rites, a paradoxical fact, but one that is possible within the new world of the *Amores*.

In poem 1.3 Tibullus speaks of his illness in a foreign land, Corcyra, and asks death to hold back its hands so that he should not die without the comfort of his own (3–4):

> me tenet ignotis aegrum Phaeacia terris:
>   abstineas avidas, Mors, modo, nigra, manus.

> Phaeacia keeps me, sick, in an unknown land.
>   O shadowy Death, hold back awhile your hands greedy though
>   they are.

In *Amores* 3.9 Ovid presents the poet's death, among his loved ones, as preferable to the one he would have met in distant lands (47–48):

> sed tamen hoc melius, quam si Phaeacia tellus
>   ignotum vili supposuisset humo.

> Better so, however, than if the land of Phaeacia
>   had buried him, unknown, in a vile ground.

Finally, in *Tristia* 3.3 (37–38):

tam procul ignotis igitur moriemur in oris,
    et fient ipso tristia fata loco.

therefore I will die so far away, on unknown shores,
    and my death will be made miserable by the place itself.

At the beginning of the sequence, Propertius 1.17 is presented again (15–18):

nonne fuit levius dominae pervincere mores
...
quam sic ignotis circumdata litora silvis
    cernere ...?

Would it not have been a milder task to bend the character of my lady
...
than to see these shores surrounded by woods unknown?

Ovid's reworking of these passages is especially clear.

    The comparison between different images of the Underworld is significant. Tibullus depicted himself in a kind of lover's Elysium, where there are also songs and dances, as is appropriate in the presence of a poet (1.3.57–66). In fact this Elysium is a "land beyond" which one can access specifically as a poet of love.[7] In *Amores* 3.9, Ovid makes this element very clear as he presents a veritable Elysium of the poets, with Catullus and Calvus and, prominently, Gallus, who has been "prodigal of his own blood and his own life," but with the very important stipulation: *si falsum est temerati crimen amici* ("if the charge is false concerning the friend whom he had offended"), an indispensable condition for admission to the area of the blessed (63–64). Ovid, who wants to emphasize the absolute unhappiness of his destiny, ostentatiously rejects the consolatory motive of life after death. In *Tr.* 3.3 therefore he expresses the desire that the teachings of Pythagoras be groundless, since otherwise his soul would be condemned to wander forever in the places of his exile (59–64), and he hopes that his soul will be extinguished together with his body (59–60):

atque utinam pereant animae cum corpore nostrae,
    effugiatque avidos pars mihi nulla rogos.

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7 Houghton 2007.

And may even my soul perish along with my body,
> so that nothing may escape the voracious flames of the pyre!

The contrast with the Pythagorean style that finds expression in *Metamorphoses* 15 is striking, and the source of a series of conceits. For instance, Ovid says he wants his soul to die along with the body, so that he is no longer in exile, a wish opposite to the traditional one of the poet, but one well suited to the distorted world of exile. The usual consolation motifs are then recovered with the transport of his bones to Rome and their burial, which re-establishes the traditional themes of mourning.[8] Just as the torment of the love poet is resolved in death, the exiled poet finds peace in the same way.

Also in contrast to Tibullus 1.1 and 1.3, in *Amores* 3.9 the status of poet is central, as it is in *Tristia* 3.3. Complexity is increased by the activation of a series of intertextual connections with Prop. 2.13b, an elegy completely dedicated to the funerary theme. There is also an important connection with 2.13a, where Propertius highlights the central role of *puella* in the evaluation of his poetry (11–16):[9]

> me iuvet in gremio doctae legisse puellae,
> > auribus et puris scripta probasse mea.
> haec ubi contigerint, populi confusa valeto
> > fabula: nam domina iudice tutus ero.
> quae si forte bonas ad pacem verterit auris,
> > possum inimicitias tunc ego ferre Iovis.

> May I have the pleasure of reciting my verses in the lap of a discerning girlfriend
> > and of winning her approval when she hears them.
> When this happens, then good riddance to the confused chatter
> > of the public: for with my mistress as judge, I shall be secure.
> If only she turns her kindly ears towards peace,
> > then I can endure Jupiter's enmity.

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8 The sensitivity that Ovid hopes will not be felt by his soul is partially transferred to his remains (*sentiet officium maesta favilla pium*, "the sorrowing dust will feel your devoted care," 84). On the fear of death in exile and the privation of a proper *funus* cf. Brescia 2016, 65–73.

9 Most scholars believe that 2.13 is not to be divided into two elegies, 2.13a and 13b. The problem is made even more complex by the fact that it is a composition placed practically at the beginning of the original third book: the question is discussed by Murgia 2000, 156–167. The observations of Fedeli 2005, 361–364 are significantly in favor of the division. In any case, even a unitarian like Heyworth 2007, 163 must at least assume a gap after line 16.

This affirmation of poetic pride is very significant, and can be so for Ovid as well, especially in reference to the hostility of Jupiter.[10] The dialogue between the poems is decisive where it speaks of the role of *libelli* ("pamphlets") in Propertius (2.13b.25–26):

> sat mea sat magna est, si tres sint pompa libelli,
> quos ego Persephonae maxima dona feram.

> For me, that would be a fairly imposing procession, if there could be
> three little books for me to give as precious gifts to Persephone.

And in Ovid (*Tr.* 3.3.77–78):

> hoc satis in titulo est. etenim maiora libelli
> et diuturna magis sunt monimenta mihi.

> This is sufficient as an inscription. Indeed, I have in my books
> a larger and more durable monument.

In the epigraph that Ovid proposes for himself, too, he highlights his own activity as a poet. The epitaphs of Tibullus in 1.3, of Propertius in 2.13b, and of Ovid in *Tr.* 3.3 converse at a distance.[11]

The epigraph, which might seem singularly modest for an author who has a successful tragedy, *Medea*, and poems such as the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* to his credit, instead represents a proud claim to his own work, with a particular emphasis given to what he has determined to be his misfortune, the *Ars amatoria*:[12] let's consider *ingenio perii Naso poeta meo* (*Tr.* 3.3.74), with the clear

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10   The connection with this Propertian passage is perhaps more direct than the evocation, however appropriately underlined, of Hor. *Carm.* 3.30 and Prop. 3.2: Ingleheart 2015, 296–300.

11   The complexity of the operation is further emphasized by the relief given to another model of *Amores* 3.9: the mourning for Bion of pseudo-Moschus, which is strictly modelled on Bion's lament for Adonis: see Reed 1997. Two commentaries on the *Epitaph of Adonis*, Fantuzzi 1985, and Reed 1997, are attentive to the Latin parallels. Radici Colace 1971 highlights the important points of contact between the *Epitaph of Adonis* and ps.-Theocr. 23. On this last composition Hunter 2002, is useful. On the epitaphs in elegy see Ramsby 2007.

12   It would seem somewhat reductive to say that Ovid refers only to amatory poetry because at the time of his exile the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* had not been published, as Videau-Delibes 1991, 342–343 would have it.

reference to *Tr.* 2.1–2 and the mention of *libelli*, which are one of the charges against him.[13] Compared to the other elegiac epitaphs, the insistence on the concrete epigraphic nature of the verses, which would be destined to be read by the traveler who also goes in a hurry (71) and are engraved with large letters (*grandibus in tituli marmore ... notis*, 72), is remarkable.[14]

Significantly, in the *Tristia* these fantasies of death are addressed to Ovid's wife, a fact that naturally also implies a call to action. The models he evokes are those of the exemplary wives of myth or, for example in *Tristia* 3.3, that of Antigone—the way in which this exemplum is presented indicates its argumentative function well (67–68):

> Non vetat hoc quisquam: fratrem Thebana peremptum
> > supposuit tumulo rege vetante soror.
>
> Nobody forbids this: despite the prohibition of the king
> > the Theban sister buried her slain brother.

Here Ovid means: to you instead, my wife, no one has imposed any prohibition and therefore you have to act.[15] The heroization of the wife also involves a reference to the model of the suffering hero (57–58):

> quod potes, extenua forti mala corde ferendo,
> > ad quae iampridem non rude pectus habes.

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13   On the dialogue at a distance between the epitaph of *Tr.* 3.3 and the first verse of *Am.* 1.15 and of *Tr.* 4.10 and the meanings that are conveyed, Casali 2016, in particular pp. 37–43, is important.

14   Discussion of this epitaph and its location in *Tristia* in Houghton 2013, 355–356. Naturally, there is no shortage of epitaphs in which the lover, now dead, laments the cruelty of a loved one. The final epigram of ps.-Theocr. 23.47–48, which contains the nucleus from which the story springs, is significantly close to the inscriptions that in elegy eternalize the cause of the poet's death, the sufferings of love inflicted by the cruel beloved. The motif knows a revival again in the elegies attributed to Lygdamus, in a composition which is a variation of Tibullan funerary motifs. For this typology of inscriptions see Navarro Antolín 1996, 189; also Ramsby 2007, 115–121.

15   The reasoning remains implicit: Augustus is not like Creon, and therefore your task is lighter than Antigone's. Of course, saying that Augustus is not like Creon could have problematic resonances. In the *Epistulae ex Ponto* we find a similar, but more explicit statement: at 1.2.119–120 it is said that if Fabius Maximus were afraid of Augustus, he would make of him a Theromedon, an Atreus, a Diomedes. The negative portrait of the *princeps* would therefore be his responsibility: it would be he who would turn into a bloodthirsty tyrant one for whom the model of Apollo is claimed. The same form is found at 3.1.119–124 where Ovid addresses his wife, who should approach Livia.

> By bearing them, as you can, with courage, lessen these evils,
>> against which for a long time you have had a well-trained heart.

This finds a parallel in Vergil, *Aen.* 1.198–199:

> o socii—neque enim ignari sumus ante malorum—
> o passi graviora ....[16]

> O my comrades—for we are not without experience of evils before
>   this—
> O you who have endured worse things ...

The thought of death is already a leitmotiv of Propertius's elegy: to imagine his own funeral and his tomb, over which his beloved, finally moved by his fate, sheds her tears, is for him, as for Tibullus, a dream to caress with pleasure. Death is for Propertius the main space in which the utopia of happy and fully reciprocated love is realized. Ovid, on the other hand, is already dead: his disappearance will somehow solve his difficult situation, as long as his wife, like an elegiac heroine, does what she must and is not unequal to the role her husband imposes on her. Even moments of the representation of death in the exilic Ovid can be read according to the general principle that this poem realizes a recodification of elegiac poetry in one of its most significant motifs: the 'grammar of elegy' remains at the core of his innovations.

One striking element is the rejection of the doctrine of Pythagoras, precisely because it strongly opposes the philosopher's lengthy speech in *Metamorphoses* 15. Thus we intervene on one of the central points of the great mythical poem: the desire for a perennial life, a perspective that is no longer desirable, is now denied.

In the same way, the *Tristia* have no room for elements of the mythical world of the *Metamorphoses* that could offer a resolution of certain problems. In *Tristia* 3.8.1–14 all the possibilities of travel and escape in the air (Triptolemus, Medea, Perseus, Daedalus) are said to be completely unreal, in opposition to the only certainty, that of obtaining rescue by turning to Augustus.[17] Signifi-

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16   The parallel with Ovid is important: *nos, quibus adsuerit fatum crudeliter uti, / ad mala iampridem non sumus ulla rudes*, "I, whom fate uses to cruelly treat, / for a long time already am not untrained in any trouble" (*Pont.* 3.7.17–18).

17   The aspiration to flee is a common reason in the lyric of the tragedy: cf. Barrett 1964, 299 ad Eurip. *Hippol.* 732–734.

cantly, the same movement had been adopted in the *Amores*: in poem 3.6 the poet is going to his woman, but he must stop in front of a river that has swollen and that he cannot cross. Then, with the same introductory formula (*nunc ego*), he expresses the desire to have the wings of Perseus and the chariot of Triptolemus (13–16). Then he returns to the present moment, defining those events as *veterum mendacia vatum* (17) and resolving to plead with the river.

In the same way as it is impossible for the fabulous creatures of myth to exist, just so it is impossible for the friend to whom Ovid addresses himself to forget him (*Tr.* 4.7.11–20):

> quod precor, esse liquet: credam prius ora Medusae
> 　　Gorgonis anguineis cincta fuisse comis,
> esse canes utero sub virginis, esse Chimaeram,
> 　　a truce quae flammis separet angue leam,
> quadrupedesque hominis cum pectore pectora iunctos,
> 　　tergeminumque virum tergeminumque canem,
> Sphingaque et Harpyias serpentipedesque Gigantas,
> 　　centimanumque Gyen semibovemque virum.
> haec ego cuncta prius, quam te, carissime, credam
> 　　mutatum curam deposuisse mei.

> It is clear that my prayer is true: I would sooner believe that the head
> 　　of the Gorgon Medusa was garlanded with snaky hair,
> that exist the dogs below the virgin's groin, that exists Chimaera,
> 　　a lioness and a fierce serpent hold apart by flames,
> that there are four-footed creatures with breasts united to human
> 　breasts,
> 　　and a three-bodied man and a three-bodied dog,
> and the Sphynx, the Harpies, and snake-footed Giants,
> 　　Gyas of the hundred hands and the half-bull man.
> I would rather believe all these things, than that you, dearest friend,
> 　　have changed, and put aside your affection for me.

Ovid lists monsters produced by the union of multiple bodies, which had naturally had a place in the *Metamorphoses*, where this phenomenon is regarded as possible on the basis of Empedoclean doctrine.[18] On the contrary, in the *Tris-*

18　Useful in this respect is Nelis 2009, who offers a discussion and also a general bibliography on the Empedoclean component in Ovid's poem. On the interrelation between Pythago-

tia Ovid assumes—we could almost say flaunts—a Lucretian point of view,[19] and proposes anew Lucretius' argument about the impossibility of the existence of composite creatures (*DRN* 5.878–906).[20] This move, however, is not intended as the *apologia* of a form of poetry that eschews mythological traits because it must be strictly scientific or simply adherent to everyday reality. Ovid's poem intends to show clearly its fictional character and its literariness.[21] The catalog itself has some traits of virtuosity that refer to his earlier output[22] and that reach their apex in lines 16, *tergeminumque virum tergeminumque canem* (cf. *Ars* 3.322 *Tartareosque lacus tergeminumque canem*) and 18 *centimanumque Gyen semibovemque virum*, a clear echo of two other verses— *semibovemque virum semivirumque bovem* (*Ars* 2.24) and *et gelidum Borean egelidumque Notum* (*Am.* 2.11.10)—which, as Seneca the Elder (*Contr.* 2.2.12) informs us, attracted much criticism.

In the *Epistulae ex Ponto* we proceed further: the events of the myth are real and therefore offer a way out to those who are protagonists of extremely painful events. They cannot, however, be valid for Ovid, who denies himself the possibility of a solution available to the characters of the *Metamorphoses*, for whom transformation implied a liberation from the tragedy they were experiencing. A notable example is found in the second epistle of the first book, to Paullus Fabius Maximus (27–36):

> fine carent lacrimae, nisi cum stupor obstitit illis:
> > et similis morti pectora torpor habet.
> felicem Nioben, quamvis tot funera vidit,
> > quae posuit sensum saxea facta mali!
> vos quoque felices, quarum clamantia fratrem
> > cortice velavit populus ora novo!
> ille ego sum lignum qui non admittar in ullum;
> > ille ego sum frustra qui lapis esse velim.
> ipsa Medusa oculis veniat licet obvia nostris,
> > amittet vires ipsa Medusa suas.

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ras and Empedocles in the *Metamorphoses*, see Hardie 1995, 212–214. In *semibovemque virum*, a memorable hemistich (see *Ars* 2.24), the Empedoclean parallel is clear: see Rusten 1982.

19   This is evident in the revival of the figure of the Chimaera, for example, a variation on Lucretius' figuration (5.904–906), which is a faithful rendering of the Homeric model.

20   On this passage, for the philosophical problem in particular, see Campbell 2003, 139–161; cf. also *DRN* 4.732–733 within the theory of perception.

21   See Rosati 1979, 128–135 and Rosati 1983 (2016), 88–92.

22   Rosati 1983 (2016), 90 n. 88; see also Rosati 1979, 130 n. 43.

> vivimus ut numquam sensu careamus amaro,
>> et gravior longa fit mea poena mora.

> There is no limit to tears until the dullness makes them end
>> and a dullness similar to death dominates my soul.
> Blessed Niobe, although she saw so many funerals,
>> who, having become stone, has lost the ability to feel pain.
> Blessed are you too, whose mouths in tears for your brother
>> the poplar covered with an unfamiliar bark.
> But I am the one who is not allowed to be received into any tree,
>> who can only wish in vain to be a stone.
> Though Medusa herself should come before my eyes:
>> Medusa herself will lose her power.
> I stay alive to experience bitter pain all the time
>> and my pain becomes more severe with its long duration.

Ovid now finds himself in a dimension of suffering superior to that of the famous figures of myth. Niobe and the Heliades are the objects of a paradoxical *makarismos* (1.2.29–32): by turning into stone and poplars, they have lost the ability to suffer.[23] Unlike them, Ovid cannot undergo any such metamorphosis: confronted with him, even Medusa would lose her strength (33–36) and would not be able to transform him into stone. In a first instance we can define this argument as a development of the tragic motif of the character who refuses to be consoled by the memory of those who suffered more than him- or herself: in Euripides' *Helen* (375–385) the protagonist defines her fate as more unhappy than that of two Nymphs, Callisto and Cos, who were transformed into a bear and a doe, respectively. Ovid, however, is the author of a poem of metamorphoses, including those of the Heliades, of Niobe, of Medusa. One of the fundamental structuring mechanisms of this poem lies in the fact that transformation excludes tragedy. The change of body, in fact, offers a compensation for the tragic nature of what has happened or prevents, at the last moment, the occurrence of irreparable events. Ovid cannot take advantage of this solution. He continues to live for no purpose but to perpetuate his suffering, and his condition finds a parallel only in the pains of the great damned of the Underworld (39–40).

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23   Ovid is here referring to a simplified conception of metamorphosis, in contrast to the complexity of the epic poem: Aresi 2019, 153–156.

Sic inconsumptum Tityi semperque renascens
     non perit, ut possit saepe perire, iecur.

Thus Tityus' liver, which is never consumed and always grows again,
     does not die, so that it might die many times.

The re-introduction of metamorphosis in the first book of *Tristia* is different. There, Ovid asked that the sudden transformation of his own fate be added to his poem (1.1.119–120). In fact, in the poetry of exile there is an evolution towards despair. Furthermore, some motifs are treated rhetorically: Ovid uses the same elements in different ways depending on the different situations, a strategy that is especially clear with regard to the great theme of friendship. What happens in the myth is no longer unreal, but in the world where the poet lives, solutions that were practicable there do not exist. Thus the same phenomenon occurs with Ulysses or Jason, heroes who could enjoy all the resources of the world of myth and whom therefore he places in a position of inferiority in comparison to himself.

The structures that shape these works at a deep level are significantly activated in an epistle that represents a turning point in the exilic corpus, namely *Pont.* 3.7. Ovid begins this elegy of rupture by saying that by now words fail him as he finds himself always asking the same things, and he feels ashamed of putting forward prayers without end; at the same time he fears that his correspondents feel bored, always hearing the same requests (*taedia consimili fieri de carmine vobis*, 3). The exile then begs forgiveness for having pestered his friends and expresses his intention to avoid being a burden to his wife, an honest woman, but one evidently unable to offer help.

Ovid will manage to endure this too, trained by this time to confront the evils that have befallen him and ready to die in a barbarous land (13–20).

hoc quoque, Naso, feres, etenim peiora tulisti:
     iam tibi sentiri sarcina nulla potest.
ductus ab armento taurus detrectet aratrum,
     subtrahat et duro colla novella iugo.
nos, quibus adsuevit fatum crudeliter uti,
     ad mala iam pridem non sumus ulla rudes.
venimus in Geticos fines: moriamur in illis,
     Parcaque ad extremum qua mea coepit eat!

You will endure this too, Naso: you have endured worse;
     now you can't feel the weight of any burden.

> The bull just taken from the herd rejects the plow
> > and withdraws its untied neck from the hard yoke;
> I, whom fate has treated cruelly,
> > I have not been unfamiliar with any evils for some time.
> I have come to the land of the Getae: may I die among them,
> > and may my Fate travel to the end the road that it has begun.

We cannot nourish a hope that turns out to be vain and to expect something better from the future can only make the present worse (13–34). At this point Ovid really puts himself in an epic-tragic dimension: in the words *hoc quoque, Naso, feres …* (13) we hear again the words of Ulysses who thus addresses his heart: "Endure, o heart, you have endured something worse" (*Od.* 20.18 τέτλαθι δή, κραδίη· καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο ποτ᾽ ἔτλης), words that pass into Aeneas' speech to his companions after they have escaped from the storm in the first book of the *Aeneid* (198–199; see above). And in the decision to die in exile we hear the words of Dido which in turn reproduce those of the great Greek tragedy, of Sophocles in particular (*Ajax* 430–480): "we will die unavenged, but let us die" (*moriemur inultae, sed moriamur*, *Aen.* 4.659–660).

Ovid is therefore determined to desist from prayers, rather than to formulate them without meaning. His friends have not dared to undergo a demanding trial, he adds, but if they had done so, Augustus would have listened to them. Now, if the wrath of the prince does not prevent him, he will die as a hero in Pontus (35–40).

Even in this case, death has become not only an important topic, but a cornerstone of one last, paradoxical argumentative strategy. Ovid, in saying that he is ready for death, proposes motifs that are present in a text, *Idyll* 23 of ps.-Theocritus, earlier connected with the laments for Adonis and for Bion, which Ovid takes up in *Metamorphoses* 14 for the story of Iphis and Anaxarete. Lines 19–24 of *Idyll* 23 powerfully express a willingness to bother no longer those who do not answer him at all, and a resolve to die:[24]

> ἄγριε παῖ καὶ στυγνέ, κακᾶς ἀνάθρεμμα λεαίνας,
> λάινε παῖ καὶ ἔρωτος ἀνάξιε, δῶρά τοι ἦνθον

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[24] This song before suicide has a literary experimental character (Copley 1940). Its objective is sufficiently ambitious, to create a story with strong colors to echo the *erotika pathemata* of elegy (Palumbo Stracca 1993, 366). The analogy with themes used in the schools of rhetoricians has been identified (Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1906, 81–82). Particularly important is the moment of the epitaph, which with its epigrammatic tone is at the origin of the narrative development; cf. n. 14.

λοίσθια ταῦτα φέρων, τὸν ἐμὸν βρόχον· οὐκέτι γάρ σε,
κῶρε, θέλω λύπεῖν ποχ᾽ ὁρώμενος, ἀλλὰ βαδίζω
ἔνθα τύ μευ κατέκρινας, ὅπη λόγος ἦμεν ἀτερπέων
ξυνὸν τοῖσιν ἐρῶσι τὸ φάρμακον, ἔνθα τὸ λᾶθος.

Cruel and hateful boy, son of an evil lioness,
boy of stone and unworthy of love,
I came to bring you the last gifts, here they are: my noose. Never
    again
I want to bother you, boy, with my sight, in fact I'm leaving
where you condemned me, where it is said that there is for lovers
the common medicine of sorrows, where oblivion is.

Ovid, then, is dead. This, in *Ex Ponto* 4, is the outcome of the metaphor of exile as death. It is a matter that is now taken for granted, and one which produces conceits, perhaps even predictable ones, in the last elegy of the book (4.15.1–5; 45–52):

invide, quid laceras Nasonis carmina rapti?
    non solet ingeniis summa nocere dies
famaque post cineres maior venit et mihi nomen
    tum quoque, cum vivis adnumerarer, erat,
cumque foret Marsus ...
...
dicere si fas est, claro mea nomine Musa
    atque inter tantos quae legeretur erat.
ergo submotum patria proscindere, Livor,
    desine neu cineres sparge, cruente, meos!
omnia perdidimus, tantummodo vita relicta est,
    praebeat ut sensum materiamque mali.
quid iuvat extinctos ferrum demittere in artus?
    non habet in nobis iam nova plaga locum.

Envious one, why do you want to destroy the poems of the late Naso?
    Normally the final day does not harm those who have genius
and after the ashes comes a greater fame; and I had a name
    even then when I was counted among the living,
and when Marsus was alive ...
If I may say so, my Muse had an illustrious name
    and was such as to be read in the midst of such great authors.

> Therefore, Envy, stop tearing me to pieces, now that I have been
> expelled
> > from my homeland. Stop! Do not scatter my ashes, cruel one.
> I lost everything, only my life was left me, to give
> > the sensation and the material of trouble.
> What pleasure is there in sinking the iron in the body of a dead person?
> > There is no place in me for a new wound.

These verses are the last, or among the last, composed by Ovid. The fourth book of the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, in which they are the last verses of the last elegy, is the final fruit of Ovid's creativity; and this epistle, which is placed in its final position and whose theme is Rome's literary world in Ovid's own times, was likely among the last to be written. The author's bitterness, indeed his desperation, is strong and on display: the only thing left to him is life, and this has happened only so that his suffering might continue. Then his Muse will be silent and soon after death will come. The affectionate reader in Rome who had come to the bottom of the scroll that contained the fourth book of the *Ex Ponto* probably already knew that the author had died in the place of his confinement.

The catalog of poets occupying the greater part of the epistle is framed by two references Ovid makes to his own death. The fame of a poet is greater after death, and this is the current condition of Ovid in exile (1, 51). In an ingenious move, the traditional concluding wish to be famous after life is thus overturned. The pride of the exile is that he was famous already in life, when there were many poets in Rome. The catalog is therefore the background that is built for the celebration of the late Ovid, who now looks from afar, since he is somehow dead and has now left the arena of competition.

In addition, as was already noted, in the reprise of the last poem there are several noticeable echoes of the last poem of *Amores* 1, which also opens with an apostrophe to Envy (*Quid mihi, Livor edax, ignavos obicis annos*, "Why, ravenous envy, do you reproach me for these years of sloth?"), goes on to offer a catalog of poets, and ends like this (39–42): "Envy feeds on the living, but to the dead gives peace / if a well-deserved honor protects them, / and finally, even when that supreme fire will have consumed me, / I will live and the greater part of me will survive." Ovid had already alluded to this poem in the epilogue of the *Metamorphoses* (15.871–879), so that all of his work welds itself into a unit under the sign of the conquest of perennial fame.

In addition, the last verse of *Pont.* 4.16 repeats with a variation a verse of the previous epistolary collection, *Pont.* 2.7.42 (*vixque habet in nobis iam nova plaga locum*, "and in me there is hardly a place for a new wound"), where the replacement of *vix*, "hardly," by *non*, "not," clearly indicates how Ovid has over

the years proceeded in the direction of despair. This image, however, is well attested in the Hellenistic epigram, where the poet targeted by the darts of Eros is frequent.[25] Archias (?), *Anth. Pal.* 5.98 is particularly close:

> Ὁπλίζευ, Κύπρι, τόξα καὶ εἰς σκοπὸν ἥσυχος ἐλθὲ
>   ἄλλον· ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔχω τραύματος οὐδὲ τόπον.

> Arm yourself with arrows, Aphrodite, and quietly go away to
>   another target: I don't even have the space for a wound.

Ovid also has before him the reworking of the motif in Propertius's elegy, where the lover, so vexed that he is now practically dead, continues to be attacked by Love (2.12.18–20):

>   si pudor est, alio traice tela tua!
> Intactos isto satius temptare veneno:
>   non ego, sed tenuis vapulat umbra mea.

>   If you have any shame, shoot your darts elsewhere.
> It is better to attack those who have not yet been touched with this poison:
>   It's not I, but my frail shade who suffers these blows.

Here too there is a reconversion of themes that constituted an organic part of the previous poetic universe.[26]

The poetry of exile does not constitute a single block, and this also applies to the representation of the author's death. At the beginning annihilation is invoked; then, with the passage of time, in relation to the construction of a role for the poet in a world that, for better or for worse, has its definite traits, a possibility of immortality is outlined. Similarly, the status of the mythical events of the *Metamorphoses* changes: pure myths exemplify at first unreality, then experiences of a reality better than that in which the exile is forced to live.

In this paradoxical and extreme world it can also happen that Ovid becomes an object, a possession that belongs to his savior. It is no longer the artist who is the author of his own creation and therefore the one who determines the

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25   Posidipp. *Anth. Pal.* 12.45.1; Meleager *Anth. Pal.* 5.198.5–6.

26   Already re-proposed in *Am.* 2.9.13–14 *quid iuvat in nudis hamata retundere tela / ossibus? ossa mihi nuda reliquit amor*, "what pleasure is there in blunting hooked arrows on bared bones? Love has left me nothing but bared bones."

destiny of those he celebrates, but these are what make it possible for him to survive.[27] In the first elegy of the fourth book of the *Ex Ponto*, it is Sextus Pompeius who is compared to the great sculptors of antiquity and, like them, he is invited to protect his work (35–36):

> sic ego sum rerum non ultima, Sexte, tuarum
> > tutelaeque feror munus opusque tuae.

> so it is said that I, not the last part of what you have,
> > be it a gift and a fruit, Sextus, of your protection.

The life that the patron will have in the future is now linked to that which in the present is guaranteed to the poet (line 21):

> levis haec meritis referatur gratia tantis

> and to your merits, so great, this slight gratitude is destined.

In the last elegy addressed to his last patron (15), Ovid simply belongs to him, a difference linked to the negative evolution of the poet's situation as it is represented in the last book of the collection. His being a property of his patron also overcomes the aspect of boredom (*taedia*) in dealing with the same requests continuously (29–30), a conclusive reason that was in the foreground also in 3.7. Indeed, metamorphosis now seems complete.

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27   For the redistribution of authorial roles to its recipients in the poetry of exile, see Martelli 2013, 222–229.

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Seeing and Knowing in Roman Painting

Bettina Bergmann

A seated male and a standing woman lock gazes (Fig. 8.1). The man, a cap over his unkempt hair and holding a traveler's staff across his lap, sits on a column drum in an open pose, his body turned toward the viewer. The woman, in contrast, stands upright, in profile, her left arm across her waist with a spindle and distaff in hand, while her right fingers rise to touch her chin. The couple's identities are clear from his scraggly appearance and pointed cap and from her characteristic gesture of thought. They are identifiable from the situation itself. Indeed, this is one of the most famous recognition scenes in ancient literature: Ulysses, disguised as a beggar, has returned to Ithaca after twenty years.

Is Penelope puzzled, in doubt, or at this very second seeing her husband for who he really is? The static, protracted confrontation remains unresolved, leaving the viewer in suspense about both their states of mind. Tension is heightened by the presence of another viewer, a female peering over a wall, who mirrors our own observation of the couple. In this way, differing points of view and levels of awareness intersect, both within and without the picture. The emphasis on looking is not without irony, for it will be not be Ulysses' visual appearance, but his *words* that ultimately reveal his true identity. Resolution of the impasse requires a storyteller, and we are invited to supply, in the mind's eye, past and future events and even the verbal exchange between the two.

The encounter of Ulysses and Penelope, a classic example of *anagnorisis* (recognition, discovery, disclosure), introduces the topic of this essay: how seeing and knowing are depicted in Roman mythological painting. In Homer's epic, Ulysses' homecoming occurs gradually, as a series of revelations of his true identity through the senses, primarily through vision, but also touch (the scar) and scent (Argos), as well as memory. The hero's successful return and physical survival depend upon the perceptions of others. The female onlooker in the fresco may well be Ulysses' nurse Eurycleia, who has earlier identified him by the scar on his leg, while this moment, the final recognition of husband by wife, will secure Ulysses' return to his former self. It was a popular scene in visual media and theater from the 6th century BCE and appears in several Campanian frescoes of the 1st century CE, such as this panel in the Macellum

FIGURE 8.1   Ulysses and Penelope. In situ, Macellum, Pompeii, ca. 60 CE.

in Pompeii. None of these visual representations matches a specific textual passage, but all simply present the most easily recognizable elements of the reunion.[1]

Moments in which characters experience different kinds of vision, and thus knowledge, were extremely popular in Roman art, yet they have never been

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1   The panel remains in situ on the north wall of the Macellum: Barringer 1994. On recognition in the *Odyssey*, see Murnaghan 1987; Cave 1988, 22–24, 250–255; Mueller 2016.

studied as a theme. Wall paintings depict far more than the classic *anagnorisis*, the identification of a lost kin,[2] by including a range of mental and emotional states: foresight, flashbacks, epiphanies, hallucinations, blindness, rapture, lapsed memory, and metamorphosis. The following essay articulates some of the ways in which seeing is represented on painted walls. We extend the analysis from the viewpoints of figures within a picture to those of external spectators like ourselves, for it is the act of looking that collapses the distance between ancient and modern viewers: we respond to the same scenes that Romans saw. This fact should not imply that those responses are the same. In fact, ancient optical theories suggest that vision was experienced quite differently from modern, Western viewing habits, which have been shaped by photography, screens, and the moving image.[3]

How might ancient spectators have recognized and how do we recognize what is happening in a picture? Here a visual vocabulary is crucial. The viewer needs to know which poses and gestures in ancient art convey certain states of mind and how compositional structures invoke particular types of situations. Consider the encounter between Ulysses and Penelope. The formula appears in a panel from the House of Jason, where a seated Paris tries to persuade, or test, a standing Helen, whose left arm, like Penelope's, is bent and covered with drapery (Fig. 8.2). There are differences. Paris, a prince and no beggar like Ulysses, wears fancy robes, and Helen's bare right arm hangs loose rather than rising to touch her lips in thought; the third figure, Eros, is not a mere onlooker, but steps from the doorway between the two, urging them on. Despite the variations, the separation of the figures and the traffic of gazes across the space convey a pause, a confrontation, a moment of decision between a man and a woman. The two scenes actually were paired in a reception room painted in the Augustan period in the House of the Five Skeletons (VI.10.2); the parallel con-

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2 *Anagnorisis* was defined by Aristotle as a change from ignorance to knowledge, revealing either a close relationship or enmity (*Poetics* 11.1452a30–32); Cave 1988, 10–54; Kennedy and Lawrence 2009, 1–5.

3 The bibliography on theories of haptic vision, intromission and extromission is enormous. For the purpose of this essay, see Bartsch 2006, 57–103 on optics and the eye of the lover. The study of Roman visuality has experienced a boom in recent decades, although the gap between ancient and modern ways of seeing is rarely taken into account. Notable studies of Campanian painting include Frederik 2002 on the erotic gaze; Elsner 2007, 67–109 on parallels in ecphrasis and painting; Squire 2016; Platt and Squire 2017. A different approach has been taken by Clarke 1998, 2003, and 2007, who challenges the notion of a generic Roman Viewer constructed from fragmentary texts of elite male writers and considers a range of viewers, including slaves, freedmen, women, old, young, straight, and gay. The present essay focuses on one aspect of viewing in narrative scenes, namely the shifting viewpoints and levels of awareness of depicted figures.

FIGURE 8.2 Paris and Helen. MANN 114320, from the House of Jason, Pompeii (IX.5,18),
          ca. 10 BCE.

figuration must have invited a comparison in which a straying Helen emerges as the antithesis of the good wife, Penelope.[4]

Because most modern viewers come to know the stories through texts, it is tempting to see the frescoes as illustrations, or to cite literary passages as explanatory captions. Indeed, analogies between paintings and texts abound. Some images also recall descriptions of performances, especially pantomime dances. Yet attempts to match frescoes with specific passages or with transitory spectacles inevitably falter due to the distinct nature of each medium. Such attempts reduce the nuances of each to a few common denominators and overlook the conditions of their making and reception. Erudite Roman writers and professional performers lived and worked quite differently from each other and from the anonymous workshop craftsmen who painted walls and laid mosaic floors. So too, readers, auditors, and spectators encountered the stories in quite specific and dissimilar contexts. The painted static scenes were *physically present* in the viewer's space, to be seen *over time*, and ignoring the experiential reception of the pictures misses their open-ended narrative power.

That said, one cannot deny that images, texts, and performances share a vocabulary of figural types and structures of seeing and narrating. On painted walls, *schemata* known from earlier statues, paintings, and mosaics operated as quotations with meaningful associations.[5] Similarly, pantomime performers drew upon the audience's knowledge by ending their routine with frozen poses (*schemata*) imitating a famous statue or painting.[6] These visual *topoi* estab-

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4   On the House of Jason, see Bergmann 1996. The frescoes from the House of the Five Skeletons are now badly faded, but are recorded in drawings: *PPM* 4, 1039–1040. The encounter between Ulysses and Penelope corresponds closely to that in the Macellum, although Eurycleia stands directly across from Penelope rather than peering over a wall. The scene of Paris and Helen reverses the order of the panel in the House of Jason; between them Eros now reads a rotulus, perhaps narrating what will come. The third panel in the room represented another prominent woman in the Trojan war, Cassandra.

   Note the following abbreviations used in this chapter:

   MANN = Museo archeologico nazionale di Napoli.

   PPM = Baldassarre, I., ed. 1990–2003. *Pompei, Pitture e Mosaici*. 10 vols. Rome.

5   On *schemata*, see Settis 1984, 210–211; Catoni 2005. On the importance of formulaic body types for recognition: Pearson 2015; Elsner and Squire 2016, 192; Bergmann 2017. Gutzwiller 2004 gives an excellent account of how both text and image can convey the inner thoughts of a character through postures and gestures.

6   On the shared vocabulary among media, see the cogent statement by Dunbabin 2014, 234. Lada-Richards 2004, 2013 makes a strong case for a reciprocal influence of figural gestures and postures among the *Metamorphoses*, pantomime dancing, and the visual arts; similarly,

lished connections among discrete stories, constituting an intermediality that resembles the intertextuality of mythical exempla in written narratives. Even more intriguing correspondences emerge in the thematic groupings of three or four scenes in painted rooms, where juxtapositions invited cross-referential readings.[7]

No work comes closer to the fluid interlocking of heroic and divine *fabulae* than the *Metamorphoses*.[8] Just as individual paintings have been cut from their walls, so too episodes of Ovid's text often are studied individually. Yet it is only when they are read together, in succession, that Ovid's techniques of visualization and of slipping from one tale to another show that multiple voices and viewpoints emerge.[9] Something similar happens when one looks at the scenes within the space of a room. As Philip Hardie has said of the *Metamorphoses*: "The reader's view is frequently focalised and guided through the astonished gaze of spectators within the text, so inviting our own presence at the visual feast of the poem."[10] Likewise, the perspectives of internal viewers shape the

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Franzoni 2006 stresses that *schemata* should not be understood as crystallized formulae but as fluid and changeable. Theatrical intertextuality was not new in the Roman period: Lamari 2018, 185 discusses how in Greek tragedy allusions to static images served as "'hyperlinks' connecting a performance with mental images 'stored' in the audience's visual memory," thereby adding depth to the perception of the play.

7 For a recent summary of scholarship on the visual combinations in Pompeian rooms, with a case-study on the *schema* of the amorous couple, see Lorenz 2018; also Lorenz 2014, on rhetorical aspects of pictorial ensembles in the House of Menander.

8 Lorenz 2018, 56 rightly warns against seeking direct, one-to-one correspondences between Ovid and Pompeian paintings. An example of a reductive analysis is Knox 2004. The only concrete example of a direct connection between a Pompeian painting and Ovid is a quotation from the *Heroides* inscribed onto a scene of Phaedra, but it was added independently after the painting was completed; Swetnam-Burland 2015. A thorough investigation of correspondences between the *Metamorphoses* and Roman art is the long-term project led by Francesca Ghedini and Isabella Colpo at the University of Padua, "MarS: Mito Arte Società nelle Metamorfosi di Ovidio"; among the many resulting publications, see Colpo 2008, 2010; Colpo and Ghedini 2012; and the culminating exhibition "Ovidio: amori, miti, e altre storie," Farinella et al. 2018. It should be stressed that one can find many parallels between the paintings and other texts besides Ovid's; notable are the epylliac "snapshots" that similarly mark a turning point, shift temporal levels, embed stories delivered by characters, incorporate analeptic and proleptic devices, and are open to alternative endings; Sistakou 2009.

9 A unique exception that captures, in single images, the continuous narrative of each book of the *Metamorphoses*, is the series of engravings from an 18th-century edition: von Albrecht 2014.

10 Hardie 2002, 173–174. See also the comment by Rosati 2002, 274–275: "the text invites us to consider the plurality of narrative levels and the different involvement and interests of

spectator's understanding of events, while novel combinations invite alternative narratives within the stories.[11]

We begin by looking at a few individual panels now removed from their walls and placed in the Naples Archaeological Museum. Ranging from quiet moments, such as that of Ulysses and Penelope, to dramatic, action-packed turning points, they show how wall painters could communicate varying perspectives and states of knowledge within a single scene and thus enable an external viewer to see the situation through different sets of eyes. We then consider groupings of pictures within rooms. What happens when three or four scenes, each filled with multiple internal onlookers, surround a living spectator? The cognitive process of that spectator (whether ancient or modern), who becomes immersed in concurrent, intersecting perceptions and emotions, indicates a level of complexity and subtlety not yet acknowledged.

1   Seeing and Knowing

Appearances are deceptive, and doubt about the reliability of vision lies at the core of mythological scenes. A whimsical spin on disguise can be seen in a fresco from the House of Jason (IX.5.18), painted in about 10 BCE (Fig. 8.3).[12] A bull has appeared on the shore where Europa and her well-dressed companions have assembled. Instantly entranced by the gorgeous creature's magnetism, Europa has climbed onto the bull's back, her torso exposed, her right arm lifting the veil above her head to reveal herself while her left hand, holding a ribbon, reaches for one of the animal's small (and unthreatening) horns. A friend, garment slipping down her arm, wraps a floral garland around the creature's bulging neck and appears ready to lean forward and plant a kiss on the bull, while two more companions may be queueing to do the same. The innocent, wide-eyed young women may see a bull, but they seem to sense something

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the actors who participate in the narrative transaction … the text also shows us how the same story can be narrated in completely different ways (for example, by changes in the times and rhythms of the narration, narrating voice, and point of view)"; also Rosati 1983, 129–152 on a "poetics of spectacularity." On changing narrative voices within the text, see Wheeler 1999, 185–193, 207–210; Barchiesi 2001, 49–78; 2002, 180–199. For an introduction to Ovid's use of the visual arts in the *Metamorphoses*, see Solodow 1988, 203–231; Feldherr 2010.

11   On spectators in Roman painting: Michel 1982; Sharrock 2002; Elsner 2007, 88–91; Lorenz 2007; onlookers in painting in general: Fricke and Krass 2015.

12   MANN 111475.

FIGURE 8.3 Europa on the Bull. MANN 111475, from the House of Jason (IX.5.18), ca. 10 BCE.

more and are preparing to assert themselves.[13] We know the "bull" to be a divine disguise, a visual ruse that a split second later will launch a whirlwind abduction across the sea (and the painting may well be assuming that we can visualize the more popular and more dramatic scene on Pompeian walls of the bull charging over the waves, Europa's drapery fluttering in the wind as she looks back at shore).[14] The god looks directly out of the picture, either working his charms or indicating his ruse to us as spectators. A knowledgeable viewer can foresee what will come, but is powerless to warn Europa and stop the impending violence. The ominous inevitability inherent in viewers' familiarity with the tale heightens their awareness of the peril threatening the trusting young female mortals.

Our role as spectator is less collusive, yet more complicated with an enormous panel from the House of the Citharist (1.4.5; Fig. 8.4).[15] The eye immediately goes to the magnificent figure of Bacchus, resplendent in flowing garments, an ivy wreath atop his long, curly locks, a leopard-skin draped across his chest, and a fennel staff, the thyrsos, in his right hand. We witness an epiphany, a sight to astound. In the picture, however, the god himself is astounded by the sight of a mortal woman, Ariadne. He halts so suddenly that his drapery flutters around him. Ariadne, abandoned by Theseus on the island of Naxos, is oblivious, lying in a deep sleep with her back to us, her head and arms in the lap of a winged personification, probably Hypnos (Sleep), who lifts a branch from a bowl to sprinkle poppy seeds over her eyes. As Eros at the center of the composition unveils Ariadne's body and Hypnos keeps her asleep, the two look up to the god gazing down at the bared woman and our eyes follow theirs, and his. In the background, Bacchus's entourage reacts to the god's reaction. On the left, a dark-skinned, bearded Pan raises his hand, fingers splayed wide in a gesture of *aposkopein*, the shielding of the eyes from an overpowering vision; behind

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13   On Europa as a naïve viewer in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, unable to see through the verisimilitude of Jupiter's disguise despite the bull's supernatural gentleness, Feldherr 2010, 253–257, especially 255: "she is so absorbed by the real presence of the bull that she misses the real presence in the bull" (NB *miratur* 2.858). Note that the bull here is brown and not the gleaming white emphasized by Ovid, but it does have relatively small horns (*Met.* 2.852–859); Anderson 1996, 335.

14   This room in the House of Jason featured three tranquil, idyllic outdoor scenes against a luminous white ground, each with an animal (bull, horse, goat) or a hybrid (Pan, centaur): Europa on the central, east wall; Hercules, Deinaneira, and Nessus on the north; a musical contest between Pan and a nymph on the south: Zevi 1964; *PPM* 9, 1999, 700–707. In contrast to such quiet scenes of Europa on the shore portrayed in the Third Style (Hodske 2007, 200), the more numerous Fourth Style paintings of the second half of the 1st century depict Jupiter racing across the sea; Hodske 2007, 200–202.

15   MANN 9286. The panel was recently cleaned, restored, and published in color; Sampaolo and Hoffmann 2014, 164–165.

FIGURE 8.4   Bacchus and Ariadne. MANN 9286, from House of the Citharist Pompeii
                        (I, 4, 25), ca. 60–79 CE.

him, flute-playing Bacchantes widen their eyes; and at the right a satyr helps
old Silenus climb a hill, informing him of what is happening. Still further in the
upper distance another satyr signals to a comrade below, next to Silenus, echo-
ing Pan's hand gesture of astonishment. The visual shock reverberates far into
the landscape.

Ancient viewers would know what comes next. This was the most popular
myth on Pompeian walls.[16] But beyond recognizing the story, the spectator is

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16   Hodske 2007, 159–162; Lorenz 2008, 111–120 counts seventeen examples, all painted in

invited to interact with it. Unable to see what Bacchus does, we witness a god's awe, and the alert onlookers lure us to feeling amazement. Just as Bacchus can gaze at Ariadne for as long as she sleeps, we can explore the many aspects of this arrested moment in our own time. We can linger on Ariadne's exposed backside but only can imagine the god's view of her front, a compositional device of hiding that adds an erotic frisson and, as we shall see, is extremely effective in Roman visual narratives.

Jupiter's ruse and Bacchus's epiphany stimulate varying degrees of awareness among internal and external viewers. Europa and Bacchus are both awestruck, in one case a mortal woman is captivated by a male god disguised as a beast, and in the other a male god is mesmerized by an unconscious mortal woman. Those around them register the impact of what Europa and Bacchus see. In another picture, we are again privy to an epiphany, but the reactions of internal viewers clash with, rather than reinforce, the visual wonderment. A tour-de-force of a visual narrative combining divergent ways of seeing and not seeing, and thus different degrees of knowing, is the "Sacrifice of Iphigenia" (Fig. 8.5). It is a unique composition with two horizontal zones. Below, the frontally-posed figures form a row like a chorus line and together convey fluctuating states of mind and emotion. The focal point is the vulnerable Iphigenia, her eyes cast upwards and her nude body on full display, but we are the only ones looking at her. At the right, the blind seer Calchas, holding the knife and ribbons for Iphigenia's sacrifice, shifts his gaze to the sky and raises a right finger to his lips in a gesture of surprise, insight, perhaps speech. At the far left, beside the statue of Diana, Iphigenia's father Agamemnon stands as an antithesis to the omniscient seer by turning away, head veiled and hand over his eyes, believing that he knows what is happening but is doubly-blinded to what actually transpires. Meanwhile, the men in the center holding Iphigenia, presumably Ulysses and Menelaus, are turning in opposite directions, one to face Calchas, the other apparently toward Diana's statue (who is also gazing upward) or directly to the sky, as if they already are responding to the sudden shift in events to come while recognizing the presence of divine forces at work.

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the Fourth Style, most depicting Ariadne from the front. Among the numerous studies of Ariadne paintings: Fredrick 2002, Elsner 2007; Colpo 2011. In the House of the Citharist, the panel was featured in a large reception room along with two others; one is lost, but the panel from the central wall depicts Iphigenia at Aulis, on the point of recognizing Orestes and Pylades. Both panels showcase nude bodies (in one case female, in the other male), both depict an imminent rescue, and both show a moment full of expectation, with characters still in the act of looking; however, the pictures show more differences than similarities: the Bacchic scene is dynamic and full of excitement while that of Iphigenia is psychologically tense; Bergmann 2014, 72–74.

FIGURE 8.5   The Sacrifice of Iphigenia. MANN 9112, from the peristyle, House of the Tragic
            Poet (VI.8.5), ca. 60–79 CE.

Everyone appears locked into his or her own reaction; only we can put them
all together and become aware of a flash forward to the upper zone, like a
seer or god—normally impossible with physical mortal eyes—and witness an
epiphany of Diana. The goddess, partially emerging as if from a cloud, repeats
Calchas' gesture of finger to lips as she looks at Iphigenia, who flies through the
sky, glancing backward while grasping the antlers of the sacred deer that has
replaced her. Omitted from the scene is a portrayal of the moment when she
is whisked from the altar; the before (below) and after (above) events leave us
to fill in, from our previous familiarity with the tale, the goddess's miraculous
intervention.[17]

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17   Sharrock 2002, 260–261 sees in this scene the recurring scheme of "powerless, looked-at

The fresco appeared alone in the small peristyle of the House of the Tragic Poet (vi.8.5) but is connected with scenes in other rooms featuring females in the Trojan War.[18] It is often regarded as a copy of a 5th-century BCE picture by Timanthes, a composition praised by several Roman authors for the artist's rendering of divergent responses. Writing in the early 1st century, Valerius Maximus highlights the range of emotions in the original painting: "Consider too that other no less famous painter who portrayed the grievous sacrifice of Iphigenia, placing a sad Calchas, a mournful Ulysses and a lamenting Menelaus around the altar. Did he not confess by veiling Agamemnon's head that the bitterness of deepest grief cannot be expressed by art? So his painting is wet with the tears of the soothsayer, the friend and the brother, but left the father's weeping to be judged by the emotions of the spectator" (8.11).[19] The Pompeian fresco, like the original, presents a multidimensional situation, a kind of "Rashomon" story line that can only unfold in the time it takes for the external viewer to make out the dramatically shifting cognitive states of foresight, terror, and liberation in the various characters portrayed, and, most ingeniously, to supply in the mind's eye the father's hidden emotions, thereby adding the spectator's own reaction to the cacophony of impressions.

For an entirely different engagement with opposing perspectives, we turn to one of the most popular recognition scenes in Roman art, the discovery of Achilles on Scyros (Fig. 8.6 left).[20] The hero, disguised as a female, has been hiding among the daughters of King Lycomedes until cunning Ulysses tracks him down and catches him by burying armor among the female gifts that he and Diomedes bring to court. In this moment, the trap is sprung and delivers a shock. Achilles, tricked by the sight of weapons and the sound of the war trumpet, instantly springs into action, revealing his true identity. Like a sensational climax on stage, women and soldiers crowd around him with dynamic,

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      women, powerful 'looking' men, and still more powerful goddesses"; Iphigenia is eroticized by the association of the virgin sacrifice with sex.

18   MANN 9112; on the House of the Tragic Poet (vi, 8, 5), see Bergmann 1994. Another representation of this sacrifice in Pompeii (vi.5.1–2), now destroyed but preserved in a watercolor, shows Calchas cutting Iphigenia's hair and, on the right, Agamemnon sitting, veiled, and turned away; Hodske 2007, 258.

19   *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium* 8.11, Ext. 6, trans. Shackleton-Bailey. Similar accounts of the figures' mounting emotions in Cicero *Orator* 74 and Quintilian *IO* 2.13.11–13. For a thorough discussion, see Platt 2014, 224–231.

20   MANN 116085, from the House of Achilles or Domus Uboni (ix.5.2). There appear to be damage and repairs in the area of the clasping arms, but Ulysses's grip is clear in a close variation from the House of the Dioscuri (vi.9.6), MANN 9110.

FIGURE 8.6 Left: Achilles Discovered on Scyros. MANN 116085, from the House
of Achilles or Domus Uboni (IX.5.2), ca. 60–79 CE. Right: Achilles and
Chiron. MANN 9109, from the so-called Basilica in Herculaneum, ca. 65–
79 CE.

diagonal movements, wide-eyed expressions, raised arms and splayed hands,
while at the pinnacle of the compositional pyramid the looming, elderly king
Lycomedes gazes out past us into another time and space.[21]

Unlike the narratives of Europa and Iphigenia, the external viewer witnesses
the live action along with spectators within the picture. No god is present. Mor-

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21   At Ov. *Met.* 13.165–170, Ulysses takes credit for discovering Achilles:
      arma ego femineis animum motura virilem
      mercibus inserui, neque adhuc proiecerat heros
      virgineos habitus, cum parmam hastamque tenenti
      'nate dea,' dixi 'tibi se peritura reservant
      Pergama! quid dubitas ingentem evertere Troiam?'
      iniecique manum fortemque ad fortia misi.

      I was the one who hid, in the women's trinkets,
      arms that would rouse a warrior. As he stood there,
      still in his dresses, and reached out his hand
      toward shield and spear, I told him: 'Son of Thetis,
      Troy, doomed, is waiting for you: why delay her?'
      It was my hand that sent a brave man forward
      to his brave deeds. (trans. Humphries 2018, 311).

tality has been foretold: Achilles' biology is his destiny.[22] What transpires simulates a metamorphosis before our very eyes, and the transition from female to male performed by the hero's body requires a viewer's recognition of coded signs and gestures for feminine and masculine. Light-skinned and beardless with long hair, Achilles' flowing robe hides his genitals, and Ulysses grips his forearm in the formulaic gesture for a male abduction or rape. As the drapery and disguise fall from his pale skin, Achilles drops a mirror, the female device of reflection, and grabs the bronze shield, an emblem of his masculine military future. Ulysses' and Diomedes' tanned bodies contrast with the hero's white skin, as Achilles moves towards Ulysses and the male world of war, yet looks back to his beloved, a similarly pale Deidameia, and the enclave of feminine domesticity. The animated male and female faces and gestures surrounding him echo and clash with each other.[23]

Embedded within the frenzy is a flashback. The shield's reflection captures, in miniature, a memory of Achilles' childhood training by the centaur Chiron as the elderly tutor instructs the young hero how to play the lyre, educating him in the liberal arts as well as hunting and survival (Fig. 8.6 right). In a *schema* known from a popular marble statue group erected in the Saepta Julia in Rome in the Augustan period (Plin. *NH* 36.29), the centaur's arm encircles Achilles in a tender embrace that echoes Diomedes' grasp in the main scene. The "reflection" of an analeptic sign conjures up retrospectively Achilles' youth, just as he moves along an inevitable trajectory toward adulthood, war, and death.[24]

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22   On the distinction between how other humans and heroes perceive time and achieve self-awareness, see Sistakou 2009. At *Iliad* 9.410–416, Achilles must choose between a long, unexceptional life and an early death with glory; Trimble 2002, 230–235 notes that the episode was especially popular among 1st-century CE authors, the fullest accounts being Ov. *Met.* 13.162–171 and Stat. *Achil.* 1; Ovid refers to Homer's narrative at *Ars* 1.681.

23   Among the eleven Pompeian representations of Achilles on Scyros, all are dated to the later 1st century CE; two others are close in composition to this one, but all were located in very different settings. This panel in the small room of the House of Achilles (IX.5.2) was combined with two others from the life of Achilles: Thetis in Vulcan's shop and Thetis with the Arms of Achilles. In the House of the Dioscuri (VI.9.6–7), it occurred in the tablinum across from a scene of an enraged Achilles drawing his dagger against Agamemnon and Minerva urging the hero to restrain himself. The very same pairing appears as wall mosaics on a garden wall in the House of Apollo (VI.7.23). On the variations, see Brilliant 1982, 67–69; Trimble 2002; Lorenz 2008, 212–215; Heslin 2015, 144–151, 161–165 sees a connection with the lost frescoes in the portico of the Temple of Apollo in Pompeii.

24   Scenes of Chiron's teaching Achilles lyre playing are first attested in the 1st century BCE but examples increase in the next century. The first literary example: *Ars* 1.11; Pliny *NH* 35.134.5–7 suggests that the decoration of the shield (also represented in a painting from the Herculaneum Basilica) may cite a lost painting by Athenion of Maroneia. See Gury 1986, 446–447; Smith 1997, 78–83.
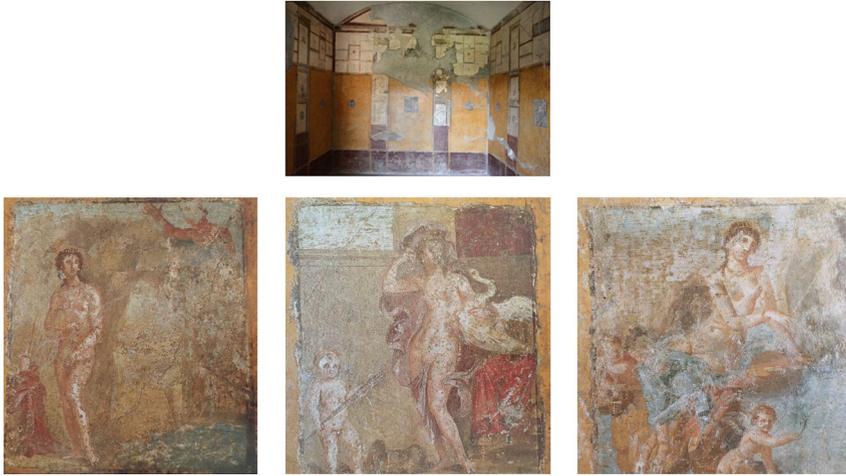
FIGURE 8.7   Top center: Room R, House of Golden Cupids, Pompeii (VI.16.7), mid-1st century BCE; In situ, left: Actaeon spying on Diana; bottom: Leda and the Swan; right: Venus Fishing.

Although all is happening in an instant, the pictured scene encapsulates past and future. Notably, it is not the hero's appearance, but his instinctual, physical reaction to seeing armor and hearing the war trumpet that unveils his true identity.

Gender is a theme that pervades mythological scenes on Pompeian walls. Each of the panels we have seen so far presents an alluring body, either of a mortal female (Europa, Iphigenia, Ariadne, Deidameia), of an omnisexual god (Bacchus), or of a gender-bending hero (Achilles). While voyeurism is clearly involved in viewing these bodies, it forms the main subject of a panel in a room of the House of the Gilded Cupids (VI.16.7). The hunter Actaeon has just chanced upon the virgin goddess Diana bathing in a woodland stream (Fig. 8.7 left).[25] In alarm he raises a splayed hand—the same gesture flashed by Pan witnessing Bacchus' sight of Ariadne. Actaeon possesses a hunter's acute tracking vision, but in this case, his catch is visual, an accident, and an epiphany.[26] More

25   On the room, see Seiler 1992, 56–57, 104–109, 113–114; Bergmann 2017, 254–255. Lorenz 2008, 207–210 lists sixteen representations of Actaeon in the Third and Fourth Styles.

26   In painting this gesture is frequent in scenes of Pan who, uncovering what appears to be a sleeping nymph, instead finds a hermaphrodite; repulsed, he turns his face away and registers his shock with a raised hand, fingers spread wide. A hunter's cynegetic vision, inductive like that of a prophet, is able to make out key details on the margins of perception; similarly, recognition scenes require sighting signs or clues: Cave 1988, 242–253.

than that, it is erotic, and Actaeon is portrayed as more than a mortal invading a god's space; he is a male voyeur. As Ovid has Diana say to Actaeon: "Tell people you have seen me, Diana, naked! Tell them if you can!" (*Met.* 3.192–193).[27] The scene is proleptic and jumps ahead, for even before the goddess turns to splash him with water, a stag's horn already is sprouting from his forehead; he is losing his human form and with it, the ability to speak.[28]

Although Actaeon's raised hand emphatically warns us not to look, there is scarcely time to register it before the goddess's large, sinuous, light-skinned body catches our eye. Our joint voyeurism is enhanced by the painter's use of a cliched sex symbol, the famous statue type of Venus after her bath, who, sensing an intruder, moves to cover her breasts and groin (Fig. 8.8). But what is happening here? This is Diana, virgin goddess of the hunt, being depicted in the guise of her rival and antithesis, the seductress Venus. How better to capture the power of Actaeon's rapturous, yet lethal vision than by presenting female beauty in its most sensuous form? We have as it were a front row seat, and perhaps a growing awareness that at any moment the goddess could shift her attention from Actaeon and catch us looking. And there is more, namely a mirroring and a double crime, for as the goddess instinctively shields her frontal body, her backside is entirely exposed to Actaeon's gaze. The two-sided viewing of the female body—already captured in Bacchus's privileged view of Ariadne—speaks directly to debates about which is preferable—the front or the back—a trope in Hellenistic and Latin literature that is intrinsic to the viewing of nude statues of women and hermaphrodites.[29]

In this room in the House of the Gilded Cupids, the viewer is surrounded by erotic female nudes. On the back wall, adjacent to the panel of Actaeon and Diana, the Venus *schema* reappears in the figure of Leda, this time in an inte-

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27   "*Nunc tibi me posito visam velamine narres, sit poteris narrare, licet!*" (trans. Humphries 2018, 62).

28   The horns are now difficult to make out but are clearly visible in an early photograph: *PPM* 5, 1994, 839 Fig. 223. On Actaeon's continued humanity in his post-metamorphic state see Sharrock and Ursini, respectively, in chapters 10 and 12 of this volume.

29   Other frescoes of the Actaeon story depict Diana as the famous Crouching Aphrodite type; Bergmann 1999, 85–90. On naked Aphrodites, see Smith 1991, 79–82; on the hermaphrodite and ancient debates about back-versus-front views of the female body and male-versus-female anatomy, id. 134; Stähli 2001; on the Venus Pudica type, see Stewart 1997, 97–107; for a feminist reading of the Cnidian Aphrodite's pose as normative in the iconography of women, Sharrock 273–275; on the problems of the "male gaze" in ancient viewing of the Venus statue, see Squire 2011, 88–109, and 103–109 (on Actaeon); on how the immobilization of the female body as a statue helps legitimize male erotic viewing under the guise of art, Segal 1998, 18–22; on nakedness in Augustan poetry and art, see Griffin 1986, 104–111.
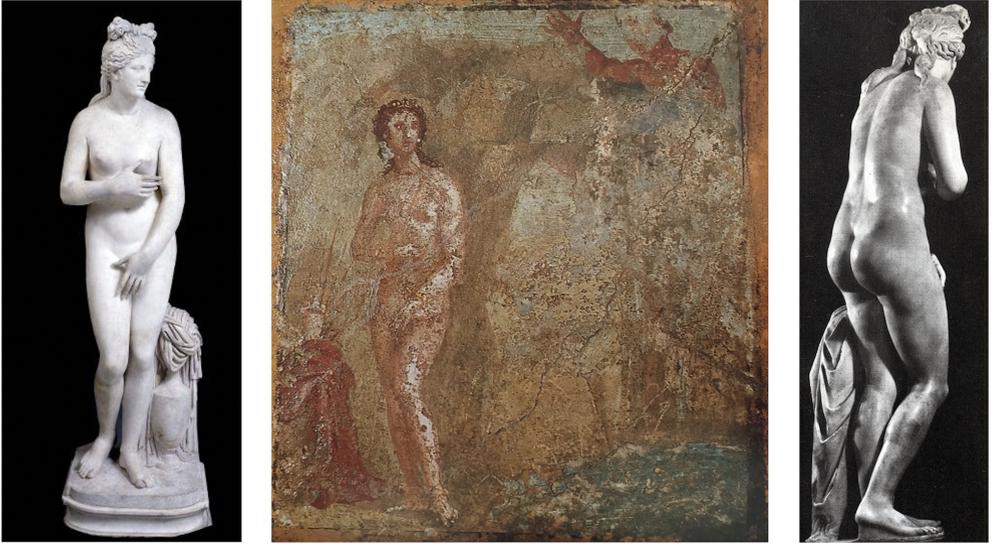
FIGURE 8.8   Left and right: "Venus Pudica," marble statue of Aphrodite, Dresden-Capitoline type, British
Museum 1934,0301.1, ca. 100–150 CE; center: Actaeon spying on Diana (cf. Fig. 8.7)

rior space and displaying a much less defensive pose (Fig. 8.7 center). Instead
of Actaeon's alarm signal, Eros stands calmly by, holding a torch, and Leda's
open body language, lifted arm, and eye contact with the swan are indicative of
receptiveness. What we see, then, is the appropriation of a well-known *schema*
of Venus, first for another goddess, Diana, and then for Leda, the mortal object
of Jupiter's desire. Goddess and mortal are both subject of the male gaze, but
the likeness stops there, for the situations portend quite different outcomes:
Leda, enamored with the swan, will succumb to Jupiter, but Diana will unleash
her fury on Actaeon. Meanwhile, to the right on the third wall, Venus herself,
the moving power behind these encounters, sits fishing at her leisure with her
companion *erotes* (Fig. 8.7 right).[30] On one level, the room offers a titillating
series of female nudes. On another, the familiar message emerges: gods rule,
innocent mortals lose.

A far more violent scene comprising entirely different experiences of sight
forms the backdrop of a dining room in the House of the Vettii (VI.15.1; Fig. 8.9).
The external viewer remains outside the picture and observes a balanced com-
position in which bodies turn outward as if posing on a stage. A group of five
women are flailing their arms in an ecstatic Bacchic trance, their garments flut-

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30   The new subject of Venus fishing, introduced in the Fourth Style, appears in twelve exam-
      ples: Lorenz 2008, 199–201.

FIGURE 8.9 The Death of Pentheus. In situ, Room N, House of the Vettii, Pom-
           peii (vi.15.1), 60–79 CE.

tering away to reveal their breasts. The object of their—and our—attention is
the central male, his nude body on display, about to be battered with a rock,
stabbed with a thyrsus, and torn limb from limb. While the maenad on the
right grabs his left arm with both of hers, the blue-clad figure on the left is espe-
cially aggressive, pinning down his leg with her foot, grabbing him by the hair
with one hand, and aiming her thyrsus at him with the other. This is Agave
attacking her own son Pentheus. Theirs is a tragic failure of communication:
as he gazes up at her and gestures for mercy, in her mania she sees, not her
pleading son, but the prized prey, a boar whose head she will later parade on a
staff through Thebes, until (we imagine) she regains consciousness of another
kind and recognizes that she has in fact beheaded her son.[31] Bacchus is invis-
ible, revealing himself through the women's frenzied movements. We, in con-

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31   This, however, is not a given: in Ovid's account Agave does not reach awareness of what
      she has done, and this fresco also leaves the outcome open.

trast, possess a clarity of vision, seeing Pentheus for the man he is and at the same time witnessing the women's inability to see him as we do. The maenads' mania-induced hallucinations blind them; our physical sight reveals the objective truth.

Anyone familiar with the story could narrate what preceded the attack and what would follow. Just before this moment, Pentheus, disguised as a woman (as was Achilles), has been spying with profane eyes upon the sacred rites of Bacchus. His mother is the first to see him, but not as himself or as a man in a disguise, rather as an animal. "No sooner does she spot the spy—whom she considers a wild animal—than she rushes wildly at him and hurls her thyrsus."[32] While Pentheus beseeches his aunts, Ino and Autonoe, for mercy, they tear him limb from limb; when he asks his mother to "see" that he is really her son (*adspice, mater* 3.725), Agave shows no pity.

The painting offers a unique viewing experience. His relatives do not see or know Pentheus, reversing the typical *anagnorisis* of lost kin, and also reversing the typical power relations between women and men.[33] We witness the women experiencing mania-induced hallucinations, but cannot see what they are seeing. Theirs is a different kind of blindness from that of Europa or Leda, unable to penetrate Jupiter's disguises as a bull and a swan. Bacchus, god of altered states, controls mortals' vision and their grasp of reality. To Ovid, Actaeon's sight had been a "mistake" (*error, Met.* 3.142) while his Pentheus confesses "that he had sinned" (*pecasse, Met.* 3.701–733), yet both Diana and Bacchus exact grisly revenge against the intruding voyeurs by having them ripped to pieces, Actaeon by his hunting hounds and Pentheus by his mother and sisters.[34]

The shared *schemata* and narrative associations in this dining room in the House of the Vettii have been well studied (Fig. 8.10).[35] Pentheus's dramatic, full-frontal pose, with one arm and one leg outstretched at a diagonal angle, head twisted and thrown back, further exposes his powerlessness and invokes the iconic posture of pathos of the Pergamon Altar, where Alcyoneus succumbs

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32   Anderson 1996, 407 on lines 710–713; 408–409 on the attack.
33   Sharrock 2002, 282–283 sees Pentheus as a "problematized" male image, in which "powerful" dressed (or semi-dressed) women surround the helpless and naked son.
34   Ovid connected their stories: Pentheus pleads for mercy from his aunt Autonoe, begging her to remember the fate of her son, Actaeon; but in her madness she has no idea what he is talking about and tears off his right arm, while another aunt, Ino, tears off his left (*Met.* 3.719–722). Segal 1998, 35 notes the symmetry of Pentheus' aunts, the sisters of Agave (NB *matertera*, "a mother's sister," 719), tearing off his right and left arms; like Actaeon earlier in the book, Pentheus no longer has the arms he needs. Both victims experience the loss of body and speech.
35   Wirth 1983; Brilliant 1984, 73–76, 78–80.
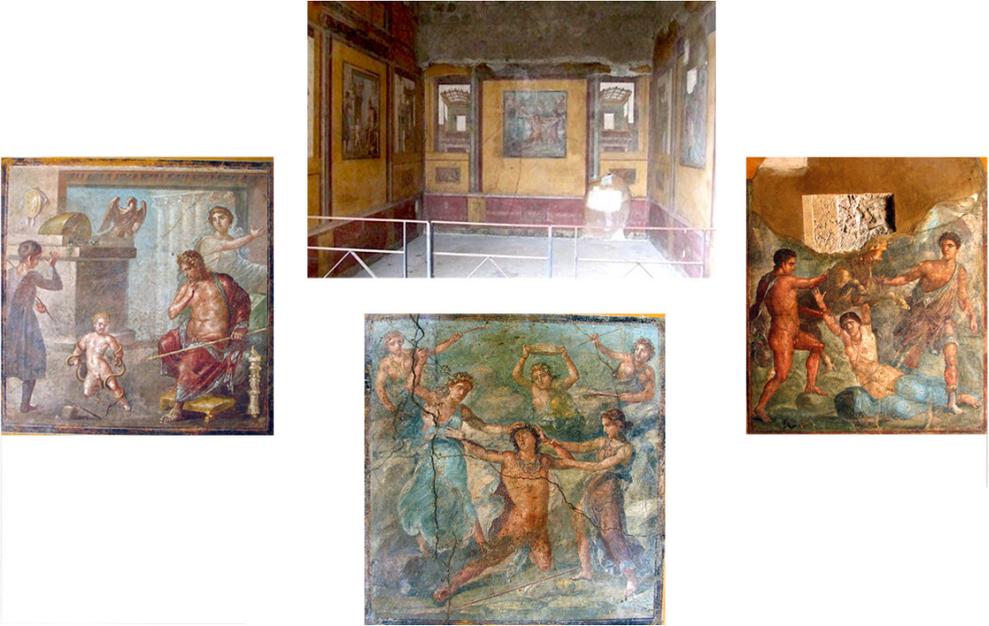
FIGURE 8.10   Top: Room N, House of the Vettii, Pompeii (VI.15.1), 60–79 CE. Left: Baby Hercules; bottom: The Death of Pentheus (cf. Fig. 8.9); right: Dirce and her Stepsons.

to Athena while his mother Gaia desperately beseeches the goddess to spare him. The staged poses of centrally placed nude figures are repeated on the side walls, on the left in baby Hercules strangling the snakes and on the right in Dirce being tied to the bull by her stepsons. All are domestic situations at Thebes featuring mothers or stepmothers (Agave, Alcmene, Juno, Dirce) and sons (Pentheus and three sons of Jupiter: Hercules, Amphion and Zethus) in a zigzagging pattern of family dynamics. Stephen Wheeler describes an analogous method used by Ovid to link tales through repeated figural types, saying that the "Daphne, Io, and Phaethon tales unfold as scenes in a serial family drama, in which the same character types recur: father, daughter, and lover, or father, mother, and son. Ovid … maintains continuity by substituting different mythological figures in the same stock roles … a common theme in all these stories is the increasing loss of parental control over the destiny of their children."[36]

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36   Wheeler 2000, 69. Similar examples in Greek tragedy are cited by Lamari 2018, 187–188: "From early in the fifth century, sinister creatures such as the maenads or Lyssa, disguised gods, and the lethal delirium of delusive parents all find their way into Greek iconography, but also into the minds of Euripides' spectators."

In two scenes in this room mortals are punished by their own relatives, namely the mother and aunts of Pentheus and the stepsons of Dirce (a worshipper of Bacchus), but in the third parental glory shines upon baby Hercules, the one happy outcome in a room that is sometimes called "the chamber of horrors."[37] That scene teases the viewer with a play of appearances. Directly above Hercules the golden eagle must be Jupiter himself delighting in his son's prowess. The bearded male on the right reacting to the feat with astonishment, with finger raised to lips, would seem to be the mortal father Amphitryon, whose guise Jupiter had assumed to seduce Alcmene. But the figure wears a wreath, holds a scepter, and sits on a throne decorated with a prominent eagle. How can we know (if even Alcmene couldn't), whether this is the mortal husband or Jupiter in disguise? Could he be both?[38]

Although not a direct influence on the ensemble in the House of the Vettii, Book 3 of the *Metamorphoses* offers an illuminating perspective on forbidden sight as a connecting theme. Narcissus suffered by seeing someone he should not (a simulacrum of himself), and his fate resonates with the preceding tales of Actaeon and Semele encountering gods, as it does with the following story, that of Pentheus.[39] A viewer conversant with the *Metamorphoses* might remember the prophecy of blind Tiresias, who predicted that Pentheus would die a violent death after *seeing* something that he should not, only then to be taunted by Pentheus for his lack of sight (*Met.* 3.511–527). Tiresias places Pentheus within a series of tales revolving around Thebes; so, too, an informed viewer in the House of the Vettii room would encounter and explain Pentheus as at the center of three Theban events.

Our final exploration of viewpoints in mythological painting is in a small room in the House of the Citharist (1.4.5), right across the peristyle from the reception room featuring the panel of Bacchus discovering Ariadne discussed above. The only fully preserved panel from the room, now in the Naples Museum, is a composition in two parts (Fig. 8.11). At the apex of a pyramid, a woman sits on a rock; a cow lies directly below her on the vertical axis, head cocked at the same angle. Forming the horizontal axis are the extended arms of

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37   It is common in pictorial room ensembles for a third panel to offer a contrast to the other two, such as the tranquil scene of Venus fishing next to the active interactions of Diana and Leda in the House of the Gilded Cupids.

38   An early literary parallel to this scene is a portrayal of Theocritus' "Little Heracles," *Idyll* 24.55, which "freezes" the moment when Hercules grasps the snakes by the neck, forming a tableau and retarding the action by shifting perspective to the reactions of the mortal parents and the household in a "psychological perception of time"; Sistakou 2009, 308–309.

39   Cancik 1967, 213; Fondermann 2008, 143–144 n. 103.

FIGURE 8.11   Io and Argus. MANN 9557, from Room 37, the House of the
                   Citharist, Pompeii (1.4.5), ca. 60–79 CE.

two males: a seated shepherd on the left locks gazes with a standing nude male,
who is handing him a pan-pipe. The two axes represent two tales of metamor-
phosis. The woman is the nymph Io. Jupiter has seduced her in a dark cloud
and has been found out by his jealous wife Juno. To protect Io from Juno's
wrath, Jupiter transforms her into a cow. Ever suspicious, Juno places a herds-
man named Argus, a creature with a hundred eyes—here depicted as a simple
shepherd—to guard over the captive cow.[40] Io, painfully aware of her bovine

40   MANN 9557, dated in the 60s CE; Bergmann 2014, 79–81; Sampaolo and Hoffmann 2014,
      168–169. Note that here, as in the fresco of Europa, the cow is brown and not snow white
      as described by Ovid (*Met.* 1.610–612). The painter probably chose to represent Argus as a
      shepherd to harmonize with the other two scenes in the room. On such variations in fres-
      coes: Lorenz 2008, 229–230; Ghedini 2011. A similar panel of Io remains in situ on the west
      wall of the Macellum in Pompeii (VII.9.4) as a pendant to that of Ulysses and Penelope:

form, suffers greatly, and, seeing her, Jupiter orders Mercury to kill Argus. The swift-footed god disguises himself as a shepherd (but here is frontally nude as a sign of his divinity). As Mercury entrances Argus with the sounds of the pan-pipe, he proceeds to relate the origin story of the instrument at such mind-numbing length that he bores the watchman to sleep. The god will then quickly behead Argus and release Io.

In this portrayal, Mercury is telling his tale, signaled by the syrinx placed at the very center of the picture, the pivot in the story. Any viewer familiar with the *Metamorphoses* will note right away that the scene corresponds closely to Book 1, lines 689–779. Ovid is the first known author to embed the tale of Syrinx, another metamorphosis, within the episode of Io, telling how the nymph, chased by Pan, was helped by her sisters to elude him and changed into reeds. Forlorn, Pan bound the reeds together, and voilà, the pan-pipe was born. Argus is listening. The instant he nods off, Mercury will act, and the external narrator, namely Ovid, will take over and finish the tale himself.[41]

We enjoy a privileged view and witness the coexistence of "true" and "false" identities. Io appears trapped behind the origin tale, her fate in suspense. She is speechless. (In Ovid's telling she is only able to low.) Io's lifted veil and exposed breast display her beauty and vulnerability, and her wide-eyed gaze—directed out of the picture toward us—captures the incongruity between her external appearance as a cow and her human psychological state. (One could even see Io's expression as a "thought-cloud" of the cow below.) We observe that Argus's perception is limited; he seems unaware of Io the woman, and just guards Io the cow. We, in contrast, see Io in both her true and transformed guises. To Argus, Mercury is a simple shepherd; we behold a glorious deity. We witness a fake herdsman (Mercury) talking to a real herdsman (Argus) guarding a fake cow (Io). It is a humorous scene about disguise and deceit that invites knowledgeable responses. An educated viewer could unravel—perhaps out loud for the benefit of companions, and at some length—not just the metamorphosis of the nymph Syrinx (thus assuming Mercury's and Ovid's voices), but also tell Io's story from different points of view, thinking ahead to when Juno will transform her back into human form, in which case the seated Io would appear in her true guise. Time is elastic. By embedding an internal narrator—and one-third of the *Metamorphoses* features such—Ovid puts us outside the current story and in another time and place. The viewer of the painting can add more narrative voices, opening the story outward

41   On the Io episode in Ovid, see Feldherr 2010, 15–26.

into flashbacks and foreshadowings, or looking inward to the tale-within-the-tale of the syrinx.

The Io panel once appeared in a small room opening onto a peristyle that probably was used for leisure and entertaining. Within a decorative scheme of yellow, red, and black, three square pictures, one on each wall, depicted a mortal and an immortal in a landscape (Fig. 8.12).[42] When the house was excavated, the picture with the Io scenes was the only intact panel and was quickly removed, while just the lower parts of those on the east and south walls survived. Luckily, these fragmentary scenes were recorded in drawings and now can be identified through comparisons with better-preserved frescoes from other houses in Pompeii. For example, on the east wall, the moon goddess Selene descends from the sky toward a hunter, a sleeping Endymion. On the south, back wall, Venus holds the wounded young hunter Adonis, who rests in her lap.[43]

The stories of the two goddesses, both besotted with beautiful, androgynous youths, offered a compelling contrast: while the moon goddess Selene's nocturnal visits recur in an endless cycle as Endymion remains her eternal lover, even if in a deathlike slumber, there is an impending finality to Adonis expiring in Venus's arms. The two tales were paired in poetry from the Hellenistic period onward, and in the 2nd century CE the Greek satirist Lucian wrote a comical dialogue in which the goddesses commiserate with each other and compare their experiences. Venus addresses Selene directly, describing the way the moon goddess appears when she flies above, gazing at, and then descending upon, Endymion:

> **Venus:** What is this I hear about you, Selene? When your car is over Karia, you stop it to gaze at Endymion sleeping hunter-fashion in the open; sometimes, they tell me, you actually get out and go down to him.

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42   Until recently the House of the Citharist was little known because the excavations of the 1860s were not well documented and much was lost; Sampaolo and Hoffmann, 2014.

43   On the 19th-century drawings of the Endymion and Adonis panels, De Vos 1990, 128–131. The closest surviving scene of Endymion is in the House of Ara Massima (VI.16.15) and that of Adonis, in the House of the Colored Capitals (VII 4.32.51). In order to create a harmonious triptych, the muralists added two seated foreground figures to the Endymion panel, a shepherd on the left foreground to match Argus in the Io panel and at the right, a water nymph with a hydria to correspond to the Mercury. Lorenz 2008, 216–218 counts sixteen examples of Selene and Endymion on Pompeian walls; three scenes of Venus and Adonis, id. 176–180. On visual memory and the *schema* of the reclining male nude used for Endymion and Adonis, Pearson 2015; Elsner and Squire 2016, 193–203.
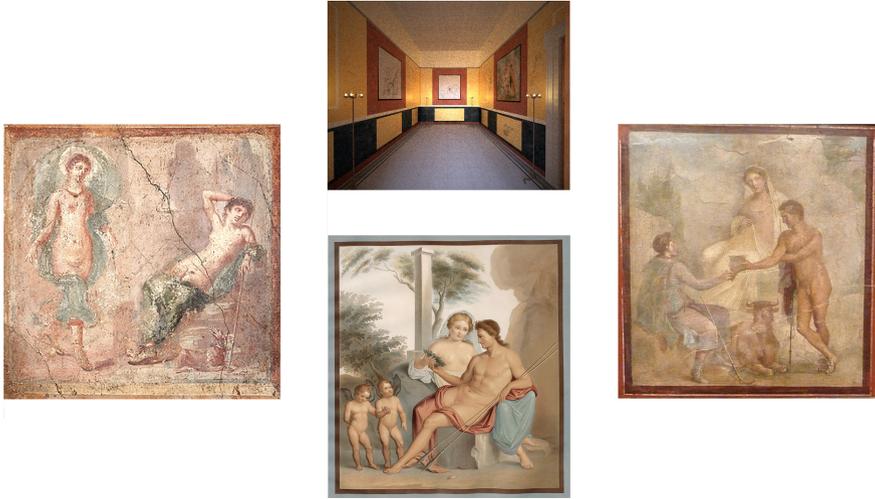
FIGURE 8.12   Top: Reconstruction of Room 37, the House of the Citharist (I.4.5), ca. 60–
                79 CE. James Stanton-Abbott. Left: Selene and Endymion. In situ, Room F,
                House of Ara Massima, Pompeii. (VI.16.15); bottom: Venus and Adonis. In situ,
                Room 18, House of the Colored Capitals, Pompeii (VII.4.31); right: Io and Argus
                (cf. Fig. 8.11).

> **Selene:** Ah, Venus, ask that son of yours [namely Eros, love]; it is he
>   must answer for it all.
> **Venus:** Well now, what a naughty boy! ... But tell me, is Endymion hand-
>   some? That is always a comfort in our humiliation.
>   ... to which Selene responds, describing a vision that perfectly
>   matches the painting.
> **Selene:** Most handsome, I think, my dear; you should see him when he
>   has spread out his cloak on the rock and is asleep; his javelins in his
>   left hand just slipping from his grasp, the right arm bent upwards,
>   providing a bright frame to his face, and he breathing softly in help-
>   less slumber. Then I come noiselessly down, treading on tiptoe not to
>   wake and startle him—but there, you know all about it; why tell you
>   the rest? I am dying of love, that is all.[44]

The two panels on adjoining walls, like the goddesses in Lucian's tale, engage
in a visual dialogue with each other, and a living spectator can chime in. The

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44   Adapted from Lucian, *Dialogue of the Gods* 11, trans. Fowler, Oxford 1905; for an earlier
      version: Theocritus, *Idyll* 3.47–50.

goddesses gaze at the nubile bodies of their beloved mortals, who are turned outward, towards us, so that we see what Venus and Selene see; while they are engaged in looking, we also can survey the goddesses' partially exposed bodies.

The three compositions illustrate how juxtapositions add new dimensions to each story. As if choreographed, the mortals—Endymion, Adonis, and Io— all sit or recline in three-quarter view with legs extended toward the viewer's left. It is tempting to imagine this space as occupied by two or three people lying on couches in the very same position, legs extended to the left, just below the mythical figures. Looking up, the diners would see that the highest figures in the panels are female—Selene, Venus, Io (a third goddess, if one thinks ahead to Io's subsequent apotheosis in Egypt)—but the eye inevitably returns to the foreground and to the delicate mortals Adonis and Endymion, whose pale, youthful bodies contrast with the tanned, powerful god Mercury. The panel with Io is the outlier in this triad. While the goddesses lust after male mortals, Io, having been ravaged and transformed by a male god, is at the mercy of nego- tiations between another male god, Mercury, and Argus, a male watchman, who is working in the service of a female goddess, Juno. The power hierarchy is clear: goddesses like Selene, Venus, and Juno suffer emotionally over the fate of mor- tals and are weaker and more fragile than the virile male divinities. In a room like this, the longer one looks, the more threads connecting the tales untangle and new ones can be woven.[45]

2   Conclusion

We believe what we see every day. Many people think that perception is the simple act of opening our eyes and observing what is out there. Roman texts and images deny any such belief. The pictures I have discussed demonstrate that vision is far from a simple cognitive act. In fact, these examples celebrate its extraordinary complexity. Many characters within these portrayals cannot see and thus, do not know: Ariadne (asleep), Agamemnon (self-blinded to Iphi- genia's sacrifice and unexpected rescue), Agave (manic hallucination). Others may see, but still do not know: Europa and Leda (naïve to Jupiter's disguise), Argus (a watchman with a hundred eyes, yet unable to keep them open and hence blind to a metamorphosis), Penelope not (yet) recognizing her missing

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45   Bartsch 2006 on optics and erotic viewing in the 1st century CE. Barchiesi 2002, 187 on
      Venus addressing Adonis (*Met.* 10.578–579). Successful exploits of both male god and poet
      are invoked by Ovid in *Am.* 1.3, where Ovid promises to make his mistress famous as earlier
      poets had done to Io, Leda, and Europa, certainly not a reassuring list of exempla.

husband. Some see, but are helpless to speak or act (Actaeon, Io, Selene, Venus). For others, seeing is an assault and a transgression (Actaeon, Pentheus). Sometimes it is only action that allows one to see: who within the throng around Achilles (in addition to Deidameia) knows the hero's true identity before the horn blast? Ulysses and Diomedes do not see him for who he is until he moves. Finally, and most importantly, those without physical sight know all: Calchas (foresight).

In effect, these mythological paintings are as much about perception as about the tales themselves. Intensified by the reactions of internal onlookers, they widen the scope of vision and raise questions about the power and limits of physical sight, about seeing and knowing, perception and cognition, sight and insight. We learn that the eye is unreliable and easily fooled by appearances, inviting danger, and that, because recognition is fallible, so too is the knowledge that it reveals.[46]

To return to our initial question, what happens when three or four scenes, each filled with multiple viewers, surround a living spectator? Posing frontally, looking or gesturing in our direction, some of those viewers directly engage with us. The living spectator (ancient or modern) becomes immersed in concurrent, intersecting reactions and in the process animates the stories in real time. The viewer's role fluctuates. Sometimes we identify a god's disguise (bull, swan, cow), but at other times we are as unsure as the other characters within the picture (Amphitryon or Jupiter?). When heroes and mortals through their own powers of vision become enlightened or make a transition, we possess a clairvoyance as if we were gods and seers, looking ahead to an epiphany and a rescue (Iphigenia) or recollecting a back story that points to the future (Achilles' shield). We experience panoramas and insights that our mortal eyes are not equipped to see.

The painted rooms of Pompeii and other Roman sites were not picture galleries, but spaces of daily life. It may be difficult for most modern homeowners to imagine, but many of the mythological scenes remained on the walls of houses for generations, some as long as a century. Over such a time span, individual responses must have been infinite. Rather than being merely isolated images, such paintings created an interactive environment that involved the viewer in the room. The key to this engagement was the ability with which painters brought their figures to life, in different states of consciousness, an artistic narrative skill that goes far beyond storytelling.

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46 Cave 1988; Kennedy and Lawrence 2009, 2–3, on recognition scenes as a problem moment that creates uncertainty about knowledge itself. On the instability of seeing and knowing in the *Metamorphoses* (in the light of his portrayal of Pythagoras), see Fondermann 2008, 133–156; on the vulnerability of mortal sight and speech, Feldherr 2010, 244.

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The Niobids and the Augustan Age: On Some Recent Discoveries at Ciampino (Rome)

Alessandro Betori and Elena Calandra

The Niobid statuary group, discovered during the excavations in Ciampino, Rome, represents a turning point in the artistic representation of the myth.[1] Through the study of technical, stylistic, and iconographic references, it is possible to date these discoveries to the first years of the Augustan principate. On the basis of this date, the Ciampino find may be the oldest known attestation of this ensemble in its entirety.

The theme of hybris punished, as represented in the myth of Niobe and her children, relates closely to the ideology of Augustus. If the owner of the villa in Ciampino was in fact Marcus Valerius Messalla Corvinus, as we are tentatively assuming, then Ovid, who was a member of Messalla's circle, may have actually seen these statues and perhaps even have drawn inspiration from them.

1 The Niobids: The Context and the Site Identification Proposal

1.1 *The Discoveries*

During the Summer of 2012, the "Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici del Lazio" discovered several statues of the Niobids while evaluating the archeological site at "Muri dei Francesi" in the town of Ciampino, a short distance from Rome. These surveys revealed part of a bath complex belonging to a lavish

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1 This chapter by Betori (part 1) and Calandra (part 2) is the first in-depth publication in English about Ciampino Niobids. As such, they take into account other works recently published by the authors in French or Italian (Calandra, Betori, and Lupi 2015; Betori 2016, 23–52; Betori 2017, 25–34; Calandra 2018, 85–87; Betori 2019a, 223–230; Betori 2019b, 110–115; Calandra 2019a, 116–121; Calandra 2019c, 9–32) and shortly in English (Betori 2019d, 378–380; Calandra 2019b, 381–383). See also the catalogs of two exhibitions presented in Tivoli and Rome on the occasion of the two thousandth anniversary of Ovid's death (Bruciati and Angle 2019; Ghedini et al. 2018) as well as Ghedini 2018. At the moment, the definitive study, by Betori and Calandra, of the excavation and of all the materials found in it is in progress. The photos of Quirino Berti that we present here are courtesy of the Istituto Autonomo Villa Adriana e Villa d'Este.

Roman villa, the original construction of which is datable to the Augustan era. It is situated on the modern Via dei Laghi, which runs from Via Appia Nuova towards the lakes of Castelgandolfo and Nemi. During antiquity, this area lay between the Via Appia and Via Latina, between mile IX and X, on the border between Rome and the ancient *municipia* of Bovillae and Castrimoenium. The area was crossed by a secondary road, perhaps an ancient variant of the Via Latina, known as Via Castrimoeniensis, and by another important road known as Via Cavona or Via Valeria. Many ancient vacation villas were located here, including the Villa of Voconius Pollio, the Villa Colle Oliva, and most important of all, the large Villa of Tor Messer Paoli, mistakenly referred to in the past as belonging to the Valerii Messallae but today identified as the Villa Mamurrana, an imperial property.

These plots within the Muri dei Francesi were identified after the discovery in 1861 of lead pipes on which were inscribed the names of Valerius Messalla and Gaius Valerius Paulinus; the identity of this Paulinus is unknown. This information allows us to confirm that the "Villa dei Valeri" must have been located within the site excavated in 2011 and 2012.

The property, which is encircled by a wall probably built in the late Renaissance period, originally belonged to a noble Roman family, the Colonna, but it belonged to the Zoffoli family from Marino at the time when it was excavated by the antiquarian Benedetto Grandi in the second half of the 19th century.

A few of the structures found in the excavations of 2011/2012 provide evidence of how the property had been used for farming over the centuries, starting in the 2nd century BCE. It included, as can be seen in other typical rural villas nearby, a residential part (*pars urbana*) built during the Augustan period or slightly before. This date can be determined by the presence in it of *opus reticulatum* masonry, by the chronological evidence of some mosaic fragments, and, on a preliminary basis, by the study of excavated objects, especially in the complex of the *natatio* (swimming pool). This initial investigation ended in 2012 and was renewed briefly for a few weeks in the winter of 2016–2017.

This research revealed the remains of a thermal area with heated rooms, pools, pipes, and channels. This area received a major renovation, probably in the middle of the imperial period, which replaced part of the lavish mosaic pavements from the original construction with less costly *opus spicatum*. New excavations in the future will clarify the exact use of the areas where the Augustan-era mosaics were found as well as the original use of the bath complex, which still is not known.

During the winter of 2011, a pool was found a short distance away from the heated bath complex but set apart from it. The pool was dug out of tufa rock, and its coarse walls were lined with *opus caementicium*. On the basis of previ-

ous investigations, it appeared to have been a cistern; however, excavations in 2012 revealed that it was instead an ornamental pool with an annexed cistern separated by a wall in *opus reticulatum*. Its high level of decoration would indicate that the pool had once been a part of the nearby heated baths, but that subsequent agricultural work had leveled the foundations of the outside walls.

The part of the original pool that came to be used as a cistern had a service staircase. Neither the pool nor the staircase was still in use a few decades after their initial construction. A study of the material found in the destruction layers indicates that this part of the complex dates from the end of the 1st century BCE. The main pool was paved in *opus spicatum* (tiles laid in a herringbone design) covered with "cocciopesto" (lime mortar with crushed pottery for waterproofing) and slabs of fine Luna marble, while the inside walls had been plastered and painted a precious blue color. The main pool was accessible by way of a stairway paved in marble and decorated with striking sculptures, probably positioned on large bases of peperino stone situated in the center and all around the edge of the pool. These sculptures illustrated the myth of Niobe and her children in a context characterized by an uninterrupted flow of water. The statues, made of lustrous Greek marble containing large crystals, had fallen into the pool, from which they were recovered. They thus escaped being robbed for reuse in lime production or destroyed by the agricultural work done in and around the site. These statues, although in a very poor state of preservation due to natural weathering over time, are recognizable as representations of the myth of Niobe, being very similar to a clearly identifiable statue group found near the Porta San Giovanni in Rome and now in the collection of the Uffizi Museum in Florence.

The evidence for the date of the Ciampino group gives us useful chronological information about the spread and use of this iconography during the early imperial period. As was noted above, the complex in which the group was found seems to date to the Principate of Augustus. In that historical and ideological climate, the theme of *hybris* punished—by Augustus' divine protector Apollo, no less—seems to express the attachment of the dominant classes to the Principate.

1.2   *The Date of the Complex*

The pool, which was first used during the second half of the 1st century BCE, can be used to date the heated bath complex itself, or at least the structures that preceded it. The group of the Niobids from Muri dei Francesi is associated with the figure of M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus, a contemporary and close friend of Augustus and his co-consul in 31 BCE. He was an important figure at the battle of Actium, and poets such as Tibullus and Ovid were members of

his cultural circle. After having celebrated one of the last triumphs permitted by Augustus to those outside of his own family and after having renounced his position as *praefectus urbi* in the government of Rome, in 2 CE, Messalla brilliantly crowned his political career as an active supporter of the regime by proposing to the Senate that the title of *pater patriae* be awarded to Augustus.

The action of this illustrious protagonist during such a delicate phase in Rome's history has already been documented by a poem dedicated to him by Tibullus (1.7) that celebrates his accomplishments along the slopes of the Alban hills. Here there is mention of the construction or restoration of a road between the area of Tusculum and the vicinity of Alba Longa. This road is identified by some as the so-called Via Cavona and by others as the Via Castrimeniense. There is also an inscription on one of the lead pipes discovered in 1861 that could be attributed to Messalla or one of his namesakes, who were consuls in 20 and 58 CE.

In 2017 an overflow pipe in the pool was discovered with the name of C. Aburnius Valens inscribed on it. The inscription refers either to a consul during the reign of Trajan or to his son of the same name who lived during the reign of Hadrian. The presence of this pipe can be attributed to the restoration of the pool by its new owners, an inference corroborated by a new layer of plaster, similar to but distinct from the older one to which it was added. This renovation may have resulted in the placement or repositioning of the statues around the pool. Eventually, this new manner of display would have compromised the overall aesthetic effect of the group, revealing the unfinished side on the back of the figures and removing them from a ramp inclined towards the viewer. On the other hand, placing Niobe as the central element in this new scene on a stone base as part of a fountain in the middle of the basin would have heightened the overall emotional effect.

1.3   *The Position of the Statues*

The following sculptural finds are currently preserved:

1.   Head of Niobe; height 34 cm.
2.   Statue of daughter Ogygia, Chiaramonti type (head and statue recomposed; Greek name "Ogygia" carved in Greek letters on pedestal); height 187 cm.
3.   Statue of eldest daughter; height 180 cm.
4.   Statue of Psyche, so called (head missing); height 104 cm.
5.   Statue subgroup: young daughter, kneeling (head missing), with one of her brothers (one hand remaining); height 106 cm.
6.   Head of daughter, dying; length 23 cm.

7.   Statue of son, fleeing, on a rock; height 200 cm.
8.   Statue of son (mutilated in the lower part); height 182 cm.
9.   Statue subgroup: two dying children; length 95 cm.
10.   Statue base with feet of a male.[2]

Since most of the statues were discovered along the wall of the pool, and a large statue base in peperino-stone was discovered in the center of the pool, it seems quite likely that the statues had been placed along the outside border of the basin, around a fulcrum point represented by the statue of Niobe on the central platform. A careful examination of the position of the statues with their reassembled pieces suggests that, after having fallen in the pool, they were used for some undetermined activity that resulted in continued post-depositional damage, including breakage into more and smaller pieces. A further examination of the base in 2017 by conservator Carlo Usai demonstrated that the various statues were originally positioned on an inclined plane and that they probably had not been placed around the pool originally, but had been previously used in a different context. The original hypothesis of the placement around the pool, however, remains valid, even if other evidence seems to contradict it (e.g. the back of the statues are not finished, which makes sense only if they had been placed together and were visible only from a single, frontal observation point; there are no niches or *exedrae* around the pool, in which the statues could have been placed with their unfinished back portions remaining invisible). The evidence of ancient restoration work done in different marbles (pentelic) makes it highly probable that the statues were in use for a long time before they were moved and remounted around the pool, as is also indicated by other types of evidence discussed below.

The extremely deteriorated condition of the statues, the surfaces of which were exposed to long periods of bad weather and running water and then buried for centuries beneath acidic soil, has made it difficult to clean them, and the results obtained in the first stage of conservation (2015) were not aesthetically satisfactory. It was therefore necessary to proceed by gently and lightly blending the surfaces when joining the many pieces of statuary. The process is entirely reversible, and the heads that have been mounted can also be easily removed without damage to the original pieces. It was, however, particularly problematic, even unsafe, to remount the head of the so-called Ogygia-Chiaramonti figure, which was very badly damaged and weathered, and had thus come to be strangely out-of-scale with respect to its very thin body, and especially to its torso.

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2   Calandra, Betori, and Lupi 2015, 487–517.

Some interesting technical details are visible in the sculpting of the figures, which are also seen in figures of various sizes and representing different ages in the Florentine group. In particular, these figures were each cut out of a single block of precious Greek marble, identified with reasonable certainty as coming from the quarries of Aphrodisias in Caria. Some probably ancient restorations of many figures resulted in the use of different marbles for some limbs that replaced the originals, and more can be identified in the inelegant work done at the back of the statues to attach these limbs. Finally, the use of supports in some of the figures has generated debate, as yet unresolved, among experts in ancient sculpture.

On the basis of data from the most recent excavations, nothing would absolutely exclude the hypothesis that the sculptural decoration was added to the pool as part of a restoration and renovation carried out by a later owner of the villa. The dating elements associated with these excavations, however, indicate that the pool was likely not in use beyond the middle imperial period. The assumption of a premature end of this luxurious bath complex, as presented above, needs to be reconsidered, especially in view of recent evidence about the change in the villa's ownership in the first half of the 2nd century CE and the likely movement or reorganization and possible contemporaneous restoration of the sculpture group. This hypothesis, however, is also contradicted by the continued use and maintenance of adjacent structures for decades and perhaps even centuries after the renovation.

2   The Niobids: Display and Significance

After comparing the literary and archaeological evidence, one can put forward some questions. How, generally speaking, did the Niobid group come into being as an artistic subject? When was the Ciampino group in particular created? How was it displayed? And, what role did Ovid play in all of this?

Over the centuries the Niobids were represented in different artistic forms and in distinct chronological phases, to the point that any unique archetype representing Niobid myth does not seem to have existed. This much is evident thanks to the systematic work of Karl Bernhard Stark and is reflected in general overviews of the subject.[3]

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3 Stark 1863, 325–336. The book deals with the myth in literature (26–97) and the figurative arts (98–36), including the ethnographic component (337–448) and the modern reception (8–25). See also Lesky 1936, 644–706; Mansuelli 1963; Schmidt 1992, 908–914; Geominy 1984

There are additional reasons why the impact of Ciampino discovery is impressive. Scholars normally have to deal with sculptures that in modern times have undergone restoration on the basis of misunderstandings. For instance, the richest collection of Niobids, the one found in Roma at Vigna Tomassini on the Esquiline hill and now housed in the Uffizi Museum in Florence, has undergone various substitutions and alterations over the years.[4] In contrast, the Ciampino statues were recently found together in context and are fresh, even if the surfaces have been damaged by the acid soil. Further, while some statue types known from tradition were easily recognized in the Ciampino find, the subgroup of the two dying children is totally new. It therefore makes sense to ask questions about sculptures that are currently exhibited in museums but may not have been identified as Niobids because they were restored incorrectly according to other iconographies.

There are some fixed points for the general chronology of the group.[5] The models of the female statues can be traced back to the second half of the 2nd century BCE. For instance, the statue of Cleopatra in the house of Delos, epigraphically dated to 138–137 BCE, seems to be the best point of reference for the eldest daughter (No. 3). The shape of the bust, which is very tight, is even closer to a statue of a Muse from a sepulchral monument, which has now disappeared, from Kerameikos, attributed to the Athenian Euboulides II, son of Eucheir II, and also dated to the years between 130 and 120 BCE. A date from the middle of the 2nd century BCE can be proposed for the Rhodian models of the Muses that were still being carved in the first decades of the 1st century BCE. All these references give a possible time frame of twenty years of *termini post* for dating the archetype of the eldest daughter, Ogygia (no. 2), and of the so-called "Psyche" (no. 4).[6]

On the other hand, the creation of some of the male figures is certainly earlier. The fugitive Niobid on the rock (no. 7) derives his unbalanced posture, which is characterized by an emphatic outward movement of the body, from the Skopas Pothos.[7] The dramatically close, sunken eyes in the faces of the two

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and 1992, 914–929; Queyrel 2016, 269–272; Schollmeyer 2017, 19–23. Helpful online resources include *LIMC*-France (no date); Pellizer and Zufferli 2007; Iacolina 2019.

4   For the display of the statues in Florence see Diacciati 2005, 207; Natali and Romualdi 2009; Fatticcioni 2019.

5   Calandra 2015, 508–520.

6   Calandra 2015, 508–509. For the Rhodian statuary Gualandi 1976, 7–259; Linfert 1976, 93–97 (comparisons with small-scale female statuary, especially 94 and 96–97, nos. 218 and 224); for large-scale Muses see Bairami 2017, no. 26, figs. 91–92 (middle of 2nd century BCE), no. 27, figs. 93–94 (100 BCE), and no. 30, figs. 102–103 (end of 2nd century BCE).

7   Stewart 1977, 144–146.

sons (nos. 7 and 8) are influenced by the pathos for which Skopas is known. This expressiveness is not normally visible in Niobid statues in the museums that have been restored in the past according to modern aesthetic criteria. Traces of Skopas are also to be found in the features of the single, unidentified female Niobid (no. 6).[8]

Attribution to the master of Paros is invoked as an alternative to Praxiteles by Pliny the Elder in the famous passage referring to the Niobids exhibited in the temple of Apollo Sosianus.[9] In point of fact, the Ciampino group is not immediately suggestive of Praxiteles' style; on the other hand, a pair of heads from the shipwreck of Mahdia (corresponding to Niobe and the Chiaramonti type) reveal the stylistic language of the Athenian master, which is noticeable in the oval shape of the faces and in the contrast between smooth surfaces and hair. In any case, neither the Ciampino statues nor the Mahdia's heads seem a direct copy from the two great masters. Rather, they look chronologically distanced from both, and not by little. The effect of both models is in fact expanded: the pathos and the postures of the male Ciampino statues are more striking than in the corresponding Skopas types; the forehead of the Mahdia's Niobe is carved in a rounded way and the area around the mouth is fleshy, in a style indebted to Praxiteles but influenced by Daxmophon of Messene, in the first half of the 2nd century BCE. A good comparison can be seen in a female head from Rhodes, partially preserved, where the modeling has the same *sfumato* effect.[10]

The stylistic solutions enumerated above refer to a phase of productions later than that of the two masters, so that the group, which is stylistically complex, seems to derive equally from both, probably taking shape between the late 2nd century and the first decades of the 1st century BCE.

Pliny fails to attribute the Apollo Sosianus group to Skopas or to Praxiteles, maybe because the theme was dealt with by both sculptors, and seems ignore or minimize *a posteriori* the difference between their styles, while it was probably evident even in ancient times.[11] Other literary sources, in effect, refer to Praxiteles as sculptor of Niobe alone. The *Anthologia Graeca* and the poet Ausonius place the unfortunate mother at the center of a Baroque image in which the

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8   Calandra 2015, 509–510; on Skopas' influence see Stewart 1977, 122–124.
9   Pliny, *N.H.* 36.28 (Muller-Dufeu 2002, 478–479, no. 1375; Martinez 2007, 43, no. 63; Todisco 2017, 94–95, TL 73). On the attributions to Praxiteles or Skopas see Bieber 1955, 74–75 (and, on the group in general, 76–77).
10   Bairami 2017, no. 20, figs. 21–24.
11   Calandra 2015, 511–512. The literature is remarkable: see below and, for Praxiteles, Corso 2010, 69–78 and 2014, 86 and 91; for Skopas, Calcani 2009, 140–141, no. 24, with further bibliography.

matter of punishment becomes matter for art.[12] The attribution to Praxiteles of the model for Niobe can thus be confirmed, but there are no other criteria for distinguishing the attributions between the two artists except stylistic analysis, which allows us to hypothesize at least two distinct stylistic schools.

Additional evidence for dating the sculptures to the late 2nd century BCE is provided by the ensemble itself. The child abandoned into the arms of a brother who is also mortally wounded belongs to the taste of other centripetal compositions, such as the wrestlers and the Artemision boy riding a horse, although the iconographic solution is somewhat different.[13]

The specific date of the Ciampino group, however, should now be placed in a more recent phase. The closest reference is the Muse at the Centrale Montemartini in Rome, from Via Arenula, near the Theater of Pompey, which is securely dated to 55 BCE. This is plausible date for the statue of the Muse as well, since it probably belonged to the decoration of the theater. The Muse is in the Rhodian style, which was already mentioned, as is another Muse statue found in excavations on the Aventine hill, now in the Palazzo Massimo in Rome, which is similar in the shape of the bust and in the treatment of the drapery.[14]

A date of around the middle of the 1st century BCE, which is compatible with the "Ogygia" inscription, may be further restricted to the years 50–30 BCE, immediately after the creation of the Theater of Pompey and just before the first years of Augustus' regime. The drapery, even if it is damaged, seems nevertheless carved as if with a stick in clay rather than with a chisel in stone. For these technical reasons the Ciampino sculptures can be placed just before the season of pure classicism, as is represented by the Prima Porta Augustus (the original of which is dated to 27 BCE) or by the Campana reliefs. The locks of hair on the Prima Porta Augustus are sharply defined as if in bronze. The figures in the Campana reliefs are also very sharp, unlike the Ciampino group.[15]

Accepting a chronology between the middle of the 1st century BCE and the early years of Augustus, it can be argued that the recently discovered statues are the oldest attestation currently known of the entire group with all its components, and that the ensemble may be considered as the point of arrival of a

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12   *Anth. Pal.* 16.129 (Muller-Dufeu 2002, no. 1499 = *SQ 1284*, 516–517; Todisco 2017, TL 83, 104); Ausonius, *Epitaph.*, 28 (Muller-Dufeu 2002, 516–517, no. 1500 = *SQ 1284* +; Todisco 2017, 104, TL 84); Prioux 2006, 158–159.

13   Stylistic discussion in Fuchs 1969, 373–383. For the wrestlers, see Smith 1991, 60; for the Artemision jockey, see Pollitt 1986, 147, no. 159.

14   Calandra 2015, 512–513.

15   Tomei 2014 for clay pieces in pre-Augustan style; Zanker 1987, 105, fig. 83 and 84 and 260–261, fig. 206 for the comparison of the Prima Porta Augustus and Herculaneum Doriphoros; remarks in Calandra 2015, 513–515.

process of development over time. The group can also be put in a more complete series, about which it should be noted that sets of representations are gradually aggregated around various chronological points.

The oldest attestation in sculpture is to be found in three Greek originals from Rome that are dated to the years 440–430 BCE: a female Niobid from Piazza Sallustio at the National Roman Museum, and two Niobids at Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen. The three statues, not by the same artist but attributed to different schools of Greece or Magna Graecia, were probably meant to be displayed together in a pediment, tentatively identified as that of the temple of Fortuna Publica on the Quirinal Hill; the statues, in any case, were discovered in the area of the *Horti Sallustiani*, an imperial property at least from a certain point. The Niobid from Piazza Sallustio is of higher quality, while the other two statues, a fleeing figure and a young man lying down, dying or dead, are smaller in size and have internal proportions that are not coherent. These discontinuities of dimension, proportion, and style can be explained by assuming the statues were displayed in a pediment. No copy of these sculptures is known: due to their (hypothetical) placement, they did not leave a series of copies but remained iconographically isolated. A little earlier, the myth appears in the Attic cultural world: in tragic poetry; in the Niobid crater from the necropolis of Crocifisso del Tufo in Orvieto, which is dated to 460–450 BCE; and in the throne of Zeus by Pheidias at Olympia, which has disappeared but is represented for us in reliefs from the Roman period.[16]

The 4th century seems marked by the private use of the myth. In Athens again, information about the Niobe of Praxiteles, mentioned above, is uncertain, while a relief (or pictorial representation?) of Niobids adorned the monument dedicated by the *choregos* Thrasyllus in 319 BCE (Paus. 5.2.2).[17] In Daunia several graves of the years 360–320 BCE include representation of the myth on red-figure vases appropriate for private use with a probable consolatory effect.[18]

The function of Mahdia heads, mentioned above, remains uncertain, but it seems that these were medallions destined to be suspended, maybe in a sacred

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16   For literary sources see note 12 above; Geominy 1992, 916–918. Continuity cannot be demonstrated for three previous occurrences in the black-figure ceramography (second quarter of the 6th century BCE): Geominy 1992, 916; Denoyelle 1997, 11.

17   Corso 2010, 70; cf. Moormann 1988, 179. A fragment of relief from the theater of Dionysus was recently rediscovered at the Kanellopoulos Museum and attributed to the Thrasyllos monument (Zarkadas 2012/2013, 307–316).

18   Mazzei 1999, 471–473, followed by Gualtieri 2008, 224–227; Rebaudo 2012, 56–90.

building: they are probably of Parian marble and the chronology proposed for them is the late 2nd to early 1st century BCE.[19]

The statues of Ciampino belong to this point in the sequence, if dating to the years 50–30 BCE is correct. Other representations of the myth are found at this time, or better in the first years of Augustus' regime. As Propertius tells us (2.31.12–14), it appears on one of the two wings of the temple of Apollo Palatinus, which was inaugurated on October 9, 28 BCE. The group of Praxiteles or Skopas exhibited in the temple of Apollo built by Gaius Sosius, who had previously fought Augustus and then entered his circle, seems almost a response to the appearance of the myth on the Palatine temple.[20] Whoever was the sculptor, the group appears *a fortiori* as a tribute of loyalty to Augustus. If indeed the Ciampino villa belonged to Messalla, the use of the myth is no different: even Messalla had opposed the Augustan ideology, and then intended to show his fidelity to the ideology of Augustus by displaying a myth of error and punishment, which becomes an image of redemption. The slight chronological gap, in effect, must not deceive: these are the years of the turning point, when Augustus, taking power, imposes a total change. The *hybris* exposed at the public level, therefore, meets a need of normativity that is felt in times of foundation and reconstruction, as was the case at Athens after the Persian Wars and at Rome following the civil wars. It is not just as a founding myth that the Niobids are used in the early years of Augustus's regime, immediately after Actium.

The epochal significance of this moment had an immediate influence in the private sphere, as in the paintings in the colombarium of Villa Doria Pamphilj, dated between 30 and 20 BCE. In this private grave, Apollo and Diana, who are not known to have appeared in the Ciampino ensemble, slay the unfortunate Niobids.[21] The paintings in the Casa del Marinaio and in the Casa dei Dioscuri at Pompeii represent a later stage, that of the middle of the 1st century CE.[22]

If we accept a date of 50–30 BCE for the Ciampino group, what is Ovid's relationship with it? At the time of the discovery, the identification of the context as the villa of Messalla could not fail to influence expectations.[23] In all respects, this proposed identification derives from technical and stylistic analysis, as has been shown: it is not exactly Augustan and it is independent of the (probable) owner of the complex. If the villa really belonged to Messalla, and if the poet

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19   Ouertani 1994, 292–293; von Prittwitz und Gaffron 1994, 311–314 hypothezises that the pieces belonged to an *heroon*.

20   For Sosius' temple see Zanker 1987, 73–74.

21   Intini 2013.

22   Salvo 2012, 104–105 and Iacolina 2019.

23   Cf. Landrea 2014, 85–97.

was ever his guest there, the probable occasion lies somewhere between the earliest stage of Augustus' principate (Ovid was born in 43 BCE), and 8 CE, the year when the poet was relegated to Tomi—and the same year in which Messalla died.

Are there reasons to place Ovid's poetry alongside this series of images? Was Ovid influenced by them? Ovid's poetry is, in fact, the fullest literary account of the Niobids that we have, and it forms an impressive step within a long literary tradition that started with Homer. In the same way, the representations from Ciampino belong to a rich sequence of images in different media. From both sources, the text and the images, it is possible to find evidence that places Ovid's poetry in the process of mythmaking.

The story as told in the *Metamorphoses* (6.146–312) presents a series of actions: Niobe's refusal to sacrifice to Latona and her children; her boasting of her own seven sons and seven daughters; the wrath of Latona, who sends her children to shoot with their arrows Niobe's sons as they are exercising in a field near the walls of Thebes; the suicide of Amphion; in spite of all this, Niobe's reply, in which she still boasts of her seven daughters; the funerals of Niobe's sons, during which her daughters, dressed in black robes of mourning for their brothers, are also killed—all of them, including the smallest; and finally, their mother turned to stone.[24]

Ovid's rendition of the myth unfolds in several steps over a long sequence, while the statuary group instead represents the death of all the Niobids as a single act. The fugitive son on the rock could be, in Ovid's verses, Sipilus trying to escape (no. 7), while one of the subgroups could represent Alphenor embracing his dead brother (no. 9); other figures are not recognizable, neither Ismenus, hit in the chest while riding, nor Phaedimus and Tantalus, shot together while they are wrestling, nor Damasicton, pierced with several wounds, nor Ilioneus imploring, whom the god decides to save when the youth is *in extremis*, though his decision comes too late. The daughters, on the other hand, are not named by Ovid, and in the Ciampino ensemble as well they are only partially identifiable: it is impossible to identify the daughter who dies on the corpse of her sister, or the one who is hiding, or the one who seems to be trembling; just two of the fugitives are documented (no. 2 and no. 3) as well as the daughter who collapses on her brother (no. 5) and the girl who bends forward from a hidden wound (no. 4).

The events of the tragedy (the first massacre, of the sons; the suicide of the father; the pride of the mother; the funerals of the sons; and the second mas-

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24   The number and names of the siblings is variable (Lesky 1936, cc. 644–706).

sacre, of the daughters) are quite distinct in the poetic text, while the statuary group includes a single action staged all at once.[25] All of the sons and daughters are represented while being hit by the arrows of Apollo and Artemis or while falling; more than one of the statues preserves the holes of the arrows.

Some elements distinguish the poetic creation from the figurative manifestation, leading us to suppose that Ovid's poetry developed and varied the myth as an action protracted over time. The distinct sequence of events would be a secondary development in sarcophagus reliefs.[26] In every case, even if Ovid did not personally see the statues in the villa, he most likely had seen other Niobids, including at least the statues in the temple of Apollo Sosianus and the reliefs in the temple of Apollo Palatinus; nor can it be ruled out that he knew the other most ancient examples that were also exhibited in Rome, as was mentioned above.

Whether he saw the statues at Ciampino or not, various points deserve attention. First of all, the subgroup consisting of a brother and sister united in death (at Ciampino only the sister is preserved) show a unitary action, different from the text of Ovid, which divides the deaths of sons and daughters in two stages. In comparison, Ovid develops, expands, and varies the theme.

Secondly, significant iconographic comparanda have been found in the House of the Dioscuri at Pompeii, where Niobid figures surround a couple of tripods, a symbol of Apollinean ideology for Augustus. The figures include two flying females, each wearing a cloak, one of them similar to the statue at the Ny Carlsberg (although no iconographic connection can be documented).[27] The female figure on the right, however, recalls the statue of the kneeling Niobid daughter in the Ciampino ensemble (no. 5), which proves that this model existed prior to those copies that have until now been dated to the Hadrianic and Antonine periods.[28]

Finally, a word about color. It was argued in the past, regarding the specimens in dark marble from Hadrian's Villa, that the black color of the daughter's dresses in Ovid's account might be his invention, as it was not found in previous

25   For Ovid's division of the story into successive scenes, see Stark 1863, 70–76; Salvo 2015, 216–230.

26   For the Niobid sarcophagi, see Koch and Sichtermann 1975, 49–50, nos. 47–49, figs. 124–128; Salvo 2015, 64–66 and 69–70, who points out a mix of pictorial and sculptural tradition; see also Iacolina 2019.

27   Moorman 1988, 179–180, no. 204/7 compares one of the female figures with the Chiaramonti Niobid and mentions the Uffizi Narcissus in connection with the kneeling son on the left; Geominy 1992, 920 s.v. Niobidai (text) and 617 (figures) dates the painting to the Neronian period; cf. Zanker 1987, 92–93; Ghedini et al. 2018, 259 no. 97.

28   On the Hadrianic revival of the myth see Rausa 2016, 374–388.

documentation.[29] Although the surfaces of the Ciampino statues are abraded, they seem to have no traces of color. Therefore, the black color of the dresses may indeed have been Ovid's invention, and could thus be considered as an element that separates the previous tradition from that of the imperial age.

The general effect of the ensemble displayed in the Villa of Messalla, however, may have been a source of inspiration for the poet. For the reconstruction of the setting, various elements are helpful, such as the dimensions of the statues, their backs, and the shape of their pedestals. Thanks to Carlo Usai's restorations it is possible to ascertain that the bases had different inclinations.[30] This allowed statues of different sizes to be displayed effectively, with larger ones in the foreground and smaller ones in the background. The statues, with their unfinished backs flattened, so to speak, were almost two-dimensional and were exhibited as if in a diorama, similar to the different levels that one sees already in the Niobid Crater and, later, in the London tondo, in which some of the types depend on those that we know from the Florentine cycle. Another possibility that Usai imagines is that of a single rocky base, like that of the Farnese Bull.[31] A similar reconstruction had already been provided in the past for the existing statues, but another one has also been suggested, with the statues in a row.[32] In fact, critics have recently pointed out, rather persuasively, a tendency to emphasize the frontal aspect of statuary produced in the 2nd century BCE, in contrast to the three-dimensionality of 3rd-century sculpture.[33]

The statues show different levels of orientation to the ground. An extreme case is the head of Niobid no. 6, which is simply lying on the ground. A similar diversity in the organization of space is visible in the Niobid Crater or the paintings in Rome and in Pompei, where the figures are mostly frontal or in profile. From another point of view, displaying the ensemble on varied levels of terrain made it easier to hide the bulky props supporting the statues. Consequently, the space necessary for the scene could be reduced, and an overall trompe l'oeil effect was achieved. As a matter of fact, a similar composition is not incompatible with the exedra form, which has often been postulated as the ideal theater in which to exhibit representations of the Niobids,

29　　Slavazzi 2000, 64; Moesch 2000, 230–231, no. 41, "Gruppo dei Niobidi"; Esposito 2000, 231–232, no. 42, "Niobide tipo Chiaramonti"; Adembri 2002; Diacciati 2005, 199–203 and 221–225.

30　　Usai 2019, 128–129.

31　　For the crater see Denoyelle 1997, 16–17; for the tondo Geominy 1992, 920 s.v. Niobidai (text) and 617, no. 28 (figures); Usai 2019, 128–129.

32　　Discussion in Bieber 1955, 75–76, with bibliography and figures (262 and 263).

33　　Cadario 2013, 92–93.

possibly near a water basin and in rocky surroundings. The find context in Ciampino is, in fact, a *natatio*.[34]

In every case, then, Ovid marks a "caesura" between an iconographical tradition that is pictorial and sculptural and one that is aware of these images—at least the public ones—but that transforms them through narrative expansion in a period that was, as we have seen above, particularly sensitive to this myth. It is by no means a coincidence that the myth was adopted by C. Sosius (certainly) and by Messalla (probably), both of whom had previously opposed Augustus politically and in practical terms. The former had fought against the young *Divi filius* at Actium, while the latter had stood on the side of Cassius and the "tyrannicides."[35] A mythic representation of hybris against the gods and punished by them—specifically, by the children of the offended divinity—could therefore be seen as a way of expressing gratitude for forgiveness after having dared too much.

Such a display would require considerable financial resources and would be possible only at the very highest levels of society; that is, apart from members of the imperial family, only for other families very closely associated with the Domus Augusta, whatever their specific interest in the theme of hybris may have been. Whether or not Messalla was the owner of this villa, then, it is clear that whoever commissioned the Niobid ensemble intended it as a gesture of loyalty to Augustus, precisely during the initial years of his new regime, by making use of a statuary group produced just a little earlier.

In any case, archaeological evidence makes it clear that the Niobid theme continues to appear frequently in imperial or para-imperial contexts.[36] In fact, after the Augustan period the myth is represented by several statuary groups, some only partially preserved, dated by scholars later than the Ciampino group and generally to the Hadrianic or Antonine period. In Rome, a Niobid series is attested by the torso of the Pedagogue from the Horti Sallustiani, which was an imperial property,[37] and also by the Uffizi Niobids from Vigna Tomassini on the Esquiline Hill.[38] From places near Rome, one can mention the statues from the *horti* at Porta Portese and from Pomezia, Campo Jemini.[39] As of now, only the headless statue of Niobe and the head of a Niobid survive from the Villa dei

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34 Diacciati 2005, 209–214 for discussion of the display and in particular for the exedra.

35 For C. Sosius and the temple of Apollo Sosianus see Zanker 1987, 74–75; for the *pax Augusta* see Sauron 2013, 85.

36 Slavazzi 2011, 143–153.

37 Diacciati 2005, 203–206 and 225.

38 Diacciati 2005, 206–214 and 225–235.

39 Diacciati 2005, 215–217 and 236–238.

Quintilii, which was owned by a pair of unfortunate brothers who were sentenced to death in 151 BCE, whereupon the villa became imperial property.[40] Next to these groups, which contain statues of the Ciampino and Uffizi types, other statues are preserved, but these belong to other iconographic traditions. They include the ephebe and head from Nero's villa at Subiaco[41] and the series from Hadrian's Villa in Tivoli (belonging to the stadium garden), which includes at least seven Niobids with dresses in grey marble (*bigio morato*). We cannot be sure that these are related to the Ogygia of the Chiaramonti type, and the possibility that there were two Niobid series in the stadium garden cannot be excluded, given the presence of other duplicate series in the Villa.[42] One of the statues in grey marble is indeed of the Chiaramonti type, while the other figures, dying and fallen on the ground, do not correspond exactly to either of the existing iconographies. The two figures lying on the ground, the Pedagogue with the youngest of the Niobids and the brother who supports the younger sister, belong to a different iconographic tradition.[43]

During the reigns of two different emperors, then, Nero and Hadrian, we find iconographic traditions other than those of the main and more widely documented group found at Ciampino and in the Uffizi. The mutability of the composition is therefore evident, so much so that a moment of crystallization does not seem to exist except in the poetry of Ovid. Indeed, after Ovid, the process of reimagining the representation of this myth seems to continue. It thus appears clear that the Niobids are a group that never ceases to be recomposed, although Ovid appears to mark a turning point by appropriating the previous tradition, transforming it, and inspiring future creations, perhaps like that of the sarcophagi that flourished in the Hadrianic and Antonine periods.[44]

Thus the imperial commission can promote variations and insertion of new figures: it is not to be overlooked that Nero is the author of a tragedy about Niobe and that he therefore could have intervened directly in the choice of different or new types.[45] Hadrian could have done the same, being himself an artist as well as a patron of the arts. Both emperors, however, were well aware of Ovid's poetry.

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40   Paris, Pettinau 2007, 471–483; for the head of Niobe see Jastrzębowska 2007, 485–492; Paris 2008, 333–344; Paris 2016, 104–107.
41   Caso 2013 proposes a date within the Hadrianic and Antonine periods.
42   Slavazzi 2002, 52–61.
43   Adembri 2019, 38.
44   See above, n. 36.
45   Suet., *Ner*. 21.

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Revenants and Undead

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Ambobus pellite regnis: Between Life and Death in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*

Alison Sharrock

What is it like to be metamorphosed? Is the resultant state a *tertium quid* between life and death, a kind of limbo, or some other sort of existence neither dead nor alive, like exile to another dimension, of the kind that features in great variety in contemporary science fiction? Is it a form of death, or an avoidance of death? The central question considered in this paper is the extent of the connection between metamorphosis and death in Ovid's epic poem.[1] Metamorphosis often signals the end of a story: in most cases the narrative quickly leaves the changed subject, flying off like Jupiter after his rape of Callisto, and moves on, to the next episode. It would be easy, therefore, to perceive metamorphosis as a form of death, a fixed point after which there is nothing more to say about the subject.[2] One might even want to say that in many cases the transformed being is now effectively dead as far as the story is concerned, being no longer able to interact with the world as previously. Neither the reader nor the subject can fully know what metamorphosis means, its implications never being stable, but nonetheless within that instability there are patterns and tendencies on which it is worthwhile to reflect again: to my surprise, the connection between metamorphosis and death turns out to be rather different from what I had expected. Although there may be a sense in which, in some cases, it is appropriate to consider metamorphosis as a sublimation of

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1 See Putnam 2001, Gentilcore 2010. Metamorphosis as a state between life and death is discussed in Barkan 1986, 64–65. Hardie 2002, 82: "[a]ny and every instance of metamorphosis results in a state that is neither life nor death, but something in between." While his following comment, that "[t]he product of every metamorphosis is an absent presence," seems to me accurately to encompass the double effect of metamorphosis, this paper will suggest that there is more life in most metamorphic outcomes than implied—but, often, uncomfortable life.

2 See Hardie 2002, 74 for a sensitive discussion of how metamorphosis contributes to the process of ending. See also Barkan 1986, 78–88, and Wheeler 1999, 199: "typically, at the end of metamorphosis, the narrator or one of his characters memorializes the event by observing how the effect of the change of form endures down to the present day."

death, no single statement can encompass the meaning of metamorphosis, including its role between life and death. This paper argues that the connection between metamorphosis and death is in fact remarkably small, and that the epic poem is better regarded as littered with the surviving debris of its nominally "completed" episodes, with the subjects of metamorphosis living on as existent but constrained beings, as, for example, the trees which cluster around the singing Orpheus in Book 10. Even the inanimate results of Perseus' "weapon of mass destruction" maintain a grotesque continuity as decorative statues (5.227–229).

Scholars have frequently noted that in many (though by no means all) cases of metamorphosis there is significant continuity between the previous state and the metamorphosed outcome, to the extent that in some cases the metamorphosed being may seem like simply the distilled essence or literalized metaphor for some deep trait of the subject.[3] In the vast majority of cases, however, the subject remains alive. The degree of sentience is certainly highly variable, from the Io cow, which, or rather, *who*, can write with her hoof, to the Perdix bird which remains afraid of heights after being thrown off a tower while in human form (8.256–259), to many whose consciousness the story simply does not allow us to experience; but in almost all cases there is nonetheless continuity of life.[4] Indeed, in the early books of the poem, the thrust of metamorphosis is directed towards creation and the flowering of new life, rather than death and destruction.[5] Even in the case of those subjects metamorphosed into inanimate materials, such as stone, water, and the special case of stars, there is a remarkable degree of continuity of life. I shall consider death and the inanimate destination further below, but first, we should examine the paradigmatic case of the *tertium quid* between life and death, the person who prays to avoid both states, the tree which gives birth.

3   Barkan 1986, 21, Feldherr 2002, 173–174, von Glinksi 2012, who rightly points out that the idea of essence or continuity fits some characters better than others. Von Glinski 2012, 13: "Metamorphosis contains a puzzle. On the one hand, the change is permanent, since the finality of the metamorphosis cannot be reversed. On the other hand, metamorphosis also preserves in perpetuity a marker of human nature, such as the tears of Niobe and Myrrha."

4   See Walter in chapter 1 of this volume on the sisters of Phaethon and, especially, Cygnus, and Ursini in chapter 12, on the unusual cases of those who retain awareness after metamorphosis being those who either die (Actaeon) or change once more (Io).

5   Regarding creation and metamorphosis, Harris 2013, 263 makes perceptive comments on the disturbingly "overabundant materiality" of metamorphosis.

1   Myrrha

On the discovery of her deception by her father, the incestuously pregnant Myrrha flees from his threat of death by the sword, sending herself into exile, away from family, community, and state. She then undergoes the typical wanderings of a suffering pregnant outcast until she is close to parturition (10.481), when (10.481–487):

> tum nescia voti
> atque inter mortisque metus et taedia vitae
> est tales conplexa preces: "o siqua patetis
> numina confessis, merui nec triste recuso
> supplicium, sed ne violem vivosque superstes
> mortuaque exstinctos, ambobus pellite regnis
> mutataeque mihi vitamque necemque negate!"

> Then, not knowing what it implies, she prays and between fear of death and weariness of life she interwove these prayers: "Oh if there are any gods open to those who confess, I have deserved and I do not refuse the sad punishment, but so that I may not violate the living as I continue to live or the dead, having died, banish me from both realms and deny me, once changed, both life and death!"[6]

At the time of the original crisis, when her father had discovered the identity of his paramour, Myrrha appeared to be attempting to escape the punishment of death, presumably on the normal grounds of self-preservation.[7] Now, however,

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6   Unless otherwise stated, all quotations from the *Metamorphoses* are from Tarrant 2004, and all translations are my own.

7   *Met.* 10.471–477. Putnam 2001 argues convincingly for a meaningful evocation, in Cinyras' action at *Met.* 10.475, both of Pallas' action in whipping out his sword just before facing Turnus (*Aen.* 10.475), and of the defeated Turnus in Myrrha's prayer at *Met.* 10.484–485. His article is also very useful on levels of exile in the passage, reflecting and commenting on the problems of excessive familial closeness in cases of incest and on the distance needed for sexual relationships. See especially his discussion of the "second exile" at 174: "This new, symbolic finality, poised between life and death, human and inanimate, lends appropriate permanence to her repentance in a form which can bring no harm to living and dead." Putnam also makes the good point that, in becoming a tree, Myrrha has (175) "double foreignness, a retreat from an individual character given to unwanted desire for illegitimate closeness based on similarity into a permanence of differentiation without any of the erotic satisfactions that differentiation might seek to legitimize." Putnam 2001, 176 makes a connection with the Cerastae, whose

she is described as suffering *mortis ... metus* as well as *taedia vitae* (482), which suggests that she now entertains a lively belief in the post-mortem punishment of pollution and impiety, for which her incest would be a prime candidate. Myrrha's actual prayer, however, is to avoid both life and death, in order, so she claims, not to violate with her corrupting presence either the living or the dead. As a result of this prayer she is turned into a tree. The child inside her, however, continues to grow as a human, until finally she gives birth in a remarkably human way, with the help of Lucina, and produces the supremely beautiful Adonis.

I suggest that the narratorial comment that Myrrha is *nescia voti* (*Met.* 10.481) "means," at least from the super-narrator's point of view if not from Orpheus', something like "not knowing what it is she prays for," rather than the conventional "not knowing what to pray for." Myrrha is explicit that she is praying for metamorphosis,[8] *mutatae ... mihi* (487), in one of many echoes of the opening formula of the poem,[9] so it is not the case that she is at a loss. Rather, she is mistaken in believing that metamorphosis is a solution. Indeed, what she most seeks is escape from physical, and especially emotional pain, the two elements release from which, like so many transformed subjects, she most conspicuously *fails* to achieve by her metamorphosis.[10] If she is also seeking to avoid polluting the upper world with the results of her incest, that, too, is not achieved via metamorphosis, not only in her continuing life as a tree, but also in the person of her son (and half-brother) and in the honor due to her

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      punishment is described as something between death and exile, earlier in Book 10, but that is a case of differentiation between death and exile, not death and life.

8   Relatively few characters in the poem explicitly ask for or otherwise seek metamorphosis. Daphne is, as often, a prime example. In order to escape from Apollo, she prays (1.547) that the *figura*, by which she has been excessively pleasing to Apollo, should be destroyed by change (*mutando*); but the result of her transformation into a tree is that she is no longer able to run and so is easily caught, while the one feature that survives her transformation is precisely the beauty which attracted the god and which he now appropriates for all time. Cadmus, at the end of the Theban cycle, prays to become a snake in recompense for his killing of the monstrous serpent with which the foundation of Thebes began, and which he now supposes to be the cause of the ongoing suffering of his family and city (4.571–575), a prayer seconded for herself by his wife Harmonia (594).

9   *mutatas dicere formas*, "to speak of changed forms," 1.1.

10   Gentilcore 2010 explores metamorphic subjects who maintain after change the grief which was its cause in the first place, suggesting also that those who are able to communicate their grief in narrative have thereby some degree of protection from metamorphosis. Gentilcore's point is that it is grief which both transforms the victims and survives the metamorphosis, with grief being in fact the only thing to survive. Apropos of Daphne and the continuity in her change, Anderson 1963, 4–5 usefully lists the vocabulary of continuity.

drops of myrrh. Regarding the latter, commentators note that the narrator's attitude (both the super-narrator Ovid's, and possibly also the internal narrator Orpheus') to Myrrha softens after her metamorphosis, thus allowing her honorific commemoration.[11] I would suggest, in fact, that Ovid's representation of Myrrha is sympathetic, although not approving, from the start, in comparison with, for example, his account of Medea or Scylla (daughter of Nisus).

Be that as it may, Myrrha's son continues her interaction with the upper world and, in some sense, her pollution of it. Even Orpheus acknowledges as much when he describes the beautiful Adonis as taking revenge against Venus for his mother's *ignes* (10.524) by the love he inspires in the goddess and the grief he causes her by his death.[12] This, I would suggest, constitutes not only an acknowledgement on Orpheus' part of the damaging role of the deities (even though at the beginning of Myrrha's story her son Cupid had denied that he was responsible for her passion, 10.311),[13] but also shows that Myrrha's metamorphosis does not achieve what she had desired from it. She had sought to separate herself from the world to an unprecedented extent by, she hoped, being removed from the communities of both living and dead. What in fact happens, however, is that the continued life within her, in the form of her maternity and parturition, not only exposes the failure of her goal to be neither dead nor alive, but also continues the pollution of both family and erotic relationships. There is more than a hint of incest in the story of Adonis. Myrrha's newborn baby is introduced to the world as almost indistinguishable from Cupid himself (10.515–518). Only a few lines later, Venus falls in love when she is "accidentally" pricked by Cupid's arrow as he is kissing her (*Met.* 10.524–526). Indeed, the slippage between Adonis and Cupid is furthered in this scene by the fact that the owner of the arrow is not explicitly named (10. 524–526):

> iam placet et Veneri matrisque ulciscitur ignes.
> namque pharetratus dum dat puer oscula matri,
> inscius exstanti destrinxit harundine pectus.

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11 On the move of Orpheus from a judgmental posture to one of sympathy, see Putnam 2001, 175; Nagle 1983; Segal 1998, especially 29–31.

12 On death and gender in the Adonis myth, see Reed 1995.

13 Reed 2013, 236–237, 270 points to versions of the myth in which Myrrha's love for her father was inflicted by Venus in anger. Reed also sees a hint at incest in the confusion between Adonis and Cupid. See Hardie 2004, on the incestuous implications of the simile of Cupid and Adonis, which he describes as "the most complex example of the approximative simile."

now he [Adonis] is pleasing also to Venus and avenges his mother's fires.
For while the quivered boy is giving kisses to his mother, unknowingly he
grazed her breast with an arrow that was sticking out.

The *puer pharetratus* answers the final line of the initial comparison between
Cupid and Adonis (10.515–518):

> laudaret faciem Livor quoque: qualia namque
> corpora nudorum tabula pinguntur Amorum,
> talis erat; sed, ne faciat discrimina cultus,
> aut huic adde leves aut illis deme pharetras.

> Even Envy would have praised his appearance: for just as are the bodies
> of naked Loves painted in a picture, so was he; but, so that adornment
> wouldn't make a difference, either give light arrows to this one or take
> them away from the latter.

Perhaps someone did follow the suggestion in line 518. More seriously, the story
of Adonis creates continuity for Myrrha's life after metamorphosis, includ-
ing continued incestuous pollution, continued erotic grief, and perhaps con-
tinued slippage between life and death. Although Ovid (and, simultaneously,
Orpheus) does not choose to pursue the chthonic aspects of the Adonis story,
they are sufficiently well known in the myth to create an absent presence.[14]

If the super-narrator means to indicate by *nescia voti* that Myrrha "was igno-
rant of what she prays for," it would be an astute comment on the nature of
post-metamorphic existence, which is notoriously difficult to tie down. Barkan
describes Myrrha's post-metamorphic condition as a "*tertium quid* resolving
the unresolvable dilemma of the narrative and at the same time forcibly yoking
together life and death,"[15] and claims that, in cases such as hers, "metamorpho-
sis is not a punishment but rather a definition of the extreme state into which

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14   See Reed 2013, 267–268, on the alternative versions in which Adonis is shared between
       Persephone and Aphrodite. As a final contribution to the case for reading the Adonis
       story as an indication that Myrrha's efforts to eradicate herself through metamorphosis
       are unsuccessful, I would draw attention to the similarity between the birth of Adonis,
       arbor agit rimas et fissa cortice vivum/[*reddit onus*] ("the tree opens a crack [actually,
       "cracks"] and where the bark is burst, gives up its living burden," 10.512) and a line from
       the account of Earth's destruction as caused by Phaethon, [*tellus*]/*fissaque agit rimas et
       sucis aret ademptis* ("the burst earth opens cracks, and dries up when its juices are taken
       away," 2.211).
15   Barkan 1986, 64–65.

they have brought themselves and a relief from the agony of those extremes," while Putnam says: "this new, symbolic finality, poised between life and death, human and inanimate, lends appropriate permanence to her repentance in a form which can bring no harm to living and dead."[16] As Tissol indicates, it is likely that Ovid has made a subtle but important change from his (possible) Nicandrian intertext, where, according to the hexameter in Antoninus Liberalis (34.4), the contrast is between the living and the dead rather than the abstractions.[17] Tissol describes this change as creating "paradox in its most extreme form at this climactic moment." Such small but highly significant changes to received myth are indeed crucial to the understanding of their Ovidian transformations, but I suggest that the paradox is Myrrha's wish, not what the story actually gives: it does not resolve the dilemma and Myrrha remains all too painfully alive.[18]

The metamorphosis itself, like so many descriptions of women turned into trees, is both visually evocative and painful, no less so in this unusual case, where the change is desired by the subject undergoing it. The linguistic and imagistic plays between human and tree are worked out as usual in details such as the *longi firmamina trunci* ("the strengthening of the long trunk," 10.491), the blood turning into sap (10.493), and the skin becoming bark (10.494). Particularly violent is the description of the root sticking out through the woman's cracked-open toes (10.489–490). It is standard for Ovidian descriptions of metamorphosis into a tree to play on the interactions of vocabulary and appearance between people and trees.[19] What is unusual, however, is the way in which Myrrha positively welcomes the wood which is taking her over and sinks down into it, drowning her face in the bark (10.497–498). But if Myrrha thinks that this metamorphosis offers her escape from her pain, she is mistaken. What Orpheus says next needs to be examined for consideration of metamorphosis and of the reliability of narrative (10.499–500):

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16   Putnam 2001, 174.

17   Tissol 1997, 42. See also Hardie 2002, 82, discussing the way in which incest has confused the boundaries of human life: "[a] state of suspension between the categories of life and death avoids pollution of either the living or the dead, but is also a fitting *contrappaso* for the betwixt and between of incest."

18   Harris 2013, 253: "The imposition of metamorphosis, eternalizing an unendurable predicament, is so typical of Ovid's poem that it is easy to take for granted what a sadistic universe it creates."

19   See Gowers 2005, esp. 335–337. In addition to Myrrha, examples include Daphne (1.552–559), the Heliades (2.340–366), Philemon and Baucis (8.711–724), Dryope and Lotis (9.324–393), and the bacchants (11.67–84).

> quae quamquam amisit veteres cum corpore sensus,
> flet tamen, et tepidae manant ex arbore guttae.

> And although she lost her previous sensations with her body, yet she
> weeps, and the warm drops seep from the tree.

Orpheus presents the Myrrha tree like so many other Ovidian characters (usually female) whose changed form continues to display the most salient feature of that person, especially when that feature is grief. In this case, he claims to know that she has lost her old sensations, but the story that he will go on to relate indicates that this is not true—she feels both mental and physical pain, even in her tree form. It is not unknown for the narrating voice of metamorphic stories to make claims about the mental state of the victim, claims which are separate from visible manifestations of such a state, but here, I suggest, Orpheus may be overreaching his position as narrator and claiming to know more than he does in fact know ("in fact," that is, in the sense that the super-narrator gives us the opportunity to question the reliability of the internal narrator).[20] It will be remembered that even the primary metamorphic narrator, "Ovid," wisely left us uncertain as to the mental state of the metamorphosed Daphne. On other occasions, certainly, Ovid does omnisciently inform us about the mental state of Io, Actaeon, et al., but never in ways that contradict what may be observed. Let us, then, observe the supposedly insensate Myrrha (10.503–509):

> At male conceptus sub robore creverat infans
> quaerebatque viam qua se genetrice relicta
> exsereret; media gravidus tumet arbore venter.
> tendit onus matrem, neque habent sua verba dolores,
> nec Lucina potest parientis voce vocari.
> nitenti tamen est similis curvataque crebros
> dat gemitus arbor lacrimisque cadentibus umet.

> But the infant wickedly conceived had grown beneath the trunk and was
> seeking a way out by which he might leave his mother and escape; the
> pregnant belly swells in the middle of the tree. The burden stretches its

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20   Putnam 2001, 191 acknowledges that life remains for Myrrha, but it is in the "continuing, insentient exile of metamorphosis in the form of the tree," which I think is an understatement, too much influenced by the biased narrator's claim that Myrrha no longer has feeling.

mother; and her pains do not have their own words, nor can Lucina be
called upon by the voice of the one giving birth. Yet she is like someone
straining in childbirth and the bent-over tree emits repeated groans and
is wet with falling tears.

At this point, it should be remembered that we are not watching the metamorphosis itself, where slippage between woman and tree is common, but rather
the ongoing life of the metamorphosed subject, who is *genetrix* and *mater*, has
a *gravidus ... venter* and is suffering *dolores*, the specifically puerperal nature of
which is enhanced by *parientis* in the following line. Like so many of her metamorphosed peers, however, Myrrha has the extraordinarily frustrating inability
to speak. As such, she cannot, as a mother giving birth, call on Lucina. If this
tree had no sensation other than weeping, her inability to call on Lucina would
be meaningless. Instead, she is not only *nitenti ... similis*[21] but also realistically
doubled up in her pain, groaning (as a tree might), and crying—with tears that
are *not* here explicitly connected with drops of myrrh. As a tree, Myrrha is still
alive, and human enough to need the help of Lucina to give birth. Happily,
Lucina recognizes the continued humanity of Myrrha and speaks the words
that allow birth to take place (10.510–513):[22]

> constitit ad ramos mitis Lucina dolentes
> admovitque manus et verba puerpera dixit;
> arbor agit rimas et fissa cortice vivum
> reddit onus, vagitque puer...

> Kindly Lucina stood by the laboring boughs and moved her hands and
> said the words of childbirth: the tree opens a crack and where the bark is
> burst, gives up its living burden, and the child wails.

Ovid has made an important and meaningful change/choice in the myth here.
Other versions of the story have the birth of Adonis enabled by acts of male
human violence. In one case, a man with an axe chops the tree open—an action

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21   Cf. Myrrha's prayer, to her father, for a husband *similem tibi* ("like you," 10.364), and the
      nurse's description, also to Cinyras, of his prospective lover as *par est Myrrhae* ("she is the
      same as Myrrha," 10.441, referring to age, but with further implications).

22   Lucina's crucial action in this regard has previously played a role in the poem when she was
      tricked by Galanthis into enabling the parturition of Alcmena (9.314–315). See Lateiner
      2006, 195–196.

entirely appropriate to trees.[23] By contrast, Ovid's version makes the tree much more human. While the tree words he uses in Lucina's intervention (*ramos, arbor, rimas*) are not those which most naturally would manifest a slippage between woman and tree, as we might expect in order to enhance the retention of human characteristics, this could indicate either an attempt on Orpheus' part to hold onto the sense that Myrrha is a tree, not a person, or typical Ovidian playful cussedness. Be that as it may, Myrrha succeeds in avoiding neither emotional nor physical pain through her metamorphosis.[24]

2   Post-metamorphic Reproduction

My argument, then, is that Ovidian metamorphosis is often a perverted continuation of life, rather than a suspension between life and death. Myrrha's remarkably human act of reproduction in her tree form raises the question as to how far Ovid's transformed subjects are evolutionary "dead ends," aetiologies for particular species, or *sui generis* eternal forms.[25] That issue raises the further question of Ovid's versions of reproduction after physical transformation, of which Myrrha herself is the most remarkable, or at least the most graphically narrated example within the poem. Those whose metamorphosis is from non-human into human form are, not surprisingly, most comfortably endowed with fertility. One such example is Pygmalion's "Ivory woman," who gives birth to a daughter, who in turn herself bears Myrrha's father, Cinyras (10.295–299). Moreover, the entirety of the human race derives from post-metamorphic bio-

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23   It is clear from the examples gathered by Reed 2013 in his commentary that the prayer (and curse) to be neither dead nor alive is both conventional and associated with the Myrrha myth. Reed makes the interesting suggestion that the dichotomy of death and life might hint at the Adonis myth, and, in particular, to elements not used by Ovid, in which he is shared between upper and lower worlds. Reed gives some good examples of other places where Myrrha seems to be *trapped inside* the tree, rather than actually being the tree. In some versions of the myth, recorded by Reed (2013, 265), human violence against the tree enables the birth of Adonis.

24   On the other hand, perhaps, what she does avoid is infernal punishment, it being replaced rather by explicitly honorific commemoration of her drops of myrrh (10.501–502), which seems quite out of keeping with Orpheus' dire warnings of punishment against such extraordinary wickedness. Another example of people as trees still feeling pain is to be found at 2.360, the sisters of Phaethon, on whom see Walter in chapter 1 in this volume.

25   On ancient ideas of speciation, mutation, and metamorphosis, although not specifically to do with Ovid, see Li Causi 2014, and, with more emphasis on Ovid, Barchiesi 2014 in the same volume.

logical reproduction, in that once Deucalion and Pyrrha had thrown the stones over their shoulders and the stones had become humans (1.398–415), those new humans must have set about having babies.

Other than those metamorphosed *into* human shape, a further (rare) explicit example of post-metamorphic fertility is Ceyx and Alcyone, whose metamorphosis in Ovid's version is into birds of the same species (not always so in the myth), birds which are believed to raise their young on calm seas, and becomes the aetion for "halcyon days." Warned by a dream, Alcyone found the shipwrecked body of her husband on the shore, was turned into a bird, and in this form embraced and kissed him. It seems that Ceyx was not in fact quite dead, although the narrator surrounds the moment with both doubt ("people," *populus*, are not sure whether he actually felt the kiss or whether his movement was just a trick of the waves) and positive statement, for we are told that the gods took pity on them and turned them both into birds (11.731–742). There are a few more lines for their story, in which is made explicit the continuity of their life, love, and future (11.742–748):

> fatis obnoxius isdem
> tum quoque mansit amor, nec coniugale solutum est
> foedus in alitibus; coeunt fiuntque parentes,
> perque dies placidos hiberno tempore septem
> incubat Alcyone pendentibus aequore nidis.
> tum iacet unda maris; ventos custodit et arcet
> Aeolos egressu praestatque nepotibus aequor.

> Then also their love remained, indebted to the same fates, nor was their conjugal bond undone in their bird forms; they mate and become parents, and in wintertime for seven peaceful days Alcyone sits on her nest floating on the sea. Then the wave of the sea lies flat; Aeolus guards the winds and stops them getting out and provides a smooth sea for his grandchildren.

Many metamorphosed characters maintain their (especially maternal) relationships after the change—Callisto and Dryope are strong examples—but these are usually with already existing offspring, born in the normal way. What is remarkable about Alcyone and her family is the explicit continuity of their lives and relationships and explicit reference to post-metamorphic fertility. Also with projected reproduction after change is Galanthis, punished for using her so-called "lying mouth" to enable the parturition of Alcmene (and for laughing at the goddess she tricked) by being not only turned into a weasel but fated

to give birth through her mouth (9.316–323).[26] Perhaps also to be included among references to post-metamorphic reproduction is the pathetic, darkly comic response of Io's father Inachus to the remarkable discovery that his daughter has become a cow—who can write her name (1.658–660):

> at tibi ego ignarus thalamus taedasque parabam,
> spesque fuit generi mihi prima, secunda nepotum;
> de grege nunc tibi vir et de grege natus habendus.

> But for you I in my ignorance was preparing marriage chamber and torches, and my hope was first for a son-in-law and second for grandchildren; but now you must have a husband from the herd and a son from the herd.

In one case, ongoing fertility is presented as part of the metamorphosis which is paradoxically and explicitly described as motivated by pity but at the same time constructed as punishment. This is the transformation of Arachne into a spider, forced on her by Minerva as Arachne attempted to maintain her independence by suicide.[27] My particular interest here is in Minerva's further comment (6.136–138):

> "atque ita vive quidem, pende tamen, improba" dixit,
> "lexque eadem poenae, ne sis secura futuri,
> dicta tuo generi serisque nepotibus esto."

> "Live indeed, but hang, wretch," she said, "and, so that you may not be secure of the future, let the same law be said as a punishment to your race and your furthest descendants."

Arachne, then, is specifically cursed with the retention of a spider-form in her descendants. It is perhaps surprising that Minerva regards the species stability of the spider as further punishment, preventing Arachne from being sure of the stability of her future line, given that the production of many descendants would usually be regarded as a positive insurance for the future. Perhaps the

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26   See Barkan 1986, 67 on Galanthis' unusual parturition.
27   See Salzman-Mitchell 2005, 136; Johnson 2008, 94. Rosati 2009, 269–270 draws out the cruelty of Minerva's punishment of Arachne, in which the latter is condemned to live forever hanging and to produce webs without meaning. He describes the authorial comment about Minerva's pity (6.135) as ironic.

key element from Minerva's point of view is that no descendant of Arachne should ever be able to weave a web that would be meaningful and so would challenge the goddess's interpretation of the relationship between art and the world.[28] Nonetheless, despite Minerva's intention, her words offer to Arachne the kind of "mortal immortality" which comes from reproduction of beings like oneself, allowing the individual to die eventually, without the species dying out. Whether this is much comfort to Arachne herself, however, is entirely another matter.

A question raised by Minerva's unusual interest in the stability of the species is how far individuality is maintained or lost by metamorphosis. As individual trees, mammals, birds, or any other living being, metamorphosed subjects must in some sense eventually die, but, at least in the case of aetiological metamorphoses, in some sense they live on in the species. On the one hand, it might be that a crucial feature of post-metamorphic existence is the subject's loss of individuality, as the individual becomes the species (the unique Caenis/Caeneus bird would be an exception), but on the other hand the loss of individuality of itself never actually appears in the poem. One might almost wonder whether such loss arises only when the story line moves away to the next incident. Myrrha remains an individual suffering childbirth and Daphne remains resistant to the amorous advances of Apollo, until the narrative leaves them, albeit with the implication that they continue in this sentient and suffering state. It is only at that point, perhaps, that they may be transferred from a state of individuality, and, all too often, individualized suffering, into the fixity and generality of species, the myrrh tree, the laurel tree. And yet, the grieving drops of myrrh and the beautiful laurel leaves are precisely what does continue in the species, so it seems that suffering and grief outlive even the end of individuality.

3   Statues and Stones

The one group whose life might seem to be destroyed *by* their metamorphosis is those who are petrified.[29] Niobe becomes a rock, one, however, that weeps tears of dew: we shall examine her case later. Mercury punishes both Aglau-

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28   Such is the view taken by Rosati 2009, 270. The anonymous reader for the press suggests that the lines are aetiological for the propensity of people to kill spiders, as might perhaps be implied by *poenae*.

29   Those turned into stars, which modern science would regard as mineral entities, are a special case of petrification, in the context of ancient notions of catasterization, and have some share in ongoing life as divinities.

ros and Battus with petrification, which seems to imply a degree of finality and fixity beyond the norms of metamorphosis, while Perseus uses Medusa's head as a "weapon of mass destruction" to petrify others (5.177–235). The petrified are easily perceived as dead because stone is inanimate, whereas birds are animate and even trees are alive. Despite this apparent fact, however, there are two ways in which the polarity between lifeless stone and living being is manipulated, if not undermined, in the poem: one is the unusually high propensity of inanimate substances to undergo metamorphosis *into* human form, while the second is a number of cases where some degree of ongoing life seems to exist even within the petrified.

To illustrate the first point regarding the connection between stones and human bodies, we should note that this is so much the case that "we" are "in fact" all descended from rocks, via the regenerative stones thrown by Deucalion and Pyrrha after the flood (1.414–415).[30] Likewise, Pygmalion's wife originated as pieces of ivory,[31] while the Theban aristocracy arose from the teeth of the dragon slain by Cadmus. The one developed example of metamorphosis from animate to human is the Myrmidons, in Aeacus' post-plague repopulation, changed from ants into humans, though here, too, the description is in terms quite similar to that of the "sown men" (7.635–642).[32]

There is, however, an aspect of inanimate-to-human metamorphosis which begins the link to my second point regarding the degree of ongoing life in cases of human-to-inanimate transformation. This is epitomized by the first metamorphosis of Pygmalion's wife, from pieces of ivory to statue. It is the statue which comes to life (is metamorphosed into a human), having been treated as if alive for some time previously, rather than the pieces of ivory themselves.

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30   Cf. Pindar *Olympian* 9.42–46 (a sort of pun), where Pyrrha and Deucalion repopulate the world: ἵν᾽ αἰολοβρόντα Διὸς αἴσᾳ / Πύρρα Δευκαλίων τε Παρνασοῦ καταβάντε / δόμον ἔθεντο πρῶτον, ἄτερ δ᾽ εὐνᾶς ὁμόδαμον / κτισσάσθαν λίθινον γόνον· /λαοὶ δ᾽ ὀνύμασθεν, "where, by decree of Zeus of the bright thunderbolt, Pyrrha and Deucalion came down from Parnassus and first established their home, and, without coupling, founded one folk, an offspring of stone: and they were called people." Translation is that of Race 1997, who comments: "A play on λάες (stones) and λαοί (people); cf. Hes. fr. 234 M–W. After the flood, Pyrrha and Deucalion brought a new race into being by throwing stones behind them." Further on the status of stones with regard to the animate, see Macrì 2013, 132: "reflections on the points of contact between the animate and inanimate world are a ubiquitous theme in the lapidaries, which explore substances with the ability to pass from one state or sphere to the other and thus escape precise classification, seemingly testifying to the existence of an intermediate realm, inhabited by entities that are of a composite nature."

31   See Ursini in chapter 12 in this volume.

32   There is also brief reference (7.391–393) to people springing from mushrooms. See Wheeler 2000, 34.

That story makes explicit what is already latent in that originary transformation via simile, when the transforming stones are described as being "like" partly formed statues (1.403–406).[33] Furthermore, many of the large number of petrified beings in Ovid retain the form of extremely lifelike portrait statues, as in the case of Phineus and other victims of Perseus. Barkan describes the mass petrification by sight of the Medusa's head, as "amount[ing] to death, of course," but also draws out the way in which these transformations are not "into some new individual or species but into an eternally frigid and unchanging version of [each victim]."[34] In Phineus' case, as Barkan brilliantly puts it, "[t]o extend his life as a piece of decoration is the worst possible insult."[35] Then there is the case of Andromeda, fixed by chain and simile as a statue until "brought to life" by Perseus.[36] If any state should be regarded as a *tertium quid* between life and death, it should perhaps be that of the metamorphosed being that becomes a statue.

If the statue stands as an intermediary between raw material and human person, it does so in part because it functions as a visual, and indeed concrete, metaphor. The classic case in discussion of the relationship between metaphor and metamorphosis is Niobe, who is "turned to stone" by both imagery and transformation (6.301–312), while her ongoing grief, given material form in tears-water from the stone, constitutes a powerful manifestation of the inability of metamorphosis to resolve the problems of the human condition.[37] Finally, there is Hercules' unfortunate servant Lichas, who brought the fateful gift from Deianira containing the poison that will destroy Hercules' mortality and set him on the path to deification. When the raging hero catches sight of the trembling Lichas, he grabs him and throws him into the Euboean sea (9.211–218). Via the simile of a gradually "petrifying" hailstone (219–222), Lichas turns to stone and ends up as a rock in the sea which *humanae servat vestigia formae* ("retains the vestiges of human form," 9.227). Not only is he a sort of minimalist statue,[38] but also (9.228–229):

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33   See von Glinksi 2012, 34–35.

34   Barkan 1986, 55.

35   Barkan 1986, 55.

36   von Glinski 2012, 36.

37   See Hardie 2002, 251 on the repetition *Niobe Niobe* at 6.273, in which he interprets the choice of the Greek name, by means of which there is no differentiation between the nominative and the ablative, as indicating the vulnerability of self-presence; Feldherr 2010, 295–313 on the link between narrative and monument in this story; see also von Glinksi 2012, 9–11; Barkan 1986, 68–69. On Niobe and her children as the subject of a statue garden see Calandra and Betori in chapter 9 of this volume.

38   Myers 1994, 48 describes the metamorphosis as "a sort of reversal of the original anthropogony from stone."

quem, quasi sensurum, nautae calcare verentur
appellantque Lichan.

And sailors fear to tread on him, as if he would feel it, and they call him
Lichas.

I would suggest that we might see these sailors as metapoetic readers of meta-
morphosed beings. They are not sure whether the transformed Lichas can still
feel, but, just to be on the safe side, they don't walk all over him and they main-
tain his identity through his name. By doing so, they impute ongoing life even
to the lump of rock.

4   Death in Metamorphosis and the *Metamorphoses*

What is the role of death in the *Metamorphoses*? The very earliest death in the
poem could be regarded, bizarrely, as being that of Saturn, displaced by Jupiter
(1.113–114):

> postquam Saturno tenebrosa in Tartara misso
> sub Iove mundus erat ....

> After the world was under Jupiter, when Saturn had been sent down to
> shadowy Tartarus ...

The ages of gold, silver, *et cetera*, in Ovid's version simply pass on from one to
the next (1.114, 1.125, 1.127), rather than dying out, as in Hesiod.[39] Although the
bronze age is *ad horrida arma promptior* (1.126), *bellum* does not come until the
Iron Age, along with intrafamilial murder (1.142, 1.145–148). We might say that
the first true human death within the poem occurs with the human sacrifice
made by Lycaon (1.226–229), while the second is the mass genocide by Jupiter
which follows on from it (in the form, that is, of the flood, on which he decides
at 1.260–261). Neither of these deaths is directly connected with any explicit
metamorphosis. Lycaon himself does change shape, but not in close connec-

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[39]   Hesiod, *Works and Days* 121–126 (golden age men are covered by earth, but continue some
        kind of life as spirits and guardians); 138–142 (silver age men are also covered by earth,
        and are regarded as blessed mortals under the earth); 154–155 (bronze age men die rather
        more dramatically).

tion with either the sacrifice or the cataclysm. Indeed, he seems, surprisingly, to survive the flood as a living, and perhaps individual, wolf among other wolves (2.495). Previous to this defining moment in history and the poem, there have been the deaths of the Giants, in battle with the gods (1.151–162). Although the Giants are monsters rather than humans, the blood from their deaths produces another of the several creations of mankind (1.157–162). Jupiter might, then, be held to be responsible for a high proportion of the early deaths in the poem, but little in the way of metamorphosis.[40]

At the other end of the poem, the final death (of those which have happened during the poet's lifetime) is the assassination of Julius Caesar. It, of course, participates in one of the two mechanisms for overcoming death which are developed in the later books: deification and metempsychosis. While each of these may be regarded as a form of metamorphosis, neither lies at the core of the most memorable and typically "Ovidian" transformations within the poem, which are those in which an individual, often female, lives on in some usually constrained and often troubling form. The vast majority of metamorphosed persons with whom the poem identifies closely in their transformation and whose experience of metamorphosis is reductive and painful, are female.[41] Discussing Hippolytus' transformation into the local deity Virbius and Egeria's into part of the natural world, Segal speaks of "these two metamorphic solutions to dying."[42] I would suggest, however, that Virbius gets considerably the better deal, and the one that, as also in the case of Acis, better constitutes a "solution" to dying than does that of the nymph whom he so unhelpfully attempts to console with the account of his death and metamorphosis (15.492–546). For Egeria, by contrast, there is ongoing grief actualized in the tears-water of her new "life" as a spring (15.547–551).

Overwhelmingly, death in the poem does not result in or from metamorphosis (except perhaps in the wider sense of what I call the "creeping metamorphosis," which pervades the entirety of the text). A small number of people are killed as an indirect result of metamorphosis, which will be discussed further below; the death of quite a number is in some way commemorated by a metamorphosis connected with them, such as Adonis (whose blood is turned into the anemone flower, 10.728–739) or Pyramus (whose blood changes the fruit of the mulberry tree to purple, 4.125–127). But far more common are those who

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40   Apostol 2014.

41   I discuss this matter at more length in Sharrock, 2020a and 2020b.

42   Segal 2001, 96, a powerful and sensitive discussion of how Ovid "brilliantly sets out the varying kinds and degrees of suffering our mortality or transcending it."

are saved *from* death, whether they like it or not (such as Aesacus, 11.784–786), by metamorphosis, often aetiological, such as Arachne, Procne and her family, Perdix, Scylla, and many more.[43]

   Apart from those transformed into inanimate substances, few characters in the poem die as a result of their metamorphosis. The best known is Actaeon, who is turned into a stag when he accidentally intrudes on Diana while she is bathing. While the stated intention on the part of the angry goddess is to stop him being able to boast about what he has seen,[44] the divine huntress also changes the human hunter into a hunted animal, with the result that he is torn to pieces by his own dogs. His death, then, is a direct result of his continued life as a stag. Actaeon's changed state is not something between life and death, but rather a source of vulnerability that creates the conditions for a particularly unpleasant death. A similar case is the story of Periclymenus. This brother of Nestor was endowed by his grandfather Neptune with the ability to change shape at will, a facility vouchsafed to very few humans, but particularly associated with water divinities. In battle with Hercules (so Nestor relates), Periclymenus had in vain tried everything, as Protean characters do, before taking the form of an eagle and attacking his enemy with beak and talons (12.556–563). Hercules shoots the eagle=Periclymenus, inflicting a fairly minor wound (12.567), but one which causes the bird-warrior to fall from the sky. As he lands, his weight forces the arrow further into his throat and he dies. Periclymenus' metamorphosis, then, could also be said to cause his death.

5   Metamorphic Poet

The argument of this paper has been that metamorphosis is as much about continued life as it is about either death or, as Myrrha hoped, some third state between life and death. If this is so, then all those possibilities for continued existence must be especially active in the final great, death-defying metamorphosis of the poem: that of the poet. The narrator of the *Metamorphoses* proclaims that the "better part" of himself will transcend death and continue to live whenever his poem is read—a prophecy that we fulfil continuously in the very act of reading it (15.873–879).[45] We might even say that Ovid only becomes

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43   Harris 2013, 252–253: "it is hard to kill yourself in the *Metamorphoses*. Dying, generally, is a challenge in the world of endless transformation." He gives the examples of Aesacus, Daedalion, and Arachne.

44   Natoli 2017; see Bergmann in chapter 8 of this volume and Hinds in chapter 11.

45   The famous epilogue, in all its complex intertextuality and paratextuality, is well discussed

"Ovid" after his death, or at least after the publication of his work, which is a kind of the death of the real, flesh-and-blood poet, and birth of the "author," that dynamic and ongoing construct with whom we continue to interact.[46] The poet's continued life as "Ovid" is, I suggest, rather more a matter of the perverted continuation of life than a form of death.[47]

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by Hardie 2015, 617–628. On the final word, with which he also ends his commentary, Hardie appropriately remarks (628): "questa ultima parola contrasta anche con il funerale di Ettore nell'ultimo verso dell'*Iliade*, e con l'estinguersi della vita di Turno, *uita,* nell'ultimo verso dell'*Eneide*."

46   An excellent account of the "death of the author" in literary theory and how authors take on a new life in the process of reading can be found in Bennett 2005.

47   See Chapter 18 in this volume.

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Ovid's Exile Poetry and Zombies

Stephen Hinds

2017 bimillennium, Publius Ovidius Naso d. 17 (?)
2017 bicentennial, Jane Austen d. 1817

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1 Preface/Précis

Thanks to many acts of critical recuperation, large and small, the poetry from exile now feels like an integral part of Ovid's body of work. But should it? This paper will seek to recover a sense of the strangeness of Ovid's final works: not so much "Ovid, death and transfiguration" (in the title of the present volume) as "Ovid, *un*death and *dis*figuration." In particular, as a guerilla response to the poet's own habitual description of his departure from Rome in 8 CE as a funeral, and his existence in Pontus as that of a dead man walking, I shall mobilize a 2009 pop-culture mash-up of a literary classic which has become a break-out hit among Anglophone millennials and literary scholars alike, *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* ("co-authors" Jane Austen and Seth Grahame-Smith; hereafter *PPZ*),[1] a work whose literal inserts and interpolations into a canonical text are at once the opposite of allusive art and a surprisingly effective instance of it. With its deformations of a great work of polite fiction, a Regency classic, what can *PPZ* teach us, by analogy and contrast, about the undoing of civilized literature, and of civilized life itself, on the shores of the Black Sea? Is Tomis, like *PPZ*'s Longbourn, Netherfield and Pemberley, the *locus* of a "zombie" apocalypse? And are we sure that we still recognize the poet we love in the zombified Ovid himself, as he limps with uneven gait toward an uncertain bimillennium along with the two "co-authors" who have usurped his *oeuvre*, Augustus Caesar and "Ibis"?

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1 Austen and Grahame-Smith 2009; I do not here pursue the work's own considerable reception history since 2009.

2   Defamiliarizing the Exile Poetry

An inevitable consequence of close and recursive study of Ovid's exile poetry is that, the more time one spends with it, the less strange it tends to become. On a first read of any of the exile books, from *Tristia* 1 to the *Ibis* or the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, it is very clear how starkly and startlingly different it is from anything written by Ovid before, how thoroughly the poet has been undone by the *princeps* who has forcibly "rewritten" his life. But the more closely we analyze the exile poetry and the more intertextual links we see between the exile poetry and Ovid's earlier *oeuvre*, or between the exile poetry and Greco-Roman literary traditions at large, the more we *lose* that sense of the unfamiliarity of the exile poetry.

But *should* we lose that sense of unfamiliarity? Close up, everything in this poetic *corpus* is a *topos*: a *topos* tweaked, customized, even inverted, but a *topos* none the less. The inevitable effect of our normal protocols of intertextual reading—the kind of reading that most of us in this volume do, the kind of reading that has transformed our close-up understanding of the exile poetry in the past forty years or so—is to *normalize* the exile poetry. Is that a problem?

To put the issue (again) in terms of the present book's title, in the intertextually rich world of Ovidian poetry *transfiguration* is always in some sense *refiguration* (of Ovid's own verse, of someone else's verse), so that, at one level, Ovidian intertextuality will always involve a gravitational pull towards a familiar sense of tradition. That is fine, it is part of Ovid's greatness, and part of what we celebrate in a bimillennial volume like this. But that does not necessarily mean that the reflex formalism which gathers any and every Ovidian couplet—even in the *Ibis*—into the soft and comforting embrace of intertextual refiguration should be left uncontested.

In other words, when we consider all the differently distinct kinds of Ovidian transfiguration after exile, we perhaps need to ask ourselves whether classic Latin philological exegesis tends to reduce these different aspects to the *same* figures of thought and of style. What happened to Ovid in 8 CE was real, and abominable; it tore apart his life, and his poetic career: it is, or should be, important to see this as a moment not just of transfiguration, not just of refiguration, but of *disfiguration*.

And that is where zombies come in.

My heuristic strategy in this paper is to ask a question: what if we had available some intertextual protocols *exempt* from the usual tendency in Latin allusive analysis to smooth edges and to accentuate continuities? What if we could read Ovid's exile poetry in the same way as we approach an intervention like *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*?

3 Pride and Prejudice and Zombies

Let me explain. *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, published in 1813, is one of the best-loved and most revered works of English literature. Austen's portrayal of polite society in the quiet world of small-town England circa 1800 (in this novel as in others) is a comedy of manners observed by an exceptional stylist with a sharp eye and ear for wit, a shrewd observer of human behavior, a timeless and luminous storyteller (not unlike Ovid.)

Shortly before 2009 an enterprising editor (Jason Rekulak) and a media-attuned writer (Seth Grahame-Smith) came up with the idea of deforming or disfiguring *Pride and Prejudice* by making it into a novel about the *zombie apocalypse*:[2] in effect, by "exiling" the novel into a strange and dystopian world, a world in which Regency-era England is terrorized by armies of the undead, stalking the country, attacking the living and infecting them with their plague and/or eating their brains; while the local militia, along with freelance "ninja warriors" (like Elizabeth Bennet and her sisters), attempt to battle the zombies by beheading them and burning their corpses.

And what may make this project good to think with is the way in which the writer went about it. He did not change or remove a single paragraph of *Pride and Prejudice*. Instead he *interpolated* a zombie subplot into the novel, inserting new sentences and paragraphs strategically on almost every page of Jane Austen's novel, without taking away any of the existing sentences, thus making *Pride and Prejudice* into a strange and *defamiliarized* version of itself. This was a sort of literary vandalism, something like the opposite of allusive art: the zombies act as *disruptors* of Jane Austen's world, both formally and situationally, and in ways that resist normal critical recuperation.

What I want to do in this chapter—as a kind of thought experiment—is to take a brief look at the manner in which *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* goes about its business; and then to ask whether it might be possible to apply an analogous sort of "zombie disruptor" approach to Ovid's Pontic poetry, so as to recapture the abruptness of the break between Rome and the Black Sea, so as to accentuate the *strangeness* of the exile verses, and so as to startle us out of the strong normalizing pull of our more usual intertextual protocols.

This means that I am entertaining the "zombie apocalypse," as presented in *PPZ*, primarily as a figure of thought (a *disfiguring* figure of thought), as a way of applying a new kind of narratological pressure to the exile poetry. Of course

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2 Ultimately descended from the zombies of Haitian voodoo, the modern pop-culture zombie traces its immediate origin and key characteristics to George Romero's 1968 film *Night of the Living Dead*: Ruthven 2012, 156–157; Jesus and Pereira 2018, 111–114.

I am also drawn to the literal zombies of *PPZ*, who may help to return us to a more dystopian reading of the simultaneously "dead and undead" world of Ovid's Tomis.

Here, then, are some excerpts from chapter 7 of *PPZ* to set the scene in and around the quiet village of Longbourn ... as disrupted by zombie interpolation. (The interpolations in the text are italicized; all the other words are by Jane Austen.)

> The village of Longbourn was only one mile from Meryton; a most convenient distance for the young ladies, who were usually tempted thither three or four times a week, *despite the unmentionables which frequently beset travelers along the road*, to pay their duty to their aunt and to a milliner's shop just over the way.
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>   *PPZ* 23

In the course of the chapter, each of the two older Misses Bennet pays a visit to the area's finest house at Netherfield, newly occupied by Mr Bingley, and his aloof friend Mr Darcy; each girl encounters a little bother along the way. First Jane:

> Jane was therefore obliged to go on horseback, and her mother attended her to the door with many cheerful prognostics of a bad day. Her hopes were answered; Jane had not been gone long before it rained hard, *and the soft ground gave way to scores of the disagreeable creatures, still clad in their tattered finery, but possessing none of the good breeding that had served them so well in life*.
>
>   *PPZ* 26

Jane avoids these "unmentionables," but, a day later, her sister has a prolonged encounter with them:

> *There was suddenly a terrible shriek .... Elizabeth knew at once what it was, and reached for her ankle dagger most expeditiously. She turned, blade at the ready, and was met with the regrettable visage of three unmentionables, their arms outstretched and mouths agape. The closest seemed freshly dead, his burial suit not yet discolored and his eyes not yet dust. He lumbered toward Elizabeth at an impressive pace .... The second ... was a lady, and much longer dead than her companion. She rushed at Elizabeth, her clawed fingers swaying clumsily about ....*
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>   *PPZ* 27–28

In consequence, when arrival at Netherfield returns our heroine from this misadventure to Austen's 1813 text,

> Elizabeth found herself at last within view of the house, with weary ankles, dirty stockings, and a face glowing with the warmth of exercise ....
>
>   *PPZ* 28

her "warmth of exercise" has been rather more strenuous than in the early 19th-century original.

Jane Austen is an object of almost religious devotion among English readers (hence the *frisson* of Grahame-Smith's experiment); it is time to turn to our own no less admired *vates*. First, a small demonstration of what the same narratological intervention would look like in a familiar early elegy of Ovid's, a generation before the sentence of exile: here in the Showerman/Goold translation [adapted] is the greater part of *Amores* 1.5 (let us call this the poem's "third edition"), mashed up with some *PPZ* language from the interruption of a ball in Meryton:[3]

> One shutter of my window was open, the other shutter was closed .... It was such a light as shrinking maids should have whose timid modesty hopes to hide away—when lo, Corinna comes, draped in an ungirt tunic, with her divided hair covering her fair white neck, such as 'tis said was famed Semiramis when passing to her bridal chamber, and Lais loved by many men. I tore away the tunic. *Just then, a stream of unmentionables poured in through the still-open shutter, their movements clumsy yet swift; their burial clothing in a range of untidiness. Some wore gowns so tattered as to render them scandalous; others wore suits so filthy that one would assume they were assembled from little more than dirt and dried blood. I unsheathed my blade and set my feet.... When the last of the unmentionables lay still, I turned back to Corinna.* As she stood before my eyes with drapery laid all aside, nowhere on all her body was a single flaw. What shoulders, what arms did I see, and touch ....

In what ways is the result like *PPZ?* And in what ways does this "disfiguration" of the world of the *Amores* look like or unlike the disfigurations of Ovid's world in his own *actual*, later post-apocalyptic poetry from exile?

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3   *Amores* 1.5.3, 7–13, 17–19 with *PPZ* 14 (and a phrase from 130, the combat at Rosings).

4   Zombie Apocalypse as a Figure of Thought

4.1   *Zombies and Quasi-zombies*

Let me revisit some of the descriptions of the walking dead (or almost dead, undead, or barely reanimated) who haunt the pages of Ovid's last works. To review these familiar features of the exile poetry through a "zombie filter" is to rediscover (from *Tristia* 1 onwards) the familiar Ovidian conceit of relegation as death, and the poet himself as a walking corpse (*Trist.* 1.3.89–90):[4]

> egredior, sive illud erat sine funere ferri,
>   squalidus immissis hirta per ora comis

> I set forth—if it was not rather being carried forth to burial without a funeral—unkempt, my hair falling over my unshaven cheeks

It is to see anew his funeral-soiled wife (91–94),

> illa dolore amens tenebris narratur obortis
>   semianimis media procubuisse domo,
> utque resurrexit foedatis pulvere turpi
>   crinibus et gelida membra levavit humo ....

> She, frenzied by grief, was overcome, they say, by a cloud of darkness, and fell half-dead in the midst of our home. And when she rose, her tresses fouled with unsightly dust, raising her limbs from the cold ground ....

and later, hovering in front of the poet, a double of his own distressed *corpus*, the *forma* of his Fortuna—a zombie surrogate, of sorts (*Trist.* 3.8.27–31, 35–36):

> ut tetigi Pontum, vexant insomnia, vixque
>   ossa tegit macies nec iuvat ora cibus;
> quique per autumnum percussis frigore primo
>   est color in foliis, quae nova laesit hiems,
> is mea membra tenet ....
> ...
> haeret et ante oculos veluti spectabile corpus
>   astat fortunae forma legenda meae

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4 See e.g. Williams 1994, 12–13; and cf. now Galasso in the present volume. Translations of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* are taken or adapted throughout from the Loeb versions of Wheeler-Goold; the *Ibis* from Mozley-Goold.

Since I reached Pontus, I am harassed by sleeplessness, scarce does the lean flesh cover my bones, food pleases not my lips; and my limbs have taken on such a hue as in autumn, when the first chill has smitten them, shows on leaves damaged by an onset of winter .... Clinging and standing like a visible body before my eyes is the figure of my fate that I must scan.

Through this filter we can become reacquainted with the exile book itself, *incultus* and *hirsutus* (1.1.3, 12), and famously dragging its elegiac feet (*Trist.* 3.1.11),[5]

> clauda quod alterno subsidunt carmina versu

> That the lame poetry halts in alternate verses

limping (we can say, with our newfound sensibility) with the irregular gait of a zombie. So too, in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, we can re-encounter Ovid's Amor, who arrives in Tomis as a disfigured version of the god—or indeed of the mistress[6]—who had once presided over the early erotic *oeuvre* (*Pont.* 3.3.9–10, 13, 16–18),

> cum subito pennis agitatus inhorruit aer
>   et gemuit parvo mota fenestra sono.
> ...
> stabat Amor, vultu non quo prius ipse solebat
> ...
>   nec bene dispositas comptus, ut ante, comas.
> horrida pendebant molles super ora capilli,
>   et visa est oculis horrida pinna meis

> when on a sudden the air shivered with an agitation of wings and the window, moved, gave a small groaning sound .... There stood Amor, not with the face he used to have ... his locks not carefully arranged as of old. Over his uncouth face the soft hair was drooping; uncouth seemed his feathers to my eyes

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5 See e.g. Nagle 1980, 22.

6 That is, Amor's exile epiphany "disfigures" the original bedroom epiphany of Corinna in *Amores* 1.5 (a moment to be juxtaposed with my own earlier *PPZ*-fueled act of literary vandalism against that poem, as the press's reader aptly notes).

—the more zombie-like in that his affect so much resembles that of the Hector whose mutilated corpse stages a famous dream-epiphany in *Aeneid* 2 (*quantum mutatus ab illo*, 274).

All this is intensified as we move on to the exile work which has always been more resistant than the others to normalization, the *Ibis*. The poem's eponymous persecutor, on my present opportunistic read, is in many ways Ovid's zombie *alter ego*, a repulsive, tortured, dead undead body which causes revulsion (*Ib*. 165–168; 1929 translation by Mozley),

> carnificisque manu, populo plaudente, traheris,
>   infixusque tuis ossibus uncus erit.
> ipsae te fugient, quae carpunt omnia, flammae;
>   respuet invisum iusta cadaver humus

> The hand of the executioner shall drag thee, amid the plaudits of the mob, and his hook shall be fixed in thy bones. The very flames, which consume all things, shall shun thee; the righteous ground shall spurn thy hated corpse

but which is also all too like the vengeful body of the exiled poet himself (*Ib*. 143–154):[7]

> tum quoque factorum veniam memor umbra tuorum,
>   insequar et vultus ossea forma tuos.
> sive ego, quod nolim, longis consumptus ab annis,
>   sive manu facta morte solutus ero:
> sive per immensas iactabor naufragus undas,
>   nostraque longinquus viscera piscis edet:
> sive peregrinae carpent mea membra volucres:
>   sive meo tinguent sanguine rostra lupi:
> sive aliquis dignatus erit subponere terrae
>   et dare plebeio corpus inane rogo:
> quidquid ero, Stygiis erumpere nitar ab oris,
>   et tendam gelidas ultor in ora manus.

> Then too shall I come, a shade that forgets not thy deeds, and in bony shape shall I assail thy face. Whether I am consumed (as I fain would

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7   *Ibis* as the "evil twin" of Ovid: Hinds 2007, 206–207.

not be) by length of years, or undone by a self-sought death; whether I
am tossed in shipwreck o'er unmeasured waters, and the outlandish fish
devours my flesh; whether foreign fowl prey upon my limbs, or wolves
stain their jaws with my blood; whether someone deign to put my life-
less corpse beneath the earth, or to set it upon a common pyre: whatever
I shall be, I shall strive to burst forth from the Stygian realm, and shall
stretch forth icy hands in vengeance against thy face.

A remarkable passage, this, whose dark fantasies are enhanced by the Gothic
feel of Mozley's translation. The civilized sadness of Ovid's exile voice, as we
have come to think of it, reasoning, cajoling, complaining, self-deprecating,
yields here to the shock of a projected *literal* attack by a zombie poet, lunging
from the grave towards his prey with icy hands outstretched.

4.2   *"Zombification" and Narrative Disfiguration*

As already noted, however, my strategic interest in zombies is not so much lit-
eral as narratological. And here too a "zombie filter" can be used to recover a
sense of the *situational* abruptness of the break between Ovid's life before and
after the "apocalypse" of Black Sea exile—a change which has distorted famil-
iar Ovidian habits of life*style* and poetry into something new, incongruous, and
macabre. Just as Elizabeth Bennet and her sisters have had to militarize in order
to defend post-apocalyptic Longbourn, so the Roman poet, who as a youth had
shunned the *aspera militiae ... certamina*, has been forced into armor in old age
(*canitiem galeae subicioque meam*) to secure the perimeter of his new and unfa-
miliar home against Sarmatian incursions (*Trist.* 4.1.69–74). Nothing in exile is
as it was in Rome (*Trist.* 5.7.43–46):

> sive locum specto, locus est inamabilis, et quo
>   esse nihil toto tristius orbe potest,
> sive homines, vix sunt homines hoc nomine digni,
>   quamque lupi, saevae plus feritatis habent.

> If I look upon the place, it is devoid of charm, nothing in the whole world
> can be more cheerless; if I look upon the men, they are scarce men worthy
> of the name; they have more of cruel savagery than wolves.

Here *in nuce* is the *dystopia* of Tomis, a *locus* which is not just *tristis*, "sad" or
"grim," but *inamabilis*, drained of Ovidian *amor*; the reflection about the barely
human status of the local inhabitants will lead to Ovid's famous worry about a
kind of *creeping barbarization* in himself (57–60)—

> et pudet et fateor, iam desuetudine longa
> > vix subeunt ipsi verba Latina mihi.
> nec dubito quin sint et in hoc non pauca libello
> > barbara: non hominis culpa, sed ista loci

> I admit it, though it shames me: now from long disuse Latin words with difficulty occur even to me! And I doubt not that there are in this very book not a few barbarisms, not the fault of the man, but of the place

—the fear, that is, of a kind of incremental onset of linguistic "zombification."

Once again, these destabilizations of previous norms of lifestyle and language are intensified in the *Ibis*—including the destabilizations of the poet's own pre-exile *oeuvre*. As the *Ibis* takes its shapeless shape, the single-mindedness of Ovidian poetic self-disfiguration becomes palpable: now *only* an attack poet, *only* a cataloguer of Tartarus, *only* a biographer of the doomed and a chronicler of eternal anti-time (*Ib.* 217–220):

> lux quoque natalis, ne quid nisi triste videres,
> > turpis et inductis nubibus atra fuit.
> haec est, in fastis cui dat gravis Allia nomen,
> > quaeque dies Ibim, publica damna tulit.

> Thy natal day too, that thou mightest see naught save gloom, was foul and black with pall of cloud. This is the day to which in our calendar deadly Allia gives her name, and the day which brought Ibis to birth, brought destruction to our people.

In effect, these verses (along with *Ib.* 63–66) launch a "zombie *Fasti*," locking Ovid's Roman calendar (after its normal pre-exilic progression from January to June) into an unending fixation on its darkest and most ill-omened day, in mid-July, the anniversary of the *clades Alliensis*, now also the birthday of "Ibis."[8] And, fairly soon after starting to read the catalogs of the dead, damned and eternally tormented in the second half of Ovid's curse poem, we realize that we are trapped in a zombified *Metamorphoses*. "Zombified" because the myths in the *Ibis* are so unrelentingly hellish; but also because the narrative structures of the *Metamorphoses* (major/minor, foreground/background, parallel/contrast,

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8   This is to revisit Hinds 1999, 6–7.

grouping, nesting), have given way to a relentless death march of couplet-by-couplet parataxis—perhaps drag-footed parataxis, in this *post mortem* version of the limp of elegy's *alterni pedes* (cf. again *Trist.* 3.1.11–12). Yes, the *Ibis* catalog is not without its elements of post-Alexandian artfulness, as recent scholarship has shown;[9] but on my anti-normalizing reading it is no less important to acknowledge the gulf that separates this stumbling parade of negativity from the polychromatic weave of the mythic masterwork which Ovid had written before the fall.

After the *grand guignol* of the *Ibis* let me use a quieter passage for one last push-back against the normalization of Ovid's exile poetry (*Pont.* 3.7.1–4):

> verba mihi desunt eadem tam saepe roganti,
> > iamque pudet vanas fine carere preces.
> taedia consimili fieri de carmine vobis,
> > quidque petam cunctos edidicisse reor.

> Words fail me as I make the same request so many times; by now it shames me that my empty pleas have no end. You are all weary of the sameness of my verses and, I think, you know my petition all the way through.

An unspectacular poem-beginning, but one which comes close to the end of the final book of the final collection published by Ovid in his lifetime. Can we perhaps read this elegy's *verba mihi desunt …* as taking the exile *oeuvre* to a different zone of (un)death, as the closest Ovid comes to giving up the struggle against the apocalypse, admitting defeat, renouncing persuasion, abandoning his previously tireless new turns of rhetoric and ingenuity to trudge towards the grave (or to return to it)? Here again, zombies are good to think with, lest the well-intentioned and for many years necessary critical move of seeing such declarations of loss of poetic powers as "meant to be humorous" *drain the force* of the moment.

Here is a typical passage of recuperative modern criticism in a recent book (by Matthew McGowan, with whose detailed readings I almost always concur), refusing to take the nihilism of these lines (and others like them) at face value:[10]

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9   So Krasne 2012 and 2016, impressively.

10   McGowan 2009, 6–7, bringing together in his discussion *Pont.* 3.7.3–4 and 3.9.1–2 with 39–42, and very fairly citing Hinds 1985, among others, in support of the position taken in his second sentence.

> Again, this is meant to be humorous, and clearly the remorseful exile is also the playful poet familiar from Ovid's earlier works. Indeed, this study will show how the *Tristia* and *Pont.* fit into the whole of the Ovidian corpus.

And, yes, fit they often do. But *is* this the "playful poet familiar from Ovid's earlier works"? Have we *lost* something if we allow the *Tristia* and *Ex Ponto* to integrate seamlessly into the whole of the Ovidian corpus?

Rather, let me take Ovid at face value in *Pont.* 3.7 and read him as acknowledging here that there has been too much refiguration for too long, so that although every individual exile verse and exile poem is rich in *ars*, the *accumulation* of all those verses and poems is obsessive, probably depressive, and certainly symptomatic of a mind locked into repetitious patterns of thought. In terms of my working analogy, the Ovid of the latter years in Tomis walks with a zombie-like "muscle memory" which keeps lurching over the same ground, through the same *topoi*, tropes and conceits, tropes "still clad in their tattered finery" (to appropriate some zombie-language from *PPZ* 26, quoted earlier), but, by virtue of their sheer repetition over the actual passage of years, *decreasingly* in possession of the good literary breeding that had served them so well in times past.

5   Conclusions

Let me offer three final reflections.

5.1   *Refamiliarizing the Zombie Apocalypse*

First, let me problematize my own appeal to the "zombie mash-up" as a means of escape from the smoothing and normalizing effects of regular allusive and intertextual analysis. A case can be made that *PPZ*, for all its shock value, is itself at times engaged in something beyond simple deformation and disfiguration. Grahame-Smith's mash-up has been argued to offer substantive commentary upon *Pride and Prejudice*, and to editorialize on its themes, especially in respect of the anxieties of courtship and "dead marriages," and in terms of the off-stage dynamics of empire, war and colonialism which many 21st-century critics find as subtexts in Jane Austen's novels.[11] In *PPZ*, Charlotte Lucas' decision to accept

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11   See esp. Mulvey-Roberts 2014; cf. Ruthven 2012. Such commentary begins, delightfully, with the "Reader's Discussion Guide" appended to *PPZ* itself at Austen and Grahame-

the tedious Mr Collins (*PPZ* 98–99) goes hand in hand with her knowledge that she has been infected by the plague and that her human agency is inexorably slipping away. (Mr Collins is too obtuse to notice.) So too, the militia regiment which represents a nation mobilized for zombie war, "wresting coffins from the hardened earth and setting fire to them" (*PPZ* 24), is already in Jane Austen's original work stationed in Meryton and programmed to raise spectres of societal anxiety.

And even my own mash-up of *Amores* 1.5 earlier in this paper can be reappropriated in the direction of a more intertextually normal reading: my interpolated zombie attack, rather than being mere literary vandalism, may editorialize upon the latent violence of the elegy's original Ovidian erotic encounter ("I tore away the tunic," *deripui tunicam*, 13).

5.2   *Fun and Joylessness*

Second, let me use the following passage of *PPZ*, *exempli gratia*, to ask of the exile poetry a question that may fairly arise from our expectations of anything from Ovid's pen: *why isn't it funnier?* The topic under discussion here is dancing; the interlocutors are Sir William Lucas and Mr. Darcy:

> "What a charming amusement for young people this is, Mr. Darcy!"
>
> "Certainly, sir; and it has the advantage also of being in vogue amongst the less polished societies of the world. Every savage can dance. *Why, I imagine even zombies could do it with some degree of success.*"
>
> Sir William only smiled.
>
> > *PPZ* 22

The italics flag a perfectly timed zombie interpolation into Mr Darcy's disparagement of the provincial ball—which, moreover, seems to adumbrate an archly anachronistic allusion by Grahame-Smith to a famous sequence in a 1983 music video by Michael Jackson and John Landis.[12]

My argument here is that the sheer mischievous humor in some of *PPZ*'s deformations of *Pride and Prejudice* throws into relief the relative joylessness of Ovid's deformations of *his* pre-exile world, which do not of course lack wit, but *do* lack *joy*, especially as the years go on. And that offers a serendipitous way to reject the arguments of those aberrant 20th-century readers who have famously argued that Ovid's whole exile *oeuvre* is a stunt, a decade-long joke by

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Smith 2009, 318–319, very much in the manner of the study questions attached to modern editions of classic novels with the needs of book clubs in mind.

12   Michael Jackson, *Thriller* (Official Music Video), 8:28–10:35.

a poet who never left Rome.[13] What we can say to these "non-exilers" is that, if Ovid's final works *were* a stunt, like *PPZ*, they would probably show more mischief and humor in their post-apocalyptic exploitation of paradox, incongruity and disjunction than they do. But in the end, for all its virtues, the exile poetry is bitter wormwood, *cano tristia tristis* (*Pont.* 3.9.35), the poetry of wit battling against ever more inexorable hopelessness and, if truth be told, *not* always winning, and all the more heroic for the evident continuation of the experiment to the point of death.

5.3   *Ending/Unending*

The final page of *PPZ*, even as it announces the continuation of the zombie apocalypse, does in fact allow a shaped and crafted conclusion to reaffirm the displaced priorities of *Pride and Prejudice* (p. 317):

> … *The dead continued to claw their way through crypt and coffin alike, feasting on British brains. Victories were celebrated, defeats lamented. And the sisters Bennet—servants of His Majesty, protectors of Hertfordshire, beholders of the secrets of Shaolin, and brides of death—were now, three of them, brides of man, their swords quieted by that only force more powerful than any warrior.*

Even under a zombie apocalypse, it is still "a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife," and the final sentence, although it contains none of Jane Austen's words (those have already ended the penultimate paragraph), still allows some reclamation of a pre-apocalyptic closure.

Not so the final verses of the *Epistulae ex Ponto* (4.16.49–52):

> omnia perdidimus: tantummodo vita relicta est,
> praebeat ut sensum materiamque mali.
> quid iuvat extinctos ferrum demittere in artus?
> non habet in nobis iam nova plaga locum.

I have lost all; life alone remains, to give me the consciousness and the substance of sorrow. What pleasure to thee to drive the steel into limbs already dead? There is no space in me now for a new wound.

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13   So Fitton-Brown 1985, among others; see the references gathered by Alison Keith in the first section of chapter 6 in this volume.

Even after conventional criticism (mine, from almost forty years ago) argues for a "shaped" allusion in these last words to the proverbial suffering of Hecuba in Ovid's own *Metamorphoses*,[14] this endless end remains in important ways unshaped, unredeemed, *unrefigured*, whether because Ovid is actually dead and hence unable to write a concluding thought for a posthumously edited book, or because *even* a shaped allusion by Ovid, at this point, nine years after the decree of exile, is at an important level a rote repetition of pain, one more turn of a worn-out *topos* from a lonely old poet who probably, if you had met him in real life on the streets of Tomis sometime in 17 CE, would have come across as a bit obsessive, a bit depressive, long overdue for a rest—and ready to be released from the undead life of a zombie.

Acknowledgements

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14   Hinds 1985, 27 = Hinds 2006, 437–438; cf. Helzle 1989 ad loc. On the matter of whether *Pont.* 4 is put together by an anonymous editor after Ovid's death (as most assume) or by Ovid himself, see Holzberg 2002, 193–196. On this poem see Galasso in chapter 7 of this volume.

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C.H. Sisson's *Metamorphoses* and the "New Age of Ovid"

Francesco Ursini

1 Introduction

In this paper I shall argue that with his "Metamorphoses" C.H. Sisson antic-ipates important aspects of the most recent receptions of Ovid at the same time that he builds upon the long Ovidian tradition. The past few decades have indeed witnessed the rise of a "New Ovidian Age," especially since many rewrit-ings and reinventions of the *Metamorphoses* have appeared in various and dif-fering art forms: poetry, narrative prose, drama, movies, and the visual arts.[1] For instance, Christoph Ransmayr's novel *The Last World* was published in the late 1980s (original title: *Die letzte Welt*, 1988). While perpetuating a tradition of stories centered on Ovid's exile, it is also a transfigured reworking of the *Meta-morphoses* themselves.[2] The real beginning of the "New Ovidian Age," however, is marked by the publication, in 1994, of a volume entitled *After Ovid: New Metamorphoses*, edited by two poets and critics, Michael Hofmann and James Lasdun. It is a collection of poetic versions (translations, reinterpretations, and even complete reinventions) of sixty passages from the *Metamorphoses*, com-posed by forty-two Anglophone poets.[3] This work has been followed by numer-

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1 For a systematic treatment of the phenomenon, with references, see the second chapter (enti-tled *Le Metamorfosi nell'età dell'incertezza*) of my book on Ovid and European culture (Ursini 2017, 115–256).

2 See Ursini 2017, 278–291.

3 Niklas Holzberg was the first to describe a "New Ovidian Age," but he placed its beginning some ten years earlier: "since the mid-1980s, he [Ovid] has become so popular, not only with classicists and other lovers of Greek and Roman poetry, but also with poets and prose writ-ers, that we may once again speak of an 'Age of Ovid,' at least as far as the literary afterlife of antiquity is concerned" (Holzberg 2002, 1 = Holzberg 1997, 11). By contrast, I prefer to place the original Ovidian "big bang" in 1994, the year in which there appeared both the first explicit, systematic rewriting of the *Metamorphoses* (*After Ovid*) and David R. Slavitt's translation (*The Metamorphoses of Ovid*). Slavitt's translation (Slavitt 1994) proved to be not only very free, but also extremely influential among learned readers: hence, its impact on later rewritings. (Note, for instance, that it is the source of Mary Zimmerman's play, presumably the Ovidian reinven-tion with the largest audience.)

ous poetic and prosaic rewritings of the *Metamorphoses*, such as Ted Hughes'
Tales from Ovid (1997), Alex Shakar's *City in Love: The New York Metamorphoses*
(1996), and the collection of short stories entitled *Ovid Metamorphosed*, edited
by Philip Terry (2000). Note also dramatic works such as Mary Zimmerman's
Metamorphoses: A Play (2002) and movies like Christophe Honoré's *Métamor-
phoses* (2014).

Although these artworks are very different from one another, contemporary
reworkings of the *Metamorphoses* tend to share some common features:

1) Rewriting is a fragmentary, heterogeneous operation. Individual authors,
    such as Hughes and Shakar, seem to select Ovidian excerpts in a "desul-
    tory" way, rewriting and rearranging only certain episodes of the *Meta-
    morphoses*. Similarly, collective works such as *After Ovid* and *Ovid Meta-
    morphosed* lack both completeness (since they do not encompass the
    poem as a whole) and systematicity (since certain episodes, for instance,
    are narrated multiple times by different authors). Moreover, such collec-
    tions include various texts of disparate nature, ranging from (more or
    less faithful) translations to reinventions of Ovidian episodes adapted to
    a contemporary context, not to mention original narratives that simply
    take the cue from Ovid for an entirely new reflection.

2) Ovid's stories are "defamiliarized" in more or less evident ways (the term
    and its definition belong to Stephen Hinds).[4] This is accomplished
    through various means. On occasion, authors employ modern vocabu-
    lary (note, for instance, "the nuclear blast" in Ted Hughes' "Semele")[5]
    or adopt a point of view that was marginalized in Ovid: for instance,
    Alice Fulton in her "Give: Daphne and Apollo" emphasizes the perspec-
    tive of the tree into which Daphnis is turned.[6] Other writers modify
    the Ovidian plot altogether; see, for example, Naomi Iizuka's play enti-
    tled *Polaroid Stories: An Adaptation of Ovid's "Metamorphoses,"*[7] in which
    Eurydice kills Orpheus with a dagger. Others let the narrator—or a sin-
    gle character—transmit and interpret the story, as Phaethon's analyst
    does in Mary Zimmerman's play.[8] Finally, certain authors radically choose
    to transfer the story itself to a contemporary context, as is the case,
    for instance, with Shakar's *City in Love* and Honoré's movie *Métamor-
    phoses*.

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4   Hinds 2005, 69–79. See also Chapter 11 in this volume.
5   Hughes 1997, 91.
6   Hofmann and Lasdun 1995, 28–58.
7   Iizuka 1999, 84.
8   Zimmerman 2002, 62–68.

3) References to Ovid and his historical context are mixed with references to modern sources and events. Stephen Hinds has excellently highlighted the pattern in his analysis of Alex Shakar's short story "Maximum Carnage,"[9] which expects from its readers not only thorough knowledge of Ovid's poetry, but also great familiarity with American comics (especially Violator, a supervillain and the arch-enemy of the eponymous hero in Todd McFarlane's *Spawn* serial, published by Image Comics).[10] Among the numerous examples, note also Mary Zimmerman's choice to combine Ovid's Orpheus and Eurydice with Rainer Maria Rilke's version of the tale.[11] Similarly, Glyn Maxwell assigns a structural function to audio-visual media in his *Phaethon and the Chariot of the Sun: Fragments of an Investigative Documentary Unearthed by Glyn Maxwell*.[12]

Such features can also be detected in an earlier poetic text: "Metamorphoses," written by the British poet, translator, and critic C.H. [Charles Hubert] Sisson. The poem is part of, and shares its title with, an entire collection of poems that Sisson published in 1968.[13] Born in Bristol in 1914 and deceased in Langport in 2003, Sisson is considered a direct heir to Eliot and Pound's Modernism, but also to a different literary tradition spearheaded by Thomas Hardy and Edward Thomas. He is the author of over twenty-five books of poetry, two novels, several translations (Dante, Du Bellay, Racine, La Fontaine, Heine, and Valéry among others), and critical essays.[14] Besides translating a number of Latin poetic texts,[15] Sisson frequently took inspiration from Latin poets in his

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9   Shakar 2002, 89–104.

10   Hinds 2005, 78: "Shakar's *Maximum Carnage*, by superimposing the sensibility of a reader of Ovid (as cued by his own book-title), and the sensibility of his ten-year-old narrator, a reader of *Violator*, achieves part of its impact by forcing us to consider the possibility of mutual permeability between high and low-cultural versions of the mythic imagination."

11   Zimmerman 2002, 40–48.

12   Hofmann and Lasdun 1995, 65–78.

13   Sisson 1998, 118–127.

14   For a recent bibliography of writings on and by Sisson, see Louth and McGuinness 2014, 491–493 (but cf. also Knottenbelt 1994 and De Luca 2015). Sisson's poem "Metamorphoses," a text generally neglected in scholarship on Ovid's reception (there is no mention of it, for instance, in Miller and Newlands 2014) though represented in anthologies such as Martin 1998 and Miles 1999, is briefly examined in Joshua 2001, 152–153; Brown 2005, 81 and 130–131; Ziolkowski 2005, 169–170; Ursini 2017, 119–121. On the presence of Ovid in modernist poetry see in general Tomlinson 1983 and, further, Tomlinson 2003.

15   Among other texts, Sisson translated the entire Catullan corpus, Horace's *Ars poetica*, Lucretius' *De rerum natura*, and Vergil's *Aeneid*, besides excerpts from Plautus, Martial, and—of course—Ovid (see below). Sisson discusses his rationale for translating poetic texts (and also, albeit indirectly, adapting or rewriting them) in the prefaces to his single translations, as well as in the introduction to his volume *Collected Translations* (Sisson

own literary output. As regards Ovid alone, his translation of the opening of the *Metamorphoses* (1.1–155),[16] albeit unfinished, is particularly important, both because it makes use of the same metrical form (couplets of iambic tetrameters) that Sisson employs in his own Ovidian poem and because it features the myth of the ages, an Ovidian theme that frequently recurs in Sisson's poem.[17] Note also his freely reworked version of the Actaeon episode (*Met.* 3.138–252),[18] which plays a crucial role (along with Pygmalion's story) in Sisson's original poem (although, in this case, the connection between the two texts is somewhat looser, and the metrical form of the translation, iambic pentameters, is different; see further below). Sisson's translations also include a version of *Tristia* 5.10.[19] Among his original poems, note especially "Daphne" and "Ovid in Pontus," both published in a 1974 collection entitled *In the Trojan Ditch*,[20] as

1996, ix–xi). There, in particular, he asserts that "there never was a poet who was not profoundly affected by poetry, not in the sense merely of having been open to identifiable influences, … but in the sense of finding that he belonged to a far-spreading company which, for all its individual diversity, shares some modes of perception which compel the linkage with words and rhythms which lie close to the heart of every language" (Sisson 1996, ix). In the same text, the very sense of translating is expounded by Sisson as "an irresistible, or at any rate unresisted attempt to get close to the work of foreign poets and to understand what they were saying, in their different times and places, in ways which make sense here and now" (Sisson 1996, x). For a more extensive, technical discussion of issues inextricably tied to poetic translation, see Sisson's 1984 essay "The Poet and the Translator" (reprinted in Louth and McGuinness 2014, 467–479). On issues more specifically tied to the translation of Latin authors, see Sisson's preface to his *Selected Translations*, which appeared in 1974 as part of the volume *In the Trojan Ditch* (now in Louth and McGuinness 2014, 430–433).

16   Sisson 1996, 285–291.

17   Despite Sisson's obvious debt to a common model in both texts, certain lines of his "Metamorphoses" seem to echo his translation of the opening of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (or vice versa): cf., for instance, "The first age was the age of gold" (5, 9) with "The golden age was first, when none …" (112) and "The giants piling up the sky" (9, 15) with "The giants pile the mountains up" (182). I was unable, however, to establish the chronological priority of either text over the other. Sisson's translation appeared in his 1974 volume *In the Trojan Ditch* and Sisson himself, in the preface to his *Selected Translations* (now in Louth and McGuinness 2014, 430–433), dates it between his translation of Catullus and that of Vergil (432). In other words, it was composed roughly at the same time as his poem "Metamorphoses." At any rate, it is reasonable to assume that the translation precedes the original poem (it could even have inspired it), and that the references to the myth of the ages and the Gigantomachy in Sisson's "Metamorphoses" are prompted by Sisson's translation of the opening of Ovid's poem, where the same topics are treated.

18   Sisson 1996, 291–293.

19   Sisson 1996, 294–295.

20   Sisson 1998, 157–158; on "Ovid in Pontus" see Ziolkowski 2005, 129; Simonis 2016, 313–314; Ursini 2017, 312.

well as "Narcissus" (another Ovidian composition), published in 1980 as part of *Exactions*.[21] Later in his career, Sisson published a larger poetic collection entitled *Tristia* and divided into ten parts, adding up to 125 lines; the theme is, once again, the poet's exile in Pontus.[22] Moreover, the volume entitled *Metamorphoses* includes, besides the eponymous text, a poem on "Eurydice" and one on "Orpheus,"[23] to which I shall come back.

In the preface to his *Collected Poems* (published in the volume *In the Trojan Ditch*, now in Louth and McGuinness 2014, 429–430), Sisson compares the practice of poetic translation to the use of myth in his own poetic output, equating both with a form of "distraction" of consciousness:

> The writing of poetry is, in a sense, the opposite of writing what one wants to write, and it is because of the embarrassing growth of the area of consciousness which writing, as indeed the other serious encounters of life, produces that one has recourse to the conscious manipulation of translation, as it were to distract one while the unwanted impulses free themselves under the provocation of another's thought. … There are other enabling distractions—reasoning and analysis, mythology and other narrative, properly used. All these are really modes of the problem of form.[24]

In the preface to his *Collected Translations*, published in the same volume (Louth and McGuinness 2014, 430–433), Sisson asserts that, in fact, he sometimes hesitated between including a text in his "poems" and classifying it as a "translation" (432). As I shall show, a composition inspired by Prop. 1.3 appears in *both* Sisson's *Collected Poems* and in his *Collected Translations*.[25]

The poem "Metamorphoses" is written entirely in couplets of iambic tetrameters and divided into nine sections, ranging in length from a minimum of four lines to a maximum of fifty-four (the total length is 240 lines). The text begins as a series of variations on Ovidian themes (the first two sections are devoted

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21 Sisson 1998, 265.
22 Sisson 1998, 488–492.
23 Sisson 1998, 91–92 and 117.
24 Louth and McGuinness 2014, 429.
25 On the faint boundary line between free translation and poetic reinvention, see also Sisson's 1984 essay on "The Poet and the Translator" (in Louth and McGuinness 2014, 467–479): "When we say a translation is free we should consider the ways in which it could be bound. What is usually meant is being tied up with what one might call the fiction of literal meanings, according to which there are words corresponding with other words. The real situation is much more complex. … There is a sense in which almost any line of poetry is nearer to Catullus than the complete prose version of Cornish is" (474).

to Actaeon, the third to Pygmalion, and the fourth to Leda and Europa). Then, however, Classical myths are placed side by side with Biblical episodes (such as those of Ruth and Susanna in the seventh section), gradually mixing the two sources together until the emergence of what Sisson calls the "metamorphosis of all": i.e. Christ's coming.[26] Sisson's poem includes, at least in embryonic form, all three of the main features common to more recent Ovidian rewritings:

1) Sisson's poem "Metamorphoses" has a fragmented, heterogeneous relationship with its model. The author, in fact, chooses (a few) specific episodes, rearranges them according to his needs, and treats some of them multiple times (particularly the story of Diana and Actaeon, narrated in the first two sections and evoked again in the sixth). This may not surprise the reader, since the poem is Sisson's original composition, merely echoing Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Note, however, that the text (initially) reads, in effect, like a miniature rewriting of Ovid's poem (just as Sisson's *Tristia* is a rewriting of Ovid's). This is what the first half of Sisson's poem is, although its second half is partly different. We can, therefore, legitimately associate this text with actual reinventions composed by later authors (who may well have used Sisson's "Metamorphoses" as a blueprint).

2) Sisson "defamiliarizes" Ovid's tales, particularly through a deliberate, systematic inversion of perspectives and/or radical change of ending (in both cases, Sisson's technique is essentially the same). Thus, for instance, Sisson surmises in the second half of his poem that Actaeon was not a man transformed into a stag, but a stag transformed into a man. Similarly, the Pygmalion episode is concluded by the protagonist's wish that the woman may be turned back into a statue.

3) Sisson combines Ovid's Classical legacy with another cultural strand: the Bible and, in general, Judeo-Christian religion. (In fact, Sisson uses two intertexts simultaneously: Ovid's poem and the Scriptures. Through his use of both texts, however, Sisson incorporates the respective cultures into one poem, which thus has a twofold reference point.) To be sure, the poem's structure seems to display a linear trajectory from Classical

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26   That religion plays a fundamental role in the whole collection is confirmed by the two epigraphs, respectively by Fulke Greville ("Though fleshe cannot believe, yet God is true") and René Crevel ("Et ici, sans nous perdre dans des subtilités, constatons que le monde n'est devenu une telle cochonnerie que parce qu'il a été si bien, si totalement, empli de Dieu"), which Sisson places at the outset of his 1968 volume (although there is no trace of them in *Collected Poems*). See Louth and McGuinness 2014, 482–483.

myth (in the first four sections) to the Old Testament (in the sixth, seventh, and eighth sections), featuring a "bridge" in the fifth section and the climax (i.e. Christ's coming) in the ninth. However, in the entire second half of the poem, both cultural strands almost constantly overlap (note, for instance, "The naked figure in the grove / Diana's or the risen Christ's?" in the sixth section). This is confirmed by Sisson's final reference to the Gigantomachy in the ninth section (which is about the birth of Christ). In sum: two cultural reference points coexist in the whole text.[27]

Thus, the poem is worthy of closer scrutiny; in what follows, I shall focus on the way in which Sisson rewrites the episodes of Actaeon and Pygmalion, the only tales to which (as noted) he dedicates one or more entire sections.[28]

2   Actaeon

In European and Western culture, the episode of Diana and Actaeon (which Ovid narrates in *Met.* 3.138–255) is famously a symbol of the relationship between error, guilt, and punishment. Ovid himself introduces the story with a moral exoneration of its protagonist (*at bene si quaeras, Fortunae crimen in illo, / non scelus invenies; quod enim scelus error habebat?* "But in him, if you look closely, you will see Fortune's wrongdoing, / not a crime: for what crime is there in a mistake?" *Met.* 3.141–142) and concludes it by making room for two opposite evaluations of Diana's behavior, without taking sides with either (*rumor in ambiguo est: aliis violentior aequo / visa dea est, alii laudant dignamque severa / virginitate vocant; pars invenit utraque causas* "People's comments are disparate: some think that the goddess was less merciful / than would have been fair, others praise her and consider her worthy / of her rigorous chastity;

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27   For this crucial feature, cf. Sisson's "Daphne," in which the wood of the tree into which the girl is transformed is paired with that of the Cross. For a discussion of the role of religion in postwar British and Irish poetry more generally (including that of Sisson himself), see Huk 2009.

28   Referring to his collection a few years after its publication, Sisson described it as "rather confusingly entitled *Metamorphoses* on account of some allusions to Ovid in the title poem" (in the preface to his *Selected Translations*, published in the volume *In the Trojan Ditch*: Louth and McGuinness 2014, 432). The statement is clearly a form of self-mocking humor. And yet, even if taken literally (implying, in other words, that Ovid is but a spur to Sisson's original poetry), it would fall short of disproving that Sisson's own poem "Metamorphoses" is *also* a rewriting of Ovid's—indeed, an open and explicit reinvention, at least in the first half of the text (the poem then transforms itself into something different; after all, metamorphosis is its fundamental theme and principle).

each side has good arguments to adduce," *Met.* 3.253–255). Analogously, in medieval, modern, and contemporary culture, readers have wondered what exactly is the crime of the seemingly innocent Actaeon, suspecting that some further details of the story were omitted by Ovid (or by the mythical tradition itself) and, more generally, meditating on the theme of identity, which is evoked by the transformation tale and its reversal of roles between hunter and prey. Another important object of debate is Ovid's insistence on the fact that Actaeon retains human consciousness even after the metamorphosis (see especially *Met.* 3.200–205).[29]

Two texts have recently attempted to answer the questions raised by the narrative: Ted Hughes' poetic version of the myth[30] and Joyce Carol Oates' short story "The Sons of Angus MacElster." In Ted Hughes' account, the scene in which the two protagonists meet is significantly replete with verbs of "seeing" and "looking" (referring, of course, to Actaeon), whereas Ovid's narrative focused, by contrast, on Diana and the nymphs' reaction to the intruder's arrival: "So he came to the clearing. And *saw* ripples / Flocking across the pool out of the cavern. / He edged into the cavern, under ferns // That dripped with spray. He *peered* / Into the gloom to see the waterfall—/ But what he *saw* were nymphs, their wild faces // Screaming at him in a commotion of water. / And as his eyes adjusted, he *saw* they were naked, / Beating their breasts as they screamed at him. // And he *saw* they were crowding together / To hide something from him. He *stared* harder. / Those nymphs could not conceal Diana's whiteness, // The tallest barely reached her navel. Actaeon / *Stared* at the goddess, who stared at him" (my emphasis).[31] Thus, Hughes suggests the intentionality of Actaeon's gesture, thereby implying Actaeon's guilt.[32] In

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29   For the various ancient versions of the myth, cf. Schlam 1984 and Heath 1992; on the modern European reception of the tale, see Casanova-Robin 2003; Brown 2005, 67–83; Schmitzer 2008; Moog-Grünewald 2010, 19–25 and Lafont 2013. See, finally, Ursini 2017, 183–190, and Schiesaro 2018 for contemporary rewritings.

30   Hughes 1997, 97–103 ("Actaeon").

31   Hughes 1997, 99.

32   The intentionality of Actaeon's gaze, established as a commonplace since Petrarch (*RVF* 23, 152–153: *Io, perché d'altra vista non m'appago, / stetti a mirarla: ond'ella ebbe vergogna,* "And I, who am satisfied by no other sight, / kept staring at her: hence, she felt ashamed"), had been made explicit as early as Nonnus of Panopolis: *Dionys.* 5.287–369 (by contrast, as noted, Ovid treats Actaeon's encounter with Diana as a result of mere chance; the same is true of Ovid's direct source, namely Callimachus' *Hymn* 5 *On the Bath of Pallas* 107–118). Note that, some twenty years before publishing his *Tales from Ovid,* Hughes had devoted an original poem to Actaeon's story (also entitled "Actaeon"), which had appeared in the 1979 collection *Moortown Diary.* In this case, the new text is a complete reinvention of the episode, transferred to a modern psychological context and endowed with a more specific

her short story "The Sons of Angus MacElster,"[33] Joyce Carol Oates reinvents the Ovidian tale and sets it in Nova Scotia in 1923. In this narrative, Angus MacElster's six sons murder their father in order to avenge the outrage suffered by their mother, whom Angus had undressed in the street following a heated argument. As Philip Terry writes in the introduction to the volume *Ovid Metamorphosed* (which includes the story), Oates makes explicit the violence that, from a female point of view, is implicit in the male gaze.[34]

The several possible readings of the episode traditionally associated with Ovid's narrative seem to be conflated in the two texts that Sisson devotes to Actaeon's story, both placed at the outset of his "Metamorphoses" but offering two different—and diametrically opposite—interpretations of the events. In the first rewriting (twenty-two lines), "Actaeon was a foolish hind / to run from what he had not seen" (1.1–2), and the narrative continues in the wake of Ovid, albeit suggesting that Diana deliberately ensnared her future prey (1.6–9: "Diana knew the man he was / but took her kirtle from her waist. / She gave her arrows to her maids / then dropped her short and flimsy dress"). In the second rewriting (only four lines), Sisson hypothesizes that events actually followed exactly the opposite course: "—Or else he was a rutting stag / turned to a man because he saw / Diana bathing at the pool" (2.1–3). Sisson's systematic use of his inversion technique appears evident here (note, in the final line of the section, his choice of an image simultaneously explicit and allusive: "—As you might turn a foreskin back," 2.4). While the opening of Sisson's poem features an inversion of Ovid's tale (note the *incipit*: "what he had not seen") and a portrayal of Diana as responsible for the entire incident ("I think she knew the hunt was up / but set the hounds upon the man / to show her bitter virgin spite," 1.11–13), Sisson rewrites his own version in the second section by reversing the sense of Actaeon's metamorphosis: no longer from man to stag, but vice versa.

Such choices, however, are not merely dictated by a taste for paradox, since the changes made by Sisson to Ovid's narrative are heir to a long tradition of creative reinventions and reinterpretations of the episode. The reverse metamorphosis, for instance, previously appeared in Giovanni Boccaccio's short poem "La caccia di Diana," at the end of which the narrator reveals his past as a stag. He asserts that he and other prey were turned into young men by Venus,

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meaning (see Scigaj 1986, 274). On the poem included in *Tales from Ovid* see Ingleheart 2009 and most recently Schiesaro 2018, 518–523.

33   Terry 2000, 72–77.

34   Terry 2000, 14–15: "classicists have often been puzzled by the disproportion between the crime and the punishment; Oates's reworking, which let us see the violence of the male gaze from the woman's point of view, provides an incisive answer."

whom Diana's companions had invoked after the hunt, asking her to fulfil their sexual desires (*E poi, verso del foco rivoltata, / non so che disse: se non che di fuori / ciascuna fiera che v'era infiammata, / mutata in forma d'uom, di quelli ardori / usciva giovinetto gaio e bello, / tutti correndo sopra 'l verde e' fiori; / e tutti entravan dentro al fiumicello, / e, quindi uscendo ciascun, d'un vermiglio / e nobil drappo si facean mantello*, "Then, turning herself towards the fire, / she said I know not what. But every animal / trapped inside the fire came out / transformed into a man, emerging from those flames / as a fair, cheerful youth. / All of them ran around the flowery meadows, / and all sprang into the stream. / Coming out of it, each of them put on / a crimson cloth as his noble cloak," 17.37–45; *Quasi ripien di nuova ammirazione, / mi ritrovai di quel mantel coperto, / che gli altri usciti dello ardente agone; / e vidimi alla bella Donna offerto, / e di cervio mutato in creatura / umana e razionale esser per certo*, "As though filled with renewed admiration, / I found myself covered in the same cloak / that the others had, as they came out of the fire; / then, I was offered to the fair Mistress / and, turned from stag into man, / I was sure of being a rational human creature," 18.7–12). In Boccaccio, Actaeon's metamorphosis obviously plays a different role compared to what occurs in Sisson's poem. Both authors, however, testify to the possibility of further developing ambiguities inherent to Ovid's narrative as well as to the mythical tradition. In this case, they both complicate and destabilize our perception of the hunter's transformation into prey. As a result, Boccaccio opts for a man-prey (who is happy about his fate), whereas Sisson refers to the animal as a hunter ("a rutting stag").

Sisson, moreover, hints at Actaeon's ambivalent gender identity by calling the protagonist a "hind," then a "stag" (note also his remark on Diana's muscular body, "There was some muscle on the girl," 1.10). In fact, gender ambivalence seems to be a constant element of rewritings and reinventions of the Ovidian tale.[35] For instance, at the outset of Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II*, Gaveston muses over various literary and musical pleasures that he might offer to his new king (and lover)—among them, a staging of the story of Diana and Actaeon, in which both roles would be played by boys: "Sometime a lovely boy in Dian's shape, / with hair that gilds the water as it glides, / crownets of pearl about his naked arms, / and in his sportful hands an olive tree, / to hide those parts which men delight to see, / shall bathe him in a spring; and there hard by, / one like Actæon peeping through the grove / shall by the angry goddess

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35   Brown 2005, 81: "Although the dynamic of the legend, in so far as it is sexual at all, seems heterosexual, it is amenable to queering of different kinds. In particular, the strong sense of transgression or boundary-crossing inherent in the myth may figure same-sex desire even though it is concealed behind a male/female encounter."

be transform'd, / and running in the likeness of an hart / by yelping hounds pull'd down, and seem to die" (1.1.61–70). A similar, yet more significant reinvention is found in the movie *Métamorphoses* by Christophe Honoré, who not only places the Actaeon episode at the outset of his work, but also stages a transgender Diana.[36] This confirms that the motifs of mutable identity and role reversal, along with those of taboo and transgression, can always be associated with the theme of gender identity (as observed by Sarah Annes Brown). Without a doubt, the "muscles" of Sisson's Diana can retrospectively acquire new overtones in light of Honoré's movie (and perhaps also of Marlowe's choice to put the Actaeon episode—one of the many possible stories—in Gaveston's mouth). The similarities between all these versions may suggest that, besides the portrayal of the hunter as a "hind," a more radical role reversal has taken place.[37]

Sisson also evokes the episode of Diana and Actaeon in two other poems: "The Deer-Park," published in his 1961 collection *The London Zoo*,[38] and "The Withdrawal," published in the volume *Metamorphoses* (along with the eponymous poem).[39] In "The Deer-Park," however, the myth functions as an antithetical emblem of a "vanquished world" (15) no longer experiencing "individual sorrow / or even identified pain" (26–27): "And the horn sounding at the death / of the torn Actaeon / echoes for similar deaths / in identical forests / for in this machine world / no one can die lonely" (19–24). Note also that the poem's ending features "the bell / of the emerging church-tower," which "marks / a point in the gathering mists" (34–36): an important detail in relation to the cultural and religious syncretism that characterizes the finale of Sisson's "Metamorphoses" (see below). By contrast, in the seven-line poem "The Withdrawal," Sisson's allusion to the mythical tale translates a world of love and introspection into a world of symbolic imagery, following a pattern typical of lyric poetry. Finally, Sisson's version of the episode in iambic pentameters ("Actaeon")[40] is of crucial importance to our understanding of the contemporary reception of Ovid's poem and the Actaeon myth. In this text, situated midway between translation and rewriting, Sisson adapts the Ovidian narrative to a modern context

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36   Ursini 2017, 189–190 (see also 159–163 on the movie in general).
37   It is possible, on the other hand, to detect various allusions to a "reversed" sexual violence in the hunting scene: "There was some blood but not her own" (1.14, following the mention of Diana's "virgin spite"); "the forest rang but not with tears" (1.16); "which they were sure he would enjoy" (1.19, referring to Actaeon, who is about to be killed by "his favourite whippet"); "Diana by the fountain still / shuddered like the water on her flesh" (1.20–21).
38   Sisson 1998, 35–36.
39   Sisson 1998, 100.
40   Sisson 1996, 291–293.

(for instance, Diana mistakes Actaeon for a reporter, 39). In so doing, Sisson seems to foreshadow certain features of some of the most memorable poems published in *After Ovid*; but note also the choice to let the translator-narrator occasionally take the floor—a technique common to both Sisson's version and David R. Slavitt's translation (e.g., "For killing deer was then accepted practice," 13; "In those days / That was the only way to have a shower," 25–26). It is particularly significant that here, too, Sisson alludes to the uncertain and ambivalent nature of the story: "The cameramen had not arrived in time, / Unfortunately, for a front-page picture, / And so the tale was left to literature" (9–11).[41]

We can, therefore, affirm that the Actaeon episode is the Ovidian tale that most attracted Sisson's interest. No wonder that the story also appears in the opening of Sisson's poem "Metamorphoses."[42] This fact, however, can also be explained on a different basis. Some medieval writers and commentators famously regarded Actaeon as a Christ-figure: this is the case, for instance, with the 14th-century poem *Ovide Moralisé* (3.604–669), in which the hunter's metamorphosis is read as an allegory of Christ's incarnation, while Diana is equated with the Sacred Trinity (seen by Actaeon-Christ in its naked purity) and the hounds tearing Actaeon to pieces are identified with the Jews who put Christ to death. Cf. also *Ovidius Moralizatus* (3.5–6) by Pierre Bersuire (c. 1290–1362) and *Épître d'Othéa* (69) by Christine de Pizan (c. 1364–c. 1429). This raises the question: is it purely accidental (or merely a result of Sisson's idiosyncrasies) that a poem in which Classical myth and Biblical episodes constantly mingle

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41   Once again, I was unable to date Sisson's "Actaeon" with precision. Consider, however, that Sisson was translating the opening of the *Metamorphoses* towards the mid-1960s, all the while composing an Ovidian poem prominently featuring the Actaeon episode (along with Pygmalion). Moreover, in 1967, Sisson published an essay entitled "Call No Man Happy Until he is Dead" (now in Louth and McGuinness 2014, 318–322), in which he quoted the proverbial dictum (attributed to Solon) which Ovid had echoed at the outset of his Actaeon narrative (*dici ... beatus / ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet*, "Nobody ... ought to be / called happy before the day of his death and his funerary ceremonies," 3.136–137). Based on this evidence, we can conclude that, in all likelihood, Sisson's "Actaeon" was also composed around that time. Note that, in his theoretical writings, Sisson highlights the difficulty of drawing a clear-cut line between free translation and reinvention of a poetic model: see above, n. 25.

42   Note also that T.S. Eliot alludes to the story of Actaeon in *The Waste Land*, which Sisson obviously uses as a blueprint for his own religious "syncretism" in "Metamorphoses." In *The Waste Land* 196–201, Sweeney's visit to Mrs. Porter is sketched through echoes of John Day's *The Parliament of Bees*, which features the myth of Diana and Actaeon. Ezra Pound, another of Sisson's poetic models, had composed a short poem entitled "The Coming of War: Actaeon" in 1915.

and overlap, opens with Actaeon's death and concludes with the death of Christ ("A death in spring-time is the best," 9.20)?

3   Pygmalion

In Europe and the West, especially since the 18th century, Ovid's version of the myth of Pygmalion (*Met*. 10.243–297) has been perhaps the best known symbol of the life-giving power of art, as well as of the relationship between art itself, love, and ideals.[43] Note, for instance, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's one-scene lyric drama *Pygmalion* (1762–1770), in which the metamorphosis is not due to divine intervention, but rather to the power of the sculptor's art—to the point that the woman/statue identifies herself explicitly with the artist as soon as she utters her first words, touching herself and her surroundings ("Moi .... C'est moi .... Ce n'est plus moi"). Finally, she touches Pygmalion and sighs: "Ah! encore moi." This tradition can be placed alongside a parallel yet opposite one, which reinvents Ovid's tale (or simply refers to it) by highlighting its disturbing aspects. One such facet of the story is the idea of an inanimate, anthropomorphic object suddenly coming to life (cf., for instance, Washington Allston's 1809 ballad "The Paint-King," in which it is Pygmalion's portrait that comes to life and kills the woman who has fallen in love with him).[44] Alternatively, other authors emphasize the inherently misogynistic assumptions implicit in a man's desire to create the "perfect woman" (cf., for example, George Bernard Shaw's 1913 comedy *Pygmalion*).[45]

Among the many recent rewritings of the episode, Alex Shakar's short story "A Million Years from Now" (published in the collection *City in Love*)[46] belongs to the first category, in that it thematizes the contrast between the real and the ideal, bringing it to its peak. The protagonist is, in fact, a once-famous artist who

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43   Unlike other ancient versions of the Pygmalion myth, Ovid's narrative portrays the protagonist as an artist (elsewhere, he is either a king or a common man).

44   On this aspect see Sharrock in chapter 10 of this volume.

45   See Rosati 1983, 51–93 (= Rosati 2016, 53–93) for a comparison between Ovid's version and other ancient sources, as well as for the significance of the story in the context of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. See further Dörrie 1974; Dinter 1979; Schmitz-Emans 1993; Mayer and Neumann 1997; Brown 1999, 133–139, 155–167 and 181–200; Joshua 2001; Brown 2005, 123–142; and Martin 2010, 578–584 on the modern reception of the myth in European culture; Ursini 2017, 233–241 on its contemporary rewritings; Keen 2017, 315–316 on its use in science fiction literature; James 2011 on movie adaptations; Stoichita 2006 on the "Pygmalion effect" in general.

46   Shakar 2002, 55–65.

is now disparagingly called "the Junk Man." Surrounded and ridiculed by prostitutes, he manufactures a woman using waste material found in the street and aspiring to attain ideal perfection—in other words, to create "a woman I could love," who maybe existed "a million years ago" or could perhaps exist "a million years from now" (hence the title).[47] Other works belong to the opposite category, including Michael Longley's short poem "Ivory and Water," in which the reader is prompted to imagine what happens "If as a lonely bachelor who disapproves of women / You carve the perfect specimen out of snow-white ivory." In such a case, "your dream may come true / And she warms and softens and you are kissing actual lips." At the end of the dream, however, events take a wholly unexpected turn as the woman melts and is transformed into water, "until / There is nothing left of her for anyone to hug or hold."[48] Ted Hughes, in his version of Ovid's tale,[49] ascribes the artistic creation process not to the sculptor but (again, as in a dream) to a "spectre" striving to come to life: "He dreamed / Unbrokenly awake as asleep / The perfect body of a perfect woman—/ Though this dream / Was not so much the dream of a perfect woman / As a spectre, sick of unbeing, / That had taken possession of his body / To find herself a life."[50]

As for Sisson, he devotes the third section of his "Metamorphoses" (thirty-two lines) to Pygmalion. While his treatment of the Actaeon episode is immediately introduced as an explicit inversion of Ovid's narrative pattern (and, thus, as a radical disappointment of the reader's expectations), Sisson's Pygmalion is initially presented in a wholly conventional fashion, as if the story were consistent with its Ovidian counterpart: "Pygmalion was an artful man; / Sculpsit and pinxit were his trade" (3.1–2). In fact, Sisson at first follows in Ovid's footsteps, albeit condensing the narrative into a much shorter text and adopting a laconic tone (which he uses throughout the first half of the poem, but especially here): note, for instance, "But it was marble, rather hard" (3.8) and "However, it did not respond" (3.12).

Nevertheless, Sisson's Pygmalion, too, undergoes an inversion process. This time, however, the process takes place at the end of the narrative, although its consequences retrospectively affect the story's premises as well (note, especially, "The ones he knew were troublesome," 5, referring to women in general. The statement obviously acquires new overtones in light of Pygmalion's misogyny, which the narrator explicitly endorses towards the end). At the moment of the metamorphosis and the two lovers' union, the statue's transition from the

47   Shakar 2002, 58.
48   Hofmann and Lasdun 1995, 240.
49   Hughes 1997, 133–139 ("Pygmalion").
50   Hughes 1997, 135.

ideal to the real (or, more specifically, from the artist's dream of an imaginary woman to Pygmalion's coexistence with one of flesh and blood) is foreshadowed by Sisson's use of the verb "to slobber," which has a shocking effect on the reader: "To his surprise the girl grew warm; / He slobbered and she slobbered back" (3.23–24). The following couplet, featuring a stark contrast between two juxtaposed sentences, makes the point even more explicitly: "—This is that famous mutual flame. / The worst of all was yet to come" (3.25–26). The finale of Sisson's narrative reverses the conclusion of Ovid's tale: "Although he often wished her back / In silent marble, good and cold / The bitch retained her human heat, / The conquest of a stone by art. / May Venus keep me from all hope / And let me turn my love to stone" (3.27–32).

Here, too, as in the case of his Actaeon narrative, Sisson does not merely aim at surprising the reader (although the *aprosdoketon* effect is certainly deliberate) or desecrating the Classical model. Rather, Sisson's version is replete with echoes of previous rewritings and reinventions of the myth. Consider, for instance, the idea that the statue may be preferable to the flesh-and-blood woman, which also appears in Charles Cotton's 1689 poem "The Picture" ("Perhaps you fear m' idolatry / Would make the image prove / A woman fit for love; / Or give it such a soul as shone / Through fond Pygmalion's living bone, / That so I may abandon thee," 13–18) and, most notably, in an epigram by James Robertson ("To please *Pygmalion*, Heav'n inspir'd with Life / A Tongueless Stone, of which he made a Wife; / Wou'd Heav'n, all-gracious, hear *Asino*'s moan, / His Wife—her Tongue at least—*wou'd soon be Stone*"),[51] originally published anonymously in 1770 (as part of *Poems, consisting of Tales, Fables, Epigrams, & c. & c. by Nobody*, London, 184) and later signed by the author in 1780 (as part of the second edition of the same volume: *Poems, consisting of Tales, Fables, Elegiacs and Miscellaneous Pieces, Prologues, Epilogues, & c. & c. by J. Robertson*, London, 270). The final line of Sisson's narrative ("And let me turn my love to stone," 3.32) indirectly evokes the idea of reverse metamorphosis, which was widespread well before Sisson himself. Note, for example, W.S. Gilbert's 1871 comedy *Pygmalion and Galatea*, in which the protagonist is a happily married man and the girl decides to turn herself back into stone in order not to destroy his marriage. In Georg Kaiser's play *Pygmalion* (written in 1944, but first published and staged in 1948 as part of a trilogy also including *Twice Amphitryon*

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51   The three texts discussed here (Cotton, Robertson, and Sisson) have been compared to one another by Brown 2005, 129–131. Note also that Cotton's poem includes a turn of phrase very similar to the ending of Sisson's Pygmalion narrative: "Where feather-footed Time / May turn my hopes into despair, / My downy youth to bristled hair" (9–11, immediately preceding the passage quoted above).

and *Bellerophon*), the girl symbolizes an artwork that can only be truly understood by its creator; correspondingly, Athena turns her back into a statue so as to save her from the charge of prostitution, pressed against her by the sculptor's client.[52]

In Sisson's text, both the idea of an artwork (actually or seemingly) preferable to reality and the reverse metamorphosis are expressions of the protagonist's misogyny, which is key to the interpretation of the whole episode. Thus, in Sisson's version, the ultimate significance of the tale is the very opposite of what Ovid suggests. In fact, Ovid's Pygmalion succeeds in overcoming his contempt for women precisely through his creation of an ideal woman and his love for her (*Quas quia Pygmalion aevum per crimen agentes / viderat, offensus vitiis quae plurima menti / femineae natura dedit*, "Having seen them [the Propoetides] and their debauched / life, Pygmalion was disgusted by the vices with which nature had / abundantly endowed the female mind," *Met.* 10.243–245). In Sisson's narrative, by contrast, the "birth" of Pygmalion's ideal woman and the protagonist's union with her unveil the "true" nature of desire ("He slobbered and she slobbered back," 3.24),[53] besides laying bare the intrinsically misogynistic assumptions that govern the sculptor's action from the very beginning. In Ovid's tale, the objectified woman replaces an ideal love which the artist deems unattainable, and which is eventually actualized through the object's metamorphosis. By contrast, Sisson's Pygmalion comes to realize that the object is precisely what best embodies his ideal woman. Sisson's rewriting thereby reverses the Ovidian model and ends on a cynical, realistic note.[54]

4   The Pagan-Christian syncretism

In the remainder of Sisson's poem, none of the single sections is entirely devoted to a specific Ovidian myth. In the fourth section, the poet evokes

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52 For a similar case, cf. Michel de Cubières-Palmézeaux's 1777 comedy *Galathée*. On the theme of reverse transformation, cf. notably Martin 2004.

53 Cf. also "An Essay on God and Man" (a poem of the same collection, in which the notion of individual personality is called into question), 17–20: "Love? This monster is supposed to be kinked with the person, / But again, I do not know. / It is a fine trick to tie love to the penis / Like the cracked fakirs who put a skewer through it" (Sisson 1998, 129).

54 The motif of Pygmalion's disappointment with Galatea and the reverse metamorphosis (for which the artist himself is responsible) are ironically combined in two 19th-century operatic texts: the libretto written by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré for Victor Massé's *opéra comique* entitled *Galathée* (1852), and Leonhard Kohl von Kohlenegg's libretto for Franz von Suppé's operetta *Die Schöne Galathee* (1865).

Jupiter's encounters with Leda and Europa.[55] Then, in the context of his Biblical rewriting, Sisson refers to Danae in the fifth and central section, which marks a transition between the "pagan" first half of the poem and the "Christian" second half. Phaethon is mentioned in the sixth part, in which Diana reappears; Eurydice in the seventh and eighth sections; the Gigantomachy is narrated in the ninth; and the myth of the ages occurs in the fifth and ninth sections (the only part in which no Classical references are featured is the seventh, which contains two Old Testament episodes, first Ruth and Boaz, then Susanna and the Elders).

In "Metamorphoses," Sisson pays great attention to the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, which he reworks on a syncretistic basis. In fact, the myth features a descent to the Underworld, which Sisson associates with Christ's: "And when you visited the shades / Did you see my Eurydice, / Christ, on that terrifying day?" (6.9–11). References to Eden provide (albeit indirectly) further grounds for syncretism: "Within this forest everything / Begins. Although I may not say / Eurydice walks with her tears / It is the grove where they began" (8.7–10). This "forest," which the author goes on to describe as the Garden of Eden, is "the forest of the uterus" (8.4), from which an aborted fetus is pulled out. Significantly, the story of Orpheus and Eurydice is explicitly treated in two other poems belonging to the same collection. The first is "Eurydice,"[56] an Ovidian rewriting somewhat similar to that found in "Metamorphoses" (note especially the final inversion, "Orpheus goes back to Thrace, / In those hard mountains / Learns to hate all women. / For her, it might be said / But that is false," 37–41, alluding to Ovid, *Met.* 10.78–85). The second is "Orpheus,"[57] in which the myth is used as an allegory of the mind ("A group of naked figures with Orpheus playing / But succeeding in attracting only the animals / I take to be a representation of the mind," 12–14). Another reinvention of the Orpheus myth appears in the poem "In Allusion to Propertius, I, iii," placed right after "Eurydice" in the final edition of the collection.[58] Here, Sisson freely rewrites Prop. 1.3, intermingling

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55   Ovid does not offer an extensive account of the myth of Leda in the *Metamorphoses*, and merely refers to it as one of the episodes depicted on Arachne's tapestry (6.109) alongside the rape of Europa (103–107)—which, however, is also narrated in full elsewhere in the poem (2.836–875). It is likely that Sisson used *Met.* 6 as a direct source (note also the eagle, mentioned by Ovid at 6.108 and by Sisson at "Metamorphoses" 4.5 in the context of the myth of Asteria).

56   Sisson 1998, 91–92.

57   Sisson 1998, 117.

58   Sisson 1998, 92–93. In the final edition of Sisson's *Collected Poems*, the collection *Metamorphoses* includes some texts which did not appear in the 1968 volume (see Louth and

it with a role-reversed version of Propertius 4.7, and alludes to the Orpheus tale in the finale of the poem. Note the role reversal: "Why had I not come to her bed before? / I explained that I lived in the underworld / Among shadows. She had been in that forest. / Had we not met, she said, in that place? / Hand in hand we wandered among the tree-trunks / And came into the light at the edge of the forest" ("In allusion to Propertius, I, iii," 19–24).

The pagan-Christian syncretism, which Sisson dates back to Dante in a theoretical essay,[59] culminates in the ninth and final section of "Metamorphoses" (twenty lines). Here, Christ's coming is equated with the beginning of a new Golden Age (as in the late-antique and medieval interpretation of Vergil's fourth eclogue): "The golden age began anew; / What had been first became the last. / Declension to the age of iron / Was unimportant after all" (9.10–13). However, the elevated, optimistic tone of this section is deflated first through Sisson's use of colloquial style ("Funny how he became a Mass," 5), then through similes ("Building an ark for the whole world / As you might nail a coffin up," 8–9). In the finale, the poet prompts further questioning: "And yet there must remain a doubt. / The giants piling up the sky, / Pelion on Ossa, also rose / And what will rise must also fall. / We know it by experience" (14–18).

In Sisson's poetry and poetics, parallel references to both pagan mythology and Christian religion play a central role, as Sisson himself explains in an important theoretical text, "Poetry and Myth" (1977).[60] The essay begins with a polemical attack on Philip Larkin's idea that "every poem must be its own sole freshly-created universe,"[61] preceded by a general observation that "a poem can have meaning only in terms of words other people use, and which we have from our ancestors."[62] Then, Sisson examines in greater detail the role of mythology, not only in works of literature, but in human experience itself:

> The question is, are our feelings about things some sort of absolute? Or can they be checked against some wider reference? And if so, how? It is

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McGuinness 2014, 483). "In allusion to Propertius, I, iii" is also (significantly) featured in *Collected Translations* (Sisson 1996, 293–294).

59   "Poetry and Myth," on which see below. For Sisson's reference to Dante (*Purg.* VI, 118–119), see Louth and McGuinness 2014, 453.

60   Originally published in "Agenda" 15 (2–3), 1977, the essay later became part of two collections of Sisson's literary-critical writings (*The Avoidance of Literature: Collected Essays*, 1978; *In Two Minds: Guesses at other Writers*, 1990), and has now been reprinted in Louth and McGuinness 2014, 452–458.

61   See Larkin 1983, 79.

62   Louth and McGuinness 2014, 453.

certainly essential to the possibility of any sort of civilization that the answers to these latter questions should not be entirely negative. It is essential to any communication, to human life itself which, whatever it may be, is certainly not that of any individual floating in space. Mythology is one of the vehicles by which the human being can escape from his solipsism. Through it, one stands for all, as in the Christian religion, or for some of all, or for part of all, as in the pagan mythologies. The old gods were put to flight, but not altogether chased off the scene, by Christ, and if he could be erased from men's apprehension it would not be in favour of a vacuum.[63]

This passage, whose conclusion indirectly illustrates the significance of the finale of Sisson's "Metamorphoses," can be read as a sort of programmatic statement of the entire poem. In fact, it offers a potential key to the interpretation of any modern rewriting of ancient mythical narratives. In this paper, at any rate, I have aimed at highlighting the way in which Sisson's poem simultaneously evokes a long tradition of Ovidian reinventions (Boccaccio and medieval moralizing literature; Christopher Marlowe and 17th-century English poetry; but also 20th-century drama) and anticipates with surprising accuracy many features of contemporary Ovidian rewritings (by no means limited to poetry). These features include systematic "defamiliarization" (in Sisson's case, through explicit inversion) and contamination of Classical sources with other cultural frames of reference (in Sisson's case, through explicit pagan-Christian syncretism). As a result, Ovid is deeply and radically transfigured—in other words, "complicated by the words and rhythms of a different language, a different age and a different tradition," as Sisson writes in his discussion of John Dryden's translation of the *Aeneid*:

> Even a translator of genius—say Dryden—cannot give you his author's line. The most he can do is to offer you a *related* line, a related poem. That is something. It omits matter you could find in such as Cornish, and it is complicated by the words and rhythms of a different language, a different age and a different tradition. That takes us far from the original, it may be said. But we *are* far from our classic originals.[64]

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63   Louth and McGuinness 2014, 454.
64   Louth and McGuinness 2014, 474 (from *The Poet and the Translator*; emphasis in the original). "Cornish" is, of course, Francis Warre Cornish, author of a well-known prose version of Catullus' poems (1904).

"Far from the original": Sisson acknowledges the irreducible distance be-
tween Ovid's world and ours, concluding therefrom that this very distance can
generate a surplus of meaning, crucial to our understanding of both worlds.
This idea is perhaps the most distinctive and significant aspect of the multi-
farious artworks (literature, drama, and movies) which, a quarter-century after
C.H. Sisson's "Metamorphoses," would collectively give birth to a "New Ovidian
Age."

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Reviving the Dead: Ovid in Early Modern England

Emma Buckley

1   Introduction

Metempsychosis, transfiguration, immortality on the lips of others: this is not just the stuff of Ovid's poetry, but also a potent metaphor for translation and poetic succession in the Renaissance, as works of Classical literature were brought back to life again in a consciously colonizing process of translation, commentary, imitation and emulation. In this paper I look at the way two literary pioneers of early modern England, Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593) and Ben Jonson (1572–1637), imbricate themselves with Ovid via close translation of his first assertion of poetic immortality, *Amores* 1.15. I shall argue that, far from investing the Ovidian *amator* with the kind of dynamic overreach typical of Marlowe and the anti-heroes of his mature dramaturgy, the poet-lover we find in the first edition of Marlowe's *Elegies*—in an excerpted selection recreated from the first complete translation of the *Amores* in English—brings the amatory *ego* "back to life" only to condemn him to permanent, frustrated imprisonment in the experience of elegy. The paper then focuses on the afterlife of Marlowe's translation of *Amores* 1.15, absorbed within Ben Jonson's "comical satire" *Poetaster*. Jonson goes even further in transforming Ovid, first reducing him to the humiliating caricature of *amor*-obsessed *adulescens* (in counterpoint with the "true" poets of the play, Virgil and Horace), then investing him with a distinctly late Elizabethan voice and ejecting him from Rome and the play alike. I conclude, however, by returning again to three versions of *Amores* 1.15, Ovid's original, Marlowe's, and Jonson's, and I suggest that in the end the relationships between a poet and his work, art and life, physical and literary essence, adumbrate and supplement, rather than diminish, Ovid's own complicated approach to literary immortality. While both Jonson and Marlowe have been labeled as over-reachers and over-writers, in the shared enterprise of *Amores* 1.15 they offer a model of collaborative revision rather than competition and erasure that confers upon Ovid true immortality in the face of censorious authority, both in antiquity and far beyond.

2   Framing Ovid's Amores: Marlowe's Ovidian Poet-Lover

One of the most famous pioneers of English translation was Christopher Mar-
lowe, whose bold and sophisticated *Lucans first Booke* has been hailed as a
watershed moment for English literary culture, not just in its empathetic revi-
talization of the *Bellum Civile*, but also in its formative status as English poetry:
a combination of past and present that does not just bring Lucan back to
life but also re-animates him within a distinctly Marlovian persona.[1] The poet
who so brilliantly re-animates Lucan had already, however, much earlier in his
career, attempted another daring resurrection: Ovid in his *Amores*.[2] In its way,
this project could be considered just as daunting, for Marlowe was undertak-
ing the first full-scale effort to translate the *Amores* into English. And while
this was a text that was obviously well known, in the Middle Ages and early
Renaissance it was only obliquely acknowledged in comparison with Ovid's
other works, which—including the *Tristia*—were standard school textbooks.[3]
Indeed, in its first published manifestation, a ten-poem collection entitled *Cer-
taine of Ovids Elegies*, apparently printed in the Low Countries, Marlowe's Ovid
was very nearly killed off entirely. For this collection was one half of a volume
that also contained the satires of Sir John Davies, and it was therefore included
in the list of banned books subjected to public immolation as a result of the
"Bishops' Ban" of 1599.[4]

Still, Marlowe's work did escape the fire, and his larger translation work,
All Ovids Elegies, also survived in several editions.[5] But this collection has not

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1   See Steane 1964, 269–271 on this "kinship of rare closeness" (257); Hooley 2008, 243–260;
     Cheney 2009.

2   While there are difficulties with the dating of the editions of Marlowe's *Elegies*, which were
     all published posthumously (see below), it is generally accepted that these translations were
     part of Marlowe's juvenilia, and probably composed while he was still a student at Cambridge
     in the mid-1580s: see Gill 1987, 4–12.

3   On the role of Ovid's other works in school curricula, see especially (for the medieval period)
     Alton and Wormell 1960, 21–38; Hexter 1986. On Shakespeare, Ovid and the early modern
     humanist curriculum, see especially Bate 1993 and Enterline 2012. For some Elizabethan dis-
     comfort with the presence of Ovid, see Keilen 2014, 238. While the *Amores* clearly had a
     considerable impact on love poetry, especially the sonnet sequence, through the Middle Ages
     and into the Renaissance, Marlowe's is the first complete translation: see Stapleton 1996. This
     is not to suggest, however, that the *Amores* was itself a "forbidden" text: see Stapleton 2014a,
     esp. 10–13.

4   In purported response to the threat of "effeminizing erotic writing," the Bishops' Ban of
     1599 banned satires and epigrams altogether; histories and plays needed a state license. See
     Hansen 2017, 1–18; Moulton 2000 (esp. 103–114 on Marlowe's *Elegies*).

5   On the tangled publication history of *Certain of Ovids Elegies* and *All Ovids Elegies*, see Bullen
     1885, vol. 3, 104; Gill 1987, 4–12.

received the same acclaim as Marlowe's Lucan. Partly this has been a result of perceived deficiencies in what has been termed an apprentice work. His sloppy attention to the Latin and over-dependence on the explicatory commentary of Dominicus Niger has been deplored by, among others, Roma Gill, the editor of the Oxford edition of Marlowe's early work.[6] In addition, it has been pointed out that the *Amores* have left much less of a trace on Marlowe's mature works than Ovid's other poetry, which is obsessively quoted and re-modelled elsewhere, most obviously in his late erotic-epyllion Hero and Leander.[7]

Before turning to Marlowe's version of Ovid's first work, however, it is worth briefly rehearsing the modern critical context for the *Amores* themselves. Readers have long been challenged by the narrative framing of this work and the complex, interrelated personalities constituted by Ovidian "self-conscious fiction."[8] Katerina Volk has sketched the critical history of response to the Ovidian elegiac *ego* in an effort to outline the dangers in uncoupling the "weak" persona of the *amator* of *Amores* from the "strong" *poeta* of its programmatic elegies,[9] while more recently Ellen Oliensis has returned to the "insoluble conundrum" of the elegiac *ego* of the *Amores*, "poised between the first and third persons, at once an author for us to look with and a character for us to look at," urging us to reconsider the erotopoetics as well as the metapoetics of Ovid's first work.[10] Nevertheless, the dominant trend of 20th-century scholarship has been to tease out fault-lines between autobiography and persona, celebrating the author's deconstruction of elegiac *ego* over and over: a demolition job so neat, in fact, that Ovid effectively kills off the genre itself.[11] To take Niklas Holzberg's model as example, the *Amores* are an elegiac erotic novel, creating not just a *scripta puella* in the form of Corinna, but also a *scriptus amator*, a fictional lover and the mimesis of a love affair.[12] From the beginning, Ovid has an eye on the

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6   See Gill 1968, 137; Gill 1988, 327–342; MacLure 1968, xxxii; Pearcy 1984, 4–29; Edmondson 2010, 173–191; Mann 2013, 110–122.

7   See e.g. Brown 2004, 106–126. A recent attempt to redress the balance by Stapleton 2014a, in the first monograph study devoted to Marlowe and Ovid's *Amores*, has attempted to use *All Ovids Elegies* as a key to understanding Marlowe's own later work, adopting a similar approach to that of Cheney 2009 on Lucan and Marlowe, claiming, for example, that the amatory cunning or theatrical bombast of a Tamburlaine, Faustus or Guise can also be traced back to Marlowe's early engagement with *Amores*.

8   The term comes from Downing 1993, who borrows it from Alter 1975. For further reflections on Ovidian body and text beyond *Amores*, see especially Farrell 1999. For an in-depth look at Ovidian "biofiction," see Goldschmidt 2019.

9   Volk 2005, esp. 92–96.

10   Oliensis 2019, esp. 14–53 (the citation is from p. 36).

11   See especially Boyd 1997; Weinlich 1999; Bretzigheimer 2001; Holzberg 2002.

12   Holzberg 2002, 46–47 lays out the following: the *amator*, at the hands of the *poeta*-in-

horizon beyond elegy, expressed through conspicuous gestures to his work in higher genres, and predicated on the conceit that the *Amores* we are reading are themselves a second edition.[13]

Issues of authorial identity are an equal headache for Marlowe's work. There are six extant editions of Marlowe's Ovidian elegy, all posthumously published and lacking many of the paratextual features early modern books display to help in matters of dating, printing and publishing. The first two (the "Isham" and "Bindley" editions) contain only ten poems, entitled *Certaine of Ovids Elegies* (and commonly abbreviated as *COE*): they follow (separated by a bridging series of three poems headed "IGNOTO"), forty-eight epigrams of John Davies. A third, more comprehensive collection (the "Mason" edition), which puts Marlowe's translation first and boasts in its title *All Ovids Elegies: 3 Bookes*, was published c. 1603.[14] But if questions remain about the transmission of the *Elegies* and Marlowe's own hand in their revisions, what is not at stake is the claim Marlowe is making when he brings Ovid back to life. In what has now become a standard reading of the Marlovian canon, Patrick Cheney has argued that when Marlowe translates Ovid, he is conscious of the opportunity the Amores (and, more broadly, the template of Ovid's literary career) offers to an ambitious, counter-cultural poet aiming at poetic immortality.[15] For Cheney, it is in particular Marlowe's translation of *Amores* 1.15, Ovid's own first studied consideration of his continuing life in literary history, that signals Marlowe's nascent commitment to a subversively Ovidian poetic immortality.

control, participates in a plot which programmatically opens with a startling poetic *ego*: not elegist but frustrated epicist. Lamenting the task of elegy enforced upon him and his enslavement to Cupid, the poet reluctantly accepts the role of *amator* and finds a *puella* to love; after suffering various setbacks, he achieves conquest of the *puella*; and finally, the poet-lover concludes by predicting his immortal fame as love poet. Cf. Boyd 1997, 132–164.

13   Cf. *Am*. 1.15, 2.18, 3.15 with Harrison 2002, 79–64; cf. Tarrant 2002, 15–18. On Ovid's games with revision see Martelli 2013. On Ovid's claims to immortality after *Amores*, see most recently (on the *Metamorphoses*) Torres-Murciano 2016, 269–289; on the *Tristia*, Ingleheart 2015, 286–300.

14   There is no date on any of these editions, though most date *COE* to c. 1599; while *COE* claim "Middleborough" as their print origin, this was a common fiction to enable unlicensed books to be sold. For more on the dating of the earliest editions, see Gill and Krueger 1971, 242–249 and Bowers 1972, 149–172. While Gill and Krueger and Bowers are in agreement that *COE* were excerpted and rearranged from a full set of translations in manuscript form, they differ about the priority of the two *COE* editions. Gill 1987, 9–10 conjectures that the Bindley version is based on a draft of the *Elegies*, while a more polished version (revised, Gill speculates, by Marlowe himself) served as the source of the Isham and Mason texts.

15   Cheney 1997.

We have, then, not just the apprentice work of a poet learning his trade, but also a knowing reanimation of Ovid's poetic voice in the service of his own, Marlovian, projected literary career.

If Marlowe aspires to be Ovid, however, the critics have noticed an inevitable transformation in the "Ovid" we first see in his translation of *Amores*. For Georgia Brown, the poet-lover of *All Ovids Elegies* is "no ordinary romantic hero, but a man who is bitter, disloyal, violent, sarcastic, and over-sexed, as well as adoring, witty, and passionate," while the *Elegies* themselves constitute the first evidence of Marlowe's obsession with transformation, rhetoric, and transgressive sexuality. For M.L. Stapleton, Marlowe's Ovid is "a callow Elizabethan gallant who accompanies John Davies's fools and clowns." And for Jenny Mann, the very effeminacy of the *Elegies* becomes fruitful ground for a new "idea of masculinity characterized by subjection rather than empowerment."[16] This tendency to transform Ovid, is, however, nowhere more marked than in the reframing of the elegies, and in particular in the placement of *Amores* 1.15 in the earliest published edition of the Marlovian Ovid, in *Certaine of Ovids Elegies*.[17] Ian Moulton has identified a significant structural reordering in Marlowe's revived Ovidian amatory voice, the way in which *Amores* 1.15 does not now frame the first book in concert with 1.1, bracketing the love affair with reflections on poetic life and identity; instead, he notes that *Certaine of Ovids Elegies* has a bipartite structure, in which the first five poems "ascend" in celebration of poetic and amatory achievement, only to descend as the lover's grip on his puella begins to unravel.

This pattern—with distinct shades of the relationship sketched earlier—offers another plot for the lover, then, though one that is far less triumphant. The poet-lover of *COE* starts well enough, with *Amores* 1.1's challenge to Cupid, the incipit of the amatory *ego* and the promise of fidelity to the *puella* at 1.3, and with erotic conquest via 1.5; but this is followed by 3.14, the revelation of his girl's infidelity and his request that she cover up her unfaithfulness. There follows the centerpiece of the ten-poem sequence, 1.15, Ovid's hymn to his own poetic

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16   Brown 2004, 110; Stapleton 2014a, 8; Mann 2015, 51.
17   The order of *Certaine of Ovids Elegies* (each headed with its original place in the Ovidian corpus): 1.1 (*Quemadmodum a Cupidine, pro bell. amoris scribere coactus sit*), 1.3 (*Ad amicam*), 1.5 (*Corinnae concubitus*), 3.13 [in modern editions, 3.14] (*ad amicam si pecatura est, ut occulte peccet*), 2.15 [a mistake—actually 1.15] (*Ad inuidos, quod fama Poetarum sit perennis*), 1.13 (*Ad auroram ne properet*), 2.4 (*Quod amet mulieres, Cuiuscunque formae fiant*), 2.10 (*Ad Graecinum quod eodem tempore duas amet*), 3.6 [in modern editions, 3.7] (*Quod ab amica receptus cum ea coire non potuit conqueritur*). It is unlikely that Marlowe himself was responsible for the reordering: see Moulton 2000, 105; Stapleton 2014a also assumes a "compiler."

immortality; and then the "descent," comprising *Amores* 1.13's failed request to Aurora to hold back the dawn so that the amator can love longer; the admission of sexual appetite out of control (2.4); the confession that the *amator* is trapped by love for two women, accompanied by the boastful claim that he can satisfy both (2.10); the anti-climactic penultimate poem of the sequence, on impotence (3.7); and the final new conclusion of 1.2 for this Marlovian-Ovidian hybrid: the lover trapped in Cupid's triumph without even a *puella* to his name.[18]

Moulton sees political danger in this compositional reordering in the Marlovian Ovid, the creation of a lover-poet who questions masculine gender identity and instead "celebrates effeminacy and argues for the pleasures of subjection," precisely the kind of transgressive thinking that might attract the moralizing censure of the Bishops' Ban.[19] Whether political subversion was on the compiler's mind or not, what does seem striking here is the way in which the reordering and reframing of the *Amores* creates an entirely different Marlovian-Ovidian amator, one that takes away the ironic distance conferred by the "separating" function of 1.1 and 1.15. Instead, we have a novelistic plot that still begins with 1.1 but can only conclude with the anti-climax of 1.2, imprisoning the elegiac *ego* within an inescapable and never ending autobiographical fiction, and condemned to perpetual submission to love. The inclusion of 3.14 before 1.15 in this new order adds insult to injury: now 1.5 looks like the briefest of conquests, while 3.14's concentration on the puella's infidelity and on the lover's plea that his girl maintain the fiction that she is faithful, even if she is not, lays bare the new truth of this Marlovian-Ovidian love poetry, one that makes infidelity and failure the basis for literary immortality, rather than triumphant conquest.[20] In sum, such selection and reordering offers its own reinterpretation of the poetic prowess of the new Marlovian-Ovidian *ego*: a pointedly souring and ironic one that reduces and imprisons the Marlovian *amator* within the corpus of elegy, even as it brings the poetry of Ovid back to life.

This does not mean, however, that the composer of *COE* is not aware of the interdependence of Ovid *poeta* and Ovid *amator*, nor of the imbrication

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18   Moulton 2000, 103–114.

19   Cf. Moulton 2000, 104. See Stapleton 2014a, 39–44 for a different approach, which sees the failed lover of *COE* as an appropriate companion to the "Gulls" already skewered in Davies' *Epigrams*, and as an exemplary warning against (rather than celebration of) desire.

20   On Ovid's blurring of the terms *nequitia* and *vitium* to cover both infidelity and the subject-matter of elegy already in the *Amores*, see Keith 1994, esp. 38.

of the voices of Marlowe and Ovid here. Indeed, it is precisely his awareness of the game playing already in Ovid's *Amores*, the game to remodel an ever inventive but repetitious Ovidian voice, whose status as poeta is always in counterpoint with (the mimesis of) the "biographical" *amator*, that gives power to his creation. With this Marlovian-Ovidian *amator* marooned amidst the wreckage of his amatory endeavors, there is now something ironic in the way he claims poetic immortality through *Amores* 1.15, for the "life" conferred—that of the submissive amator at this conclusion to these new *Elegies*—is one that re-embodies both Marlowe and Ovid in altered form. It has become a commonplace of Marlowe studies that the mature poet-dramatist Marlowe, who has modeled his literary self on Ovid, is an "overreacher" equal to and implicated in his own characters.[21] In his first published outing, however such vaulting ambition has been cut down to size, absorbed within a biographical narrative of elegiac and erotic failure: his downfall has been assured before he has had the chance to overreach.

3 Putting the *Amator* on Stage: Ben Jonson's *Poetaster* (1601)

If *Certaine of Ovids Elegies* reduces the immortal Ovidian *ego* to mere lovesick *amator*, Ben Jonson takes this conceit and runs away with it in his satirical play *Poetaster*, introducing the action with Ovid himself, before banishing him from the stage (and Rome) and before the plot of the larger play has been resolved. In this intensely topical play, which forms part of the *poetomachia* or War of the Theatres of 1599–1601, the character of Horace clearly embodies Jonson himself, squaring up to his contemporary critical foes Marston and Dekker (thinly disguised on stage as Crispinus and Demetrius). *Poetaster* is itself a complex web of translation and citation, performance and reperformance, in which ancient and modern sources mingle, join voice and sometimes argue and speak over each other.[22] In this dramatic universe, however, presided over by the just Augustus, the attempt to bring Horace low with malicious misinterpretation and the accusation of treason fails, and with a quite literal

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21   On the implication of Marlowe with his characters see e.g. 1980, 193–221, esp. 220–221; for critique of the tendency, Shepherd 2000, 102–115.

22   It is in fact, as Victoria Moul puts it, 'a play composed of and *about* translation' (2012, 136); Miriam Jacobson (2014, 38) encourages us to read *Poetaster* as "a dramatic *ars poetica*." Jackson 2014 counts references and allusions to over seventy writers and many more sources, ancient and modern, in the text. On the specific translation of Ovid, Horace, and Vergil within the play, see especially Koslow 2006 and Moul 2014.

poetic justice, the play ends with the malicious Crispinus being forced to vomit forth a stream of his own deplorable vocabulary in a striking performance of the word embodied.[23]

Poetaster thus articulates a fall from grace for bad poets, in counterpoint to the virtuous and useful "counsellors to the prince," Virgil and Horace.[24] It utilizes the palimpsestic potential of ancient Rome to reflect not just on Jonson's own literary and social milieu, but also to argue out on stage the ethical value of the self-critical "good" poet and his entitlement to what Jonson calls, in another context, "legitimate fame."[25] But what is less clear is the role of Ovid within what otherwise looks like a balanced celebration of virtue and denunciation of vice. For, pre-empting the Aristophanic mode of this broader political satire, we find the first act of *Poetaster* offering us instead New Comedy, opening with Ovid as *adulescens*, mooning over his poetry rather than studying the law as he ought to be doing, reluctantly aided and abetted by his slave Luscus, who warns of the *durus pater*'s imminent arrival:

> OVID "Then, when this body falls in funeral fire,
> My name shall live, and my best part aspire."
> It shall go so.
> [Enter] LUSCUS.
> LUSCUS Young master, Master Ovid, do you hear? God sa' me! Away with your songs and sonnets and on with your gown and cap, quickly—here, here—[*He hands Ovid the garments.*] Your father will be a man of this room presently. Come—nay, nay, nay, nay, be brief. [*He takes Ovid's poem.*] These verses, too, a poison on 'em, I cannot abide 'em, they make me ready to cast, by the banks of Helicon. Nay, look what a rascally untoward thing this poetry is; I could tear 'em now.[26]

Luscus' desire to vomit provides neat ring composition with the emetics with which the play will close, but does nothing to deter the Ovid on stage, who, instead of donning the garb of the contemporary Inns of Court student, decides

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23   On the shared theme of corruption and malicious informing in *Sejanus* and *Poetaster*, see especially Bowers 2007 and Loxley 2018.

24   On this contemporary clash of personalities and literary critical sensibilities, see Jackson 2014, "Introduction."

25   Jonson, *Epigram* 17.3 ("To the Learned Critic"). For more on the ethics of Jonson on literary criticism, see Russell 2012. "Comical satire" is Jonson's own description: see Jackson 2014, "Introduction." On these issues in *Poetaster*, see especially Koslow 2006.

26   I use Jackson 2014, based on the 1602 Quarto edition.

to revise his morning's work (*Amores* 1.15, as the opening words of the play have foreshadowed, lines 41–42, above): while Luscus, leaving Ovid to what he calls "poetical fancies and furies" (1.1.32), exits, giving the young poet the chance to concentrate on reforming "the hasty errors of our morning muse" (*Poetaster* 1.1.37–44, 72–78):[27]

> Envy, why twitt'st thou me my time's spent ill
> And call'st my verse fruits of an idle quill?
> Or that, unlike the line from whence I sprung,
> War's dusty honours I pursue not young?
> Or that I study not the tedious laws
> And prostitute my voice in every cause?
> Thy scope is mortal, mine immortal, fame,
> Which through the world shall ever chant my name.
> …
> Kneel hinds to trash; me let bright Phoebus swell
> With cups full flowing from the muses' well.
> Frost-fearing myrtle shall impale my head,
> And of sad lovers I'll be often read.
> Envy the living, not the dead, doth bite,
> For after death all men receive their right.
> Then, when this body falls in funeral fire,
> My name shall live, and my best part aspire.

This Jonsonian "Ovid's" claim to eternal fame is clearly closely modeled on Marlowe's translation, performatively embodying the "start" to Ovid's collection: once again we find the poet practicing his craft, though he is further on than the poet of *Amores* 1.1. However, any lofty sense of the immortal value of poetry is immediately undercut, as Ovid's father turns up in time to hear the last lines of the recitation and offer his own outraged rejoinder (1.2.1–7):

> OVID SENIOR [*To his son*] Your name shall live indeed, sir; you say true; but how infamously, how scorned and contemned in the eyes and ears of the best and gravest Romans, that you think not on; you never so much as dream of that. Are these the fruits of all my travail and expenses? Is this the scope and aim of thy studies? Are these the hopeful courses where-

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27   A marginal note references the text: "Ovid. Lib. 1. Amo. Ele. 15." For more on the translation, see below.

with I have so long flattered my expectation from thee? Verses? Poetry?
Ovid, whom I thought to see the pleader, become Ovid the play-maker?

The fun here, for an audience that knows its Ovid, is the pointed manner in
which Ovid Senior pithily throws the words of his son back in his face. In the
process he cuts this obviously "Marlovian" Ovid back down to size, to abashed
adulescens reduced to the scope of law studies rather than the *opus* of eternal
fame. He even promises him in classic *senex iratus* fashion a funeral pyre if he
dares to continue his literary career, in a neat riposte to Ovid's own boast of
avoiding funeral fire. This is an argument—in the "real life" of the play—that
Ovid's father wins, and Junior meekly agrees to knuckle down to his law studies
again, admittedly with limited success, as he cannot help but reform the tenets
of law into elegiac pentameter.[28]

If Jonson has recreated an Ovid-as-Marlowe at the outset of his play, impris-
oned within Ovidian biography, his further appearances in *Poetaster* are de-
voted to deconstruction of this conglomerate figure. Almost immediately Ovid
is even more hopelessly compromised, as (prompted by Tibullus) he responds
to the thought of meeting his beloved Julia, daughter of Augustus, with elegiac
encomium.[29] Acknowledging that his passion for her carries the danger of los-
ing his own "self," Ovid considers his love, together with the return to poetry,
necessary to celebrate his *puella*, a risk worth taking (1.3.44–57):

> TIBULLUS Publius, thou'lt lose thyself.
> OVID Oh, in no labyrinth can I safelier err
> Than when I lose myself in praising her.
> Hence, law, and welcome, muses! Though not rich,
> Yet are you pleasing; let's be reconciled
> And now made one. Henceforth I promise faith,
> And all my serious hours to spend with you—
> With you, whose music striketh on my heart
> And with bewitching tones steals forth my spirit

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28   TIBULLUS: "If thrice in field a man vanquish his foe, / 'Tis after in his choice to serve, or
      no. / How now, Ovid! Law-cases in verse?" (1.3.5–7). For more on the explicit use of Ovid's
      own autobiography to cast this conversation with Tibullus and depict Ovid Senior in 1.2,
      see Jackson 2014 ad 1.3.8 (drawing on *Trist.* 4.10.21–26), and Cain 1996 ad 1.3.1 (drawing on
      Trist. 4.10.51–52), 5–6. Shapiro 1991 40–42 argues that this father-son relationship refracts
      an Oedipal relationship between Jonson and Marlowe.

29   For an overview of 17th-century approaches to explanations of Ovid's exile and the ques-
      tion of his relationship with the elder Julia, see Taylor 2013, 44–83 and below.

> In Julia's name. Fair Julia! Julia's love
> Shall be a law, and that sweet law I'll study:
> The law and art of sacred Julia's love;
> All other objects will but abjects prove.
> TIBULLUS Come, we shall have thee as passionate as Propertius anon.

Once again part of Jonson's art lies in the way that biography and literature merge on stage, as the final line (which alludes to Propertius' grief for the recent "death" of Cynthia) makes clear.[30] But there are signs that Ovid is losing himself in other ways in this exchange. The ironically detached "Ovid" of *Amores* is conspicuously *not* the downtrodden lover of the Propertian *Elegies*, and while *Poetaster* has paraded its close relationship with *Amores* and *Tristia* in character-Ovid's words earlier, the language in which he speaks of his Julia here is consciously appropriative of the register of late Elizabethan love poetry, rather than of 1st-century CE Ovidian elegy (*Poetaster* 1.3.36–44):

> Julia, the gem and jewel of my soul,
> That takes her honours from the golden sky,
> As beauty doth all lustre from her eye.
> The air respires the pure Elysian sweets
> In which she breathes, and from her looks descend
> The glories of the summer. Heaven she is,
> Praised in herself above all praise, and he
> Which hears her speak would swear the tuneful orbs
> Turned in his zenith only.

Heaven in the *Amores* is reserved for Ovid's own poetic ambitions, not for praise of his mistress; the Ovid of antiquity is never in doubt about his control over his creation, and never so ingenuously in thrall to it, as character-Ovid is here.[31] When this Ovid employs the cosmic imagery and celestial register of the Elizabethan sonnet to praise his lover, rather than the earthier register of Ovid's

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30   The play is anachronistically chockfull of love poets, including Gallus, built from Ovid's autobiographical *Trist.* 4.10. For more on Ovidian biography see Myers 2014.

31   See e.g. *Amores* 3.12, where praise of Corinna's beauty comes with the undercutting merger of her "salability" as lover and book (*Fallimur, an nostris innotuit illa libellis? / sic erit— ingenio prostitit illa meo. / et merito! quid enim formae praeconia feci? / vendibilis culpa facta puella mea est*, "Am I deceived, or has she become famous through my poetry? So it will be—she's on sale because of my genius. And it serves me right! Didn't I advertise her looks? It's my fault that the girl's been made sellable," *Am.* 3.12.7–10). I use the text and translation of Showerman and Goold, 1977.

physical descriptions of Corinna, we find that the comic *adulescens* of this play is now embodying the Elizabethan prodigal, an "Ovidian amateur" not just in the mold of Marlowe, but of a whole group of late Elizabethan elegists.[32]

Any happy denouement of this comic plot, infused with a distinctly Elizabethan erotic sensibility, is irrevocably thwarted when another *senex iratus*—the emperor Augustus—enters in the middle of Act 4, and discovers the elegiac poets and their lovers enjoying a "banquet of the gods" fancy-dress party, a banquet that structurally and allusively is again irresistibly Marlovian in its reimagining of the banquet of Dido, Queen of Carthage.[33] One minute Ovid-as-Jupiter is mock-ordering that the "beautiful and wanton Julia" (4.5.177) be sacrificed; the next, Augustus' truly Jovian wrath fills the stage, and this *pater durus* very nearly commits murder (as the marginal stage-direction puts it, "He offers to kill his daughter"), only being prevented by the interventions of Maecenas and Horace. Augustus' terrifying anger has several targets: the impious profanation of the gods, which he links to all the elegists' "profanation" of the name of poet (4.6.1–45); Ovid's specific, social and "violent" wrong in wooing Julia (4.6.51–57); and a more deep-set degradation of the connection between knowledge and virtue, exposed in Ovid's lack of understanding of his ethical obligations as poet (4.6.61–71):

> There is no bounty to be showed to such
> As have no real goodness.
> …
> This shows their knowledge is mere ignorance;
> Their far-fetched dignity of soul, a fancy;
> And all their square pretext of gravity
> A mere vainglory.

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32   See Helgerson 1976 for the seminal discussion of these "rebellious" poets of Elizabethan counter-culture; he there already conflates Ovid and Marlowe, terming him an "Ovidian amateur" (110–113). See also Keach 1977. Jonson's "gem and jewel of my soul" may have been inspired by Samuel Daniel's *Cleopatra*: "This precious Gem, the chiefest that I haue, / The iewell of my soule I value most" (Daniel 1594, sig. L5ʳ); for the flavor of encomium, compare e.g. Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* sonnet sequence: "CVpid because thou shin'st in Stellas eyes, / That from her lookes thy dimnesse nowe scapes free: / That those lips swelde so full of thee they be. / That sweet breath maketh oft the flames to rise, / That in her brest thy pap well sugred lyes, / That grace euen makes thy gracious wrongs; that she, / What word so ere shee speakes, perswades for thee: / That her cleere voice, lifteth the Sunne to Skyes." (Sydney 1591, 5).

33   As Moul 2012, 159–165 has shown, providing detailed analysis of this scene (and further echoes in *Poetaster* Act 5).

Before he exits the play forever, however, Ovid is offered one last chance to speak, both in soliloquy (4.8, 4.9.97–109) and in conversation with Julia; and now Jonson offers us yet more extended and complicated fusion of ancient biography and Elizabethan elegiac poetics. His final meeting with Julia combines the stage-setting of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* balcony scene with Ovid's own testimony of his farewell to his wife in *Tristia* 1.3, and also introduces another completely distinct "Ovid" of the late Elizabethan age, the voyeuristic pseudo-philosopher of George Chapman's *Ovid's Banquet of Sense* (1595), who upturns the hierarchy of Marsilio Ficino's meditations on divine love to celebrate the earthly pleasures of physical attraction.[34] In Jonson's (parodically) earnest conversation between Ovid and Julia—one that appeals once again to the celestial, refracts against the magical, and even envisages the court with feminine pronouns in a manner that must recall Elizabeth, not Augustus—we now find scarcely a trace of the quintessential Ovid of antiquity, or the language of the Ovidian corpus: a striking divagation from the obsessive translation practices of *Poetaster*.[35] Rather, Jonson's Ovid has now become an amalgam and representative of what Daniel D. Moss has called the "Ovidian vogue," a living embodiment of Ovidianizing early modern erotics, underpinned by the creative misreading of Neoplatonic ideation of the interchange of spirit and body in the attainment of intellectual and metaphysical love.[36] And as this Ovid charts the loss of his own body, now condemned to walk "like a heartless ghost" when separated from Julia (*Poetaster* 4.8.24), Jonson does not just eject "Ovid" from his play, but also an entire body of Ovidianizing literature, unfit to occupy the same play-space as the virtuous satire of Horaces, ancient and early modern.[37]

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34   The reminiscence of George Chapman (1559–1634) has been noted since Cain 1996, 20–21 ad 4.9, 4.9.71, 80–89; Moul 2012, 160–161; Jackson, 2014 ad 4.9.11–14, 45–47, 68–70. For more on *Ovid's Banquet of Sense*, see especially Gless 1979 and Moss 2014. On Ficino's (1433–1499) influence on Chapman, see Clucas 2002.

35   See especially *Poetaster* 4.8.1–18, 4.9.32–41; contrast Ovid's much more skeptical treatment of love in e.g. *Am*.1.8, 1.14 and 3.7. On the interconnection of court poetry, magic and Neoplatonic accounts of love, see Culianu 1987, especially 28–58, and Hanegraaff 2008, 175–207.

36   Moss 2014. Cf. Julia's response: "I come, my Ovid; take me in thine arms / And let me breathe my soul into thy breast!" (*Poetaster* 4.9.25–26). Cf. Hanegraaff 2008, 175–183; Vasoli 1997–2006; Jayne 1952. Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* had already played with precisely the same kind of physical burlesquing of divine love, in Leander's discussion of the role of virtue and physical attraction in his attempts to woo Hero (though she, un-Julia-like, makes some effort to resist): cf. especially lines 167–176, 508–552.

37   Cf. Cain 1996, 23: "[t]he Ovid being rejected is as much the Ovid of the 1590s in England as the historical Ovid of Augustan Rome."

4   Transfiguring Ovid

It may seem, then, that Jonson offers an amplified continuation of the costs of Marlowe's refiguration of Ovid as lewd and effeminate *amator*: re-embodied in *Poetaster* as figure for a whole corpus of morally compromised verse, when Ovid is expelled from Rome, he takes an entire literary milieu with him. It would be tempting, then, to read Jonson's *Poetaster* as a pointed merging of literary criticism with power politics, the bringing together of the successful exercise of power, interpretation and authority, both temporal and poetic, in Jonson-Horace's successful defense of his own work and rejection of Ovid-Marlowe.[38] Yet, as has often been noted, real discomfort with Ovid's fate within the work remains, not least because the play provides its own internal complications and even critique of Ovid's fate.[39] Indeed, it is the character Horace, most closely associated with Jonson himself, who provides most sympathetic commentary on Ovid's destiny, intervening with Maecenas to prevent actual violence against the emperor's daughter, and categorizing the banquet not as threat to social order but simply as "innocent mirth / And harmless pleasures, bred of noble wit" (4.7.38–39). Reflecting on Ovid's fate, Horace finds a more potent enemy in *Poetaster*, and reserves real blame for the informer Lupus, who in his view truly undermines imperial safety and authority (4.7.39–49):[40]

> Away, I loathe thy presence! Such as thou,
> They are the moths and scarabs of a state,
> The bane of empires, and the dregs of courts;
> Who, to endear themselves to any employment,
> Care not whose fame they blast, whose life they endanger;
> And under a disguised and cobweb mask
> Of love unto their sovereign, vomit forth
> Their own prodigious malice; and pretending
> To be the props and columns of his safety,
> The guard unto his person and his peace,
> Disturb it most with their false lapwing cries.

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38   On the history of Jonson's "rejection" of Ovid and Marlowe (with important qualifying and counter arguments), see James 2014 and Stapleton 2014b.

39   For critique of over-simplistic moralizing readings of Ovid, see Sinfield 2000, 75–89; Moul 2012; Loxley 2018, 144–149.

40   Cf. Maecenas at 4.7.53–56: "Princes that will but hear or give access / To such officious spies can ne'er be safe: / They take in poison with an open ear, / And, free from danger, become slaves to fear."

Though Augustus makes it quite clear that Ovid's punishment is merited by his social misconduct (4.6.47–57),[41] Horace's condemnation of the role of malicious misinterpretation re-frames the Ovidian banquet, the target of Augustus' larger wrath at a "counterfeit" world, as a satirically innocent activity: the far greater risk is an imperial society in thrall to informers and spies. The risk of falling into such a tyrannical society, one that will come to be explored more fully in Jonson's 1603 *Sejanus*, is however once again in prospect when in Act 5 the informer Lupus returns, this time gaining entrance with information concerning "the life of Caesar" (5.3.17–22), and accusing both Horace and Maecenas of "dangerous, seditious libel" (5.3.35). Yet now Lupus' attempts to spin Horace's work as treason come to nothing. Caesar, dismissing the charges as "quotidian clamours" (5.3.113), orders Asinius Lupus to receive a punishment appropriate to both his crime and his name, the "larger ears" of a modern-day Midas; and Horace, drawing on *Odes* 3.3, gets to proclaim the security and independence of the just artist (5.3.49–54):[42]

> A just man cannot fear, thou foolish tribune;
> Not though the malice of traducing tongues,
> The open vastness of a tyrant's ear,
> The senseless rigour of the wrested laws,
> Or the red eyes of strained authority
> Should in a point meet all to take his life.
> His innocence is armour 'gainst all these.[43]

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41   "If you think gods but feigned, and virtue painted, / Know, we sustain an actual residence; / And with the title of an emperor / Retain his spirit and imperial power; / By which— [To Ovid] in imposition too remiss, / Licentious Naso, for thy violent wrong / In soothing the declined affections / Of our base daughter—we exile thy feet / From all approach to our imperial court, / On pain of death, and thy misgotten love / Commit to patronage of iron doors, / Since her soft-hearted sire cannot contain her" (4.6.47–57). As Jackson 2014 *Poetaster* notes ad loc., Jonson responds here to *Tristia* 2.133–136, where Ovid recalls that Augustus' angry words (*tristibus … verbis*, 2.133) were worthy of an emperor, and that though his judgement was severe and threatening (*immite minaxque*, 2.135), the punishment was also mild (*lene*, 2.136).

42   "'Tis not the wholesome, sharp morality / Or modest anger of a satiric spirit / That hurts or wounds the body of a state, / But the sinister application / Of the malicious, ignorant, and base / Interpreter, who will distort and strain / The general scope and purpose of an author / To his particular and private spleen" (spoken by Virgil, 5.3.117–124).

43   Cain 1996 and Jackson 2014 ad loc. note the allusion to Horace, *Odes* 3.3.1–8: *IUSTUM, & tenacem propositi virum, / Non civium ardor prava iubentium, / Non vultus instantis tyranni / Mente quatit solida, neque Auster / Dux inquieti turbidus Adriae, / Nec fulminantis magna Iovis manus. / Si fractus illabitur orbis, / Impavidum ferient ruinae*, "The just man who holds

Others have noticed the peculiar pressure Jonson places on Augustus' characterization in the complex doubling of Acts 4 and 5, and have even detected worrying correspondences between the socially disruptive behavior of Ovid in Act 4 and Augustus himself in Act 5.[44] What seems just as striking, however, is the way in which the willingness of Augustus to listen to Horace's defense in Act 5 brings into starker relief the *lack* of opportunity given to Ovid to defend himself in arraignment in Act 4. While the play's edict of banishment and Ovid's departure are built out of the biography of Ovid's exilic poetry, the Elizabethan erotics of Ovid's soliloquizing leave no room in *Poetaster* for Ovid to offer the defense, contextualization of guilt, and lamentation of malicious misinterpretation that are the obsessive elements of Ovid's self-justification in his post-exilic poetry.[45]

On the one hand, this is perfectly natural: *Poetaster* stages Ovid's crime, playing out on stage an error such that Jonson's poet could not, even if he were given further space in the text, assert *crede mihi, distant mores a carmine nostri / vita verecunda est, Musa iocosa mihi* ("Trust me, my behavior differs from my verse: my life is chaste, my Muse playful," *Trist.* 2.353–354). But given the play's obsession with malicious misinterpretation, the relationship of poetry to virtue, and the potential damage to the body politic and the person of the monarch arising from *interpretatio prava*, the very absence of Ovid's own rejection of malicious interpretation in his exile poetry is striking. The absence is all the more jarring given that *Poetaster* begins by programmatically summoning just such an Ovidian figure of malicious detraction, a personification of Envy determined

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fast to his resolve / is not shaken in the firmness of his mind by the passion / of citizens demanding some injustice / or by the threatening tyrant's frown, not by the wind / of the south, rebellious king of the restless Adriatic, / or by the mighty lightning-wielding hand of Jupiter. / Should the round world break and fall around him, its ruins will strike him unafraid." I quote from the same edition as Jonson, Spilimberg 1584, slightly modernized, and the translation of West 2002.)

44 See e.g. Platz 1973, who identifies two different Augustuses; in Act 4 an "actual" monarch, in Act 5 an idealized, "Augustinian," utopian ruler. Moul 2012, 160–165 further notes uncomfortable correspondences between the Ovidian/Marlovian Jupiter of Act 4's banquet and Augustus' own Marlovian-Jovian behavior in Act 5: the monarch is now happy to upturn social hierarchy and even fate itself in honoring Virgil ("The course of heaven and fate itself in this / Will Caesar cross, much more all worldly custom," 5.2.35–37; cf. *DQC* 1.1.29 and Jupiter (to Ganymede): "Controule proud Fate, and cut the thred of time"). A further undermining structural issue is that the obvious source for a human "banquet of the gods" was infamously modeled by Augustus himself in his youth, at least according to gossip (*in fabulis*: Suetonius, *Life of Augustus* 70). Cf. also Boehrer 1997, 42–46.

45 See especially Williams 1994, 154–209; Barchiesi 1997, 13–34; Gibson 1999, 19–37; Myers 2014; Casali 2016.

to "damn the author" and "beslime his fame," who has an opening declaration that makes a distinctly Ovidian attack on Jonson's own work and life (prologue 19–26):[46]

> Nor would I you should look for other looks,
> Gesture, or compliment from me than what
> Th'infected bulk of Envy can afford—
> For I am risse here with a covetous hope
> To blast your pleasures and destroy your sports
> With wrestings, comments, applications,
> Spy-like suggestions, privy whisperings,
> And thousand such promoting sleights as these.

The sentiments of this personification re-echo within the play proper in Act 5. Virgil, reciting his description of the Envy-like *Fama* of the *Aeneid*, "As covetous of tales and lies ... / As prodigal of truth" (5.2.96–97 = *Aen*. 4.188), is interrupted by informers, and responds by pointedly condemning the malicious interpreter (5.3.117–124):

> 'Tis not the wholesome, sharp morality
> Or modest anger of a satiric spirit
> That hurts or wounds the body of a state,
> But the sinister application
> Of the malicious, ignorant, and base
> Interpreter, who will distort and strain
> The general scope and purpose of an author
> To his particular and private spleen.

As the commentators note, here Virgil adopts the programmatic pre-emptive defense of the poet Martial against *interpretatio prava*: *absit a iocorum nostrorum simplicitate malignus interpres* ("Let the malicious interpreter keep away

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46   Jackson, *Poetaster*, ad loc. notes other contemporary literary depictions of Envy, and the influence of Senecan tragedy; I would add that Jonson's stress on Envy's affinity for darkness (1–4, 11–13), her snaky costume (5–10), the many puns on vision and seeing, and the conceptual play on Envy's "infected bulk" make this creature particularly Ovidian (cf. *Met*. 2.760–785, esp. 768–770, 779–780, 784–785). On *invidere-Invidia*, and Ovid's engagement with the tradition of literary *aemulatio*, see Keith 1992, 117–134. On the important role of Envy in Jonson's play (as in *Am*. 1.15, Envy serves as character and prologue), as well as his work more broadly, see Meskill 2009, especially 94–97.

from my innocent jokes," 1 pref. 9–10).[47] But this speech also informs Jonson's own determination to avoid not just Ovidian "Envy" but also the Ovidian fate of the transgressive artist, for *Poetaster* is further bolstered by paratextual materials that defend the play pre-emptively against the perils of malicious application. And here too Jonson's Classical source is not Ovid, but Martial. The title-page declares *et mihi de nullo fama rubore placet* ("I do not desire celebrity from anybody's blush," Jonson 1602, A1ʳ), not just a statement of the harmlessness of the "comical satire" about to be staged, but also, as readers of Martial know, part of the ancient satirist's own programmatic declaration of safety via appeal to imperial authority (7.12.1–4):

> Sic me fronte legat dominus, Faustine, serena
> excipiatque meos qua solet aure iocos,
> ut mea nec iuste quos odit pagina laesit
> et mihi de nullo fama rubore placet.

> So may our Lord read me with unfurrowed brow, Faustinus, and catch my jests with his accustomed ear, as my page has never harmed even those it justly hates, nor do I desire celebrity from anybody's blush.[48]

That this is a carefully chosen and programmatic "steering" for interpretation becomes clearer when Jonson's instruction to the reader (*Ad Lectorem*, Jonson 1602 A1ᵛ) is simply the conclusion to that epigram (7.12.9–12):[49]

> Ludimus innocuis verbis, hoc iuro potentis
>   per Genium Famae Castalidumque gregem:

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47   Jackson, *Poetaster*, 2014 notes the correspondence. For Martial I use the edition and translation of Shackleton Bailey 1993.

48   This epigram recalls the programmatic 1.4: *Contigeris nostros, Caesar, si forte libellos, / terrarum dominum pone supercilium. / consuevere iocos vestri quoque ferre triumphi, / materiam dictis nec pudet esse ducem. / qua Thymelen spectas derisoremque Latinum, / illa fronte precor carmina nostra legas. / innocuos censura potest permittere lusus: / lasciva est nobis pagina, vita proba* ("Caesar, if you happen to light upon my little books, put aside the frown that rules the world. Even the triumphs of Emperors are wont to tolerate jests, and a warlord is not ashamed to be matter for a quip. Read my verses, I beg, with the expression with which you watch Thymele and jesting Latinus. A censor can permit harmless jollity. My page is wanton, but my life is virtuous."). On Martial's Ovidianism, see Hinds 2007; on Martial's configuration of Ovidian life, death and fame, Rimell 2008, 51–93.

49   Modern editions (and some early modern) print *ludimus innocui: scis hoc bene: iuro potentis / per genium Famae Castaliumque gregem*, ("I sport harmlessly, you know that well. I swear it by the genius of potent Fame and the Castalian troop," 7.12.9–10).

Perque tuas aures, magni mihi numinis instar,
   lector, inhumana liber ab Invidia.

I sport harmlessly, I swear it, by the Genius of potent Fame and the Castalian troop: and by your ears, reader free from heartless jealousy, a mighty divinity to me.

If all this were not enough, *Poetaster* ends with a concentrated rearticulation of these themes: final words from Caesar, declaring that "Envy will dwell where there is want of merit, / Though the deserving man should crack his spirit" (5.3.553–554); a song scorning detraction; and with another tag from Martial: *Rumpatur, quisquis rumpitur invidia* ("Whosoever is bursting with envy, let him burst," 9.97.12).

Jonson's programmatic appeal to Martial in the face of a threatening Ovidian "Envy" could be read as a final act of rejection: a rejection of Ovidian immortality, of a contemporary Ovidian "poetics," and a rejection of any similar exilic fate though a conspicuous appeal to pre-emptive justification rather than post-exilic lamentation. But from another perspective, Jonson's anxiety about malign interpretation both in and out of the drama "proper," and his blurring of bounds between authorial and character *personae*, only succeeds in drawing Jonson closer to Ovid. After all, the claims of "innocence" and "harmlessness" applied by *Poetaster*'s Horace in the play to Ovid (4.7.38–39), and invoked in his own defense (5.3.49–54), are the key Jonson himself offers to reading the play in his prefatory materials, as well as a repeated refrain in his work more broadly.[50] And as Jonson well knew, Martial's own careful negotiation with absolute authority was built out of the dangerous example and the allusive context of Ovid's exilic poetry, while his meditations on the dangers of plagiarism, misattribution and misinterpretation were deeply informed by the post hoc rationalizations deployed in Ovid's exilic works.[51] Read through Martial,

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50 See especially *Sejanus*, which reimagines a world in which "No innocence is safe, where power contests" (4.1.40–41), together with a preface that stresses his own political innocence. In another collocation of Ovid and Martial, Jonson prefaces his 1616 folio version of *Poetaster* with a letter to Richard Martin, in which he writes, "SIR, A thankefull man owes a courtesie euer: the vnthankefull, but when he needes it. To make mine owne marke appeare, and shew by which of these seales I am known, I send you this peece of what may liue. of mine [cf. *Am*. 1.15.41, *parsque mei ... superestes erit*]; for whose innocence, as for the Authors, you were once a noble and timely vndertaker, to the greatest Iustice of this kingdome ...."

51 See especially Rimell 2008, 69–82 for Martial's use of Ovid's exilic poetry to structure his own bibliographic ego; more generally Williams 2002; Hinds 2007.

then, there is a curious meta-literary pre-echo in Jonson's expulsion of Ovid: even as the play embodies the faults of Ovid's *vita*, then casts him out completely, Ovid's poetic defense against malign misinterpretation, now revised as pre-emptive justification, palimpsestically guides *Poetaster*.

Jonson's efforts to avoid an "Ovidian fate" were not theoretical. In his common-place book *Discoveries*, part of his 1641 *Collected Works*, and what Swinburne termed Jonson's "mental autobiography," Jonson reflected in a section entitled *De Innocentia* on the danger he too faced from "men's malice," accusers who "were driven, for want of crimes, to use invention, which was found slander" (*Discoveries*, 950–955).[52] Jonson was recalling his 1597 imprisonment for his part in the composition and acting of the satirical comedy *The Isle of Dogs* as well as other confrontations with political authority:[53] a summons to the Privy Council on charges of popery and treason brought by the Earl of Northampton after *Sejanus*' first performance in 1603, and in 1605 another term of imprisonment for his part in the writing of the satire *Eastward Ho!*[54] The Jonson of *Discoveries* frames this experience in terms reminiscent of the Horace of *Poetaster*, under attack from "hired and mercenary impudence"; and, like Horace, he felt his political danger came from malicious intepretation (*Discoveries*, 965–969):

> Nay, they would offer to urge mine own writings against me, but by pieces, which was an excellent way of malice: as if any man's context might not seem dangerous and offensive, if that which was knit to what went before were defrauded of his beginning, or that things by themselves uttered might not seem subject to calumny, which read entire would appear most free.

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52   Swinburne 1889, 137, quoted by Hutson 2014, "Introduction."
53   On the play, its political context, and its possible role in the Privy Council's decision to shut down the London theatres, see Donaldson 2014, "Introduction." All copies of the text were suppressed, its main author, Thomas Nashe, escaped London, and Jonson, together with two other actors, was confined in Marshalsea Prison in Southwark and interrogated by the Privy Council, which was under the impression that the play contained "very seditious & sclanderous matter" and that its players deserved punishment for "theire leude and mutynous behavior" (National Archive, *Privy Council Register for the Reign of Elizabeth*, PC 2/22, 345–346; cited from the edition of Giddens and Lees-Jeffries 2014, LR10).
54   See Ayres 1999, 16–22 for its possible topical application to the Raleigh trial of 1605 or the 1603 Essex rebellion; Worden 1994, 77–78. In 1628 he was again summoned, in the wake of the murder of the Duke of Buckingham. On *Eastward Ho!* see Gossett and Kay 2014, "Introduction": though Raleigh was sentenced to have his ears and nose cut, the sentence was not carried out in the end.

It is all the more striking, then, that *Poetaster*—not just the play determined to expel Ovid and a "Marlovian" Ovidianizing poetics, but also defensive to the point of paranoia about misinterpretation and the dangers arising from malicious envy—should offer a full recitation not just of *Amores* 1.15, but of what is recognizably Marlowe's *Elegy* 1.15, itself a poem subjected to the censoring pen of the 1599 Bishop's Ban and one that, addressed to Livor, forges a direct relationship with the authorial peril exposed by Envy in the Prologue.[55] Moreover, while some have seen Jonson as a revisionist "overwriter" of Marlowe, offering merely "corrective" translation, there is no question that what we have here is not effacement or "overwriting" of Marlowe, but rather a sophisticated merger of poetic voices,[56] in which Jonson's decision to revive not just Ovid's *Amores* but this *Elegy* of Marlowe is a statement of commitment to the immortality of poetry in the face of censorship and the literal threat of immolation. There are certainly many alterations in Jonson's piece.[57] Indeed, Joseph Loewenstein sees a near-explicit nod to this at lines 23–24, in which Ovid claims that Lucretius will live until the universe dies in language that more explicitly recalls fiery ekpyrosis: "Then shall Lucretius' lofty numbers die / When earth and seas in fire and flames shall fry" (1.1.59–60).[58] The text of *Amores* 1.15, then, itself a poem about poetry and joining a fraternity of poets, serves to bring Ovid, Marlowe, and Jonson together, not or not only in a relationship of antagonistic overwriting, but also in a spirit of collaboration.

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55   Indeed the 1602 Quarto positively invites self-identification, as the Envy of the Prologue, named as "Livor" (sig. A2ʳ) gives way to the declaration against Envy in the voice of Ovid himself. An "Apologetical Dialogue" appended to the play, which placed Jonson amidst his books in his study, Ovid-like, was censored at the time of the printing of the first quarto; it was later included in the 1616 folio. See Russell 2012 for more on this "Dialogue," and on *Poetaster*'s prologue and its topical relevance, see Bowers 1972, 158–164.

56   On the history of scholarship regarding the relationship of the two poems, see Moul 2012, 136–139; Stapleton 2014b, 16–17. On Jonson's sensitivity to plagiarism and his denunciations of it in *Poetaster* and elsewhere, see Loewenstein 2002, 104–132.

57   Of course some of Jonson's changes are clearly prompted by the desire to correct misunderstandings; others offer more literal translation of Ovid, in line with Jonson's preferred "plain style." Herford and Simpson 1950, 538–540 count thirty-two changes, to which Jackson 2014 ad *Poetaster* 1.1.45 adds five more: factual corrections include the specification of Accius, whom Marlowe misidentified as M. Accius Plautus in line 19, and the correction of proper names (e.g. Argo for Argos, 22); more literal translations include changes in tense (11, 15), voice (26), and diction (4, 28).

58   Contrast Marlowe's "Lofty Lucretius shall live that hour, / That Nature shall dissolve this earthly bower," 24–25; see Loewenstein 1999. Dominicus Niger's commentary (1549, 281) suggests that Lucretius was thinking that fire would be the cause of the end of the world.

Furthermore, what Jonson brings is recognition of the need to invest in and re-perform Ovid's and Marlowe's work, a statement that itself is a reassertion of the power of poetry in the face of authority. See, for example, Jonson's transformation of *Amores* 1.15.20, a declaration in Ovid that the poets Ennius and Accius will never lack a name (*Casurum nullo tempore nomen habent*), transformed in Marlowe's "Are both in Fames eternal legend writ," and re-worked in Jonson's "A fresh applause in every age shall gain."[59] Finally, Jonson makes another significant change that addresses poetry's relationship with authority in his treatment of *Amores* 1.15.33–34: *Cedant carminibus reges, regumque triumphi: / Cedat et auriferi ripa beata Tagi.* Where Marlowe is hesitant, closely attending to the subjunctive mood, ("To verse let Kings give place, and Kingly shows, / And banks o'er which gold-bearing Tagus flows"), Jonson is less correct, but more confident, when he writes "Kings shall give place to it, and kingly shows, / The banks o'er which gold-bearing Tagus flows" (*Poetaster* 1.1.69–70). Such confidence is surely not misplaced, since in the very act of translation he puts poetry above kings, resurrecting Marlowe's banned verse.[60]

This collaborative impulse converges in the final lines of *Amores* 1.15 (35–42). In one sense it is possible and indeed enticing to see in the final lines of Marlowe and Jonson an attempt to "break free" of the Ovidian source text, for the last, most famous, most quintessentially Ovidian lines, to which he himself returns time and again, are refracted in pointedly different ways in Marlowe and Jonson:

> vilia miretur vulgus: mihi flavus Apollo
>   pocula Castalia plena ministret aqua.
> sustineamque coma metuentem frigora myrtum:
>   atque ita sollicito multus amante legar.
> pascitur in vivis livor, post fata quiescit:
>   tunc suus ex merito quemque tuetur honor.
> ergo etiam, cum me supremus adusserit ignis,
>   vivam: parsque mei magna superestes erit.

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59   Compare too "The Frost-drad myrtle shall impale my head, / And of sad lovers I'll be often read" (a closer translation of *Am.*1.15.37–38 *Sustineamque coma metuentem frigora myrtum: / Atque ita sollicito multus amante legar*) with Marlowe's "About my head be quiuering Mirtle wound, / And in sad louers heads let me be found."

60   Compare "Thy scope is mortal, mine immortal fame, / Which through the world shall ever chant my name" (*Poetaster* 1.1.44–45, Jonson's rendering of *Amores* 1.15.7–8 *Mortale est, quod quaeris, opus. mihi fama perennis / Quaeritur, in toto semper ut orbe canar*) with Marlowe's "Thy scope is mortall, mine eternall fame, / That all the world might euer chaunt my name."

> Faire *Phoebus* leade me to the *Muses* springs.
> About my head be quiuering Mirtle wound,
> And in sad louers heads let me be found.
> The liuing, not the dead can envie bite,
> For after death all men receiue their right:
> Then though death rackes my bones in funerall fier,
> Ile liue, and as he puls me downe, mount higher.
>
> MARLOWE, *Elegy* 1.15.36–42, Isham edition

> Kneel hinds to trash; me let bright Phoebus swell
> With cups full flowing from the muses' well.
> The frost-drad myrtle shall impale my head,
> And of sad lovers I'll be often read.
> Envy the living, not the dead, doth bite,
> For after death all men receive their right.
> Then, when this body falls in funeral fire,
> My name shall live, and my best part aspire.
>
> JONSON, *Poetaster*, 1.1.71–78

Marlowe's interest in the sensory, physical, and amatory self continues to make itself known, but now it does translate into the metaphorical and poetic. In charged lines which imagine the raking flames of the funeral fire, it is not just the "great" part of him that survives, but the "whole" body, which escapes bodily constraints, not merely to "live" but even to "mount higher." This is language that seems designed to provoke anticipation of the overreaching figures with whom Marlowe himself has so often been conflated (cf. *Doctor Faustus*, scene 14, line 74: [Faustus] "O, I'll leap up to my God! Who pulls me down?"). Jonson's personal interests are also plain: his dismissal of those who kneel to "trash" echoes in the play proper, finding resonance in Horace's despair at being unable to escape Crispinus' "lewd solecisms and worded trash" (*Poetaster* 3.1.87) and Virgil's condemnation of the "barking wits" who "with their beggarly and barren trash / Tickle base, vulgar ears in their despite" (5.3.328–330). But again Jonson, recognizing the physical costs of literary mortality, shifts the conceit, not wanting to be found and to be, but rather to *be read* and to live on *as a name*: "I'll be often read. … Then, when this body falls in funeral fire, / My name shall live, and my best part aspire:" (1.1.74, 78–79).[61]

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61   Cf. Loewenstein 1999, who notes the influence of Marlowe on Jonson here and concludes (p. 109): "We could say that the couplet is written in the middle voice."

Once again this might hint at Jonson's own complex individualist poetics—not just a display of erudition in his use of Latin-inflected "aspire," but indicative of a far more sustained and intense interest in literary being and an obsession with the power of the name (sharing Ovid's obsession but also a preoccupation of his *Epigrams*, which obsessively play on the notion of name as metonymy for poem). They also pre-echo his translation of his great master Horace, and the advice of the *Ars poetica* to speak in your own voice: advice he renders as "Take, therefore, you that write, a subject fit / Vnto your strength, and long be turning it: / Prove you're your shoulders will or will not beare ...."[62] And it boldly insists on the notion of performance to make immortality. But in the end I wonder whether Marlowe and Jonson are also, even as they make the *Amores* their own, simply responding to the appetite for revision and reinterpretation that powers Ovid's quest for immortality within the *Amores* and causes such regret in his exilic corpus—a supple, multi-faceted attempt to live forever not simply by reiterated declarations of poetic survival, but also a creatively adaptive literary form which has already offered us multiple and different "Ovids"—Ovid the elegist, *amator*, *poeta*, poem and *nomen*: Ovids amenable to revision, reinterpretation, reinscription. When Marlowe says "I'll live," and Jonson "My name shall live," it is still Ovid who proves himself a survivor beyond death.

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62   *Horace His Art of Poetry* 1640, B2ʳ, lines 55–57 in Butler et al. 2014.

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PART 4

Immortals and Others

∵

From Chaos to Chaos: Janus in *Fasti* 1 and the Gates of War

Francesca Romana Berno

In principio non c'è stato l'universo, ma la follia.
Come mai nessun filosofo l'ha capito?

<div style="text-align:right">I.B. SINGER, *Keyla la rossa*, chapter 4, 6</div>

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1 Introduction

No ancient deity is more closely involved in transfiguration than Janus, the god of passages and beginnings.[1] His twofold appearance is itself a picture of transformation, considered at the very moment of its starting-point. No transfiguration is more radical than the original one, from chaos to cosmos, which is commonly regarded by all cultures (though with several variations on the theme) as the root of the universe, and which Ovid connects with this god.

Ovid was the first poet to assign great significance to the term chaos.[2] The word, in fact, had previously been trivialized. In Ovid, by contrast, chaos refers to the original kernel (à la Hesiod) of any possible orderly world; no wonder that the term appears in the opening of both of his most ambitious poems (*Met.* 1.5–21; *Fast.* 1.101–114). This explains Ovid's inclination to pair these two figures together: an archaic, eminently Roman god, and a notion so Greek that it needs transliteration, rather than translation. In so doing, Ovid found sup-

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1   Keune 1918; Burchett 1918; Börtzler 1930; Freyburger 1985, 723–724; MacKay 1956; Gagé 1979a and 1979b; Schilling 1960, 113–131; Capdeville 1973, 421–423; Hardie 1991, 50–54; below, n. 6. Scholars still do not agree about the main role of Janus, if he is most of all the god of beginnings or the god of transitions.

2   Reed 2018; Berno 2019a.

port in ancient etymology. Thus, Janus opens the *Fasti*, the poem of orderly years, meticulously arranged around recurring festivals and religious celebrations. Shortly after the beginning of the *Fasti*, Janus introduces himself and calls himself Chaos, i.e. mixture and formless mass: *me Chaos antiqui (nam sum res prisca) vocabant* ("the ancients (since I'm a primitive thing) called me Chaos," 1.103).

In this paper, starting from the identity between Janus and Chaos that Ovid postulates, I shall analyze the god's characterization in the first book of the *Fasti*. I intend to prove that the world's primeval tendency towards entropy does not vanish with the transition from chaos to cosmos, but remains active on multiple levels in the *Fasti*, where it plays an even greater role than in the *Metamorphoses*.[3] First of all, the entropic tendency is embedded in the very appearance of the two-faced god, recalling monstrous, disturbing figures. Secondly, I shall highlight the god's affinity with Propertius' Vertumnus (Prop. 4.2), a god who takes all possible shapes without holding on to any one in particular. This affinity shows that, far from emphasizing Janus' "static" and reassuring role as a god of beginnings, Ovid underscores the god's unsteady, dynamic features as the protector of gates and transitions. Finally, various passages in the god's speech point to the difficult, laborious nature of Janus' role as guarantor of peace. In my view, this must be explained in terms of the Romans' fear of a new civil war, a fear which even the text's propagandistic tone cannot soothe.

In this regard, an Ovidian image plays a crucial role: the gates of the temple of Janus in Rome, famously closed in times of peace (as in 27 BCE under Augustus).[4] Ovid's text seems to offer two contrasting explanations of the gates' function. While they initially appear to trap War inside the building, preventing conflict from spreading, they are then said to defend Peace by keeping it inside. I shall argue that this inconsistency can be rooted in a changing of the god and his power within *Fasti* 1. Indeed the function of the the god seems to transition[5] from a rather optimistic role, based on his experience as a peaceful and powerful king, to a pessimistic one, connected with Rome's recent history, which is no longer ruled by Janus, but instead by the Imperial family.

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3   Tarrant 2002; specifically on Janus, see Hardie 1998, 72–74; Tola 2017; Badura 2021a, 109; see also the previous note.

4   See below, p. 342.

5   On this motif see Heyworth 2019.

2   Janus as Chaos[6]

When Janus, asked by the poet, shows himself, Ovid is terrified at the god's two-faced appearance; hence his question (1.89–92):

> quem tamen esse deum te dicam, Iane biformis?
>> nam tibi par nullum Graecia numen habet.
> ede simul causam cur de caelestibus unus
>> sitque quod a tergo, sitque quod ante vides.

> Yet what god am I to call you, biformed Janus?
>> For Greece has no deity like you.
> Produce the reason why you are the only god
>> To see what is behind and what ahead.
>>> TRANS. BOYLE-WOODWARD 2000

Ovid wants to know who Janus is, and why he has two faces. Janus' reply includes two explanations. Thus, the god's first speech is divided into two main parts. In the first (1.103–114), Janus is identified with the original magma (*chaos*, 103) and its gradual transformation into an orderly cosmos, which is described as the result of a conflict, in accordance with a well-known Empedoclean theory, that of the conflict between love and strife.[7] (The god's function, therefore, seems to be tied to "beginnings.") In the second, longer section (1.115–132), Ovid emphasizes Janus' ability to oversee every opening and closure, including peace and war (1.121–124). Here, the focus is on changes and transitions rather than origins.[8] Thus, Ovid accounts for both of the god's main functions: only the second one, however, is called *vis mea* (1.133).

Let us start from the first section (1.103–114):

> me Chaos antiqui (nam sum res prisca) vocabant:
>> aspice quam longi temporis acta canam.

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6   See previous notes plus Frazer 1929, 90–101; Bömer 1958, 17–24 ad *Fast.* 1.89–140; Amiri 2004, 259–262; Labate 2010, 192–199.

7   Scholars have long recognized the Empedoclean connection in this passage: see Hardie 1991, 50; Labate 2010, 197.

8   Cf. Cic. *Nat. D.* 2.67 *cumque in omnibus rebus vim haberent maxumam prima et extrema, principem in sacrificando Ianum esse voluerunt, quod ab eundo nomen est ductum, ex quo transitiones perviae iani foresque in liminibus profanarum aedium ianuae nominantur*, "Also, as the beginning and the end are the most important parts of all affairs, they held that Janus is the leader in a sacrifice, the name being derived from *ire* ['to go'], hence the name *iani* for archways and *ianuae* for the front doors of secular buildings" (trans. Rackham 1972).

lucidus hic aer et quae tria corpora restant,
      ignis, aquae, tellus, unus acervus erat.
ut semel haec rerum secessit lite suarum
      inque novas abiit massa soluta domos …
tunc ego, qui fueram globus et sine imagine moles,
      in faciem redii dignaque membra deo.
nunc quoque, confusae quondam nota parva figurae,
      ante quod est in me postque videtur idem.

The ancients (since I'm a primitive thing) called me
      Chaos. Watch me sing events long ago.
This lucent air and the other three elements
      Fire, water and earth, were a single heap.
Once dissension of its matter had split the mass
      Which departed in fragments for new homes
…
Then I, who had been a ball and a faceless hulk,
      Got the looks and limbs proper to a god.
Now, as a small token of my once confused shape,
      My front and back appear identical.

As is well known, Janus' association with chaos is based on ancient grammar. The Latin equivalent of the term is *confusio*, as is shown by Ovid, who elsewhere calls *chaos* "a confused mass of things without order" (*confusa sine ordine moles, Ars* 2.467). Janus, too, refers to this definition when he describes his own appearance as *confusae quondam nota parva figurae* ("as a small token of my once confused shape," 1.113). An ancient Stoic etymology traced *chaos* back to the Greek verb χέεσθαι, "to flow";[9] yet the most common etymology connected it to the verb χάσκειν, "to open wide," which Festus regarded as corresponding to Lat. *hiare*—whence an unattested **hianus* gives rise (with loss of aspiration) to *ianua* and *Ianus*.[10] All this allows the god, in effect, to prove the poet wrong. Ovid has asked him who he was, and his ignorance depended on the fact that

9   *SVF* I 103 = Prob. *in Verg. Ecl.* 6.31. Cf. Cic. *Nat. D.* 2.67 (above, n. 8) with Pease 1958, 723–724 ad loc.; Macrob. *Sat.* 1.9. 10; MacKay 1956, 175–176.

10   Paul. Fest. 52 M. *Chaos appellat Hesiodus confusam quondam ab initio unitatem, hiantem patentemque in profundum. ex eo et "chaskein" Graece; et nos hiare dicimus. unde Ianus detracta aspiratione nominatur ideo, quod fuerit omnium primum; cui primum supplicabant velut parenti et a quo rerum omnium factum putabant initium.* Maltby 1991, 124 s.v. *chaos*; 278 s.v. *hio*; *DÉLL* 526 s.v. *hio*; Porte 1985, 248–250; Green 2004, 75 ad *Fast.* 1.113.

he could not find a Greek god corresponding to him (1.89–90). Janus replies by identifying himself with *chaos*, which cannot be called a *numen* but certainly belongs to Greek culture: *me Chaos antiqui* (*nam sum res prisca*) *vocabant* (1.103 "the ancients (since I'm a primitive thing) called me Chaos"). Thus, Ovid's aetiological poem begins with a god who contradicts a didactic poet, who is already prone to self-doubt. This goes farther in the traditional, Callimachean mix of different explanations which scholars have long recognized in the *Fasti*.[11] Of all the gods that Ovid mentions as his "sources," Janus is the most "didactic" one. This is hardly surprising, considering the opening of the poem and its metapoetic overtones—yet it seems to be at odds with the confused, contradictory nature of Janus' own assertions.[12] Thus, the "didactic" god who should inspire the poet does not seem to live up to his task—or, rather, he effectively shows how the *confusio* inherent to his appearance is also active on an epistemic level.

The originary nature of Janus is confirmed by a description of the origin of the universe which evidently owes much to Empedocles, as we have already said, and of course to Hesiod (1.105–112), which is also imitated in Ovid's *Ars amatoria* 2.[13] With this narrative, Janus presents himself as a primeval force, something different from the *demiourgos*-like entity which we find organizing the original mass in the opening of the *Metamorphoses* (1.5–7, 21, 24–25):

> Ante mare et terras et, quod tegit omnia, caelum
> unus erat toto naturae vultus in orbe,
> quem dixere Chaos, rudis indigestaque moles
> …
> hanc deus et melior litem natura diremit
> …

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11 Miller 1983, 170; Harries 1989, 168–169; Hardie 1991, 62–64; Barchiesi 1992, 15–17; Barchiesi 1994, 218–221; Newlands 1995, 6–7; Pasco-Pranger 2000, 281–285; Merli 2000, 86–90.

12 Generally on Janus' inconsistencies, Martin 1995, 264. See e.g. his inconsistency about the gates of war (below, section 6) and his twofold attitude about luxury (*Fast.* 1.191–226), with Miller 1983, 168–169; Barchiesi 1994, 218–225; Berno 2019b.

13 *Prima* **fuit rerum confusa sine ordine moles**, / **unaque erat facies** *sidera, terra, fretum.* | *mox caelum impositum terris, humus aequore cincta est, | inque suas partes cessit* **inane chaos** ("First there was a confused mass of things without order, and stars and earth and sea had but appearance; presently the sky was set over the earth, the land was ringed by the sea, and empty void retired to its own place," *Ars* 2.467–470 trans. Mozley 1979); see Labate 2010, 193–207; Ziogas 2013, 58–59; Berno 2019a, 111–114, and Reed 2018. For the literary precedent of Apollonius of Rhodes, *Arg.* 1.496–502 see Nelis 1992, 159; Berno 2019a, 120–122.

quae postquam evolvit **caecoque exemit acervo**,
dissociata locis concordi pace ligavit.

Before the sea was, and the lands, and the sky that hangs over all, the face
of Nature showed alike in her whole round, which state have men called
chaos, unordered mass of things .... God—or kindlier Nature—composed
this strife .... When thus he had released these elements and freed them
from the blind heap of things, he set them each in its own place and bound
them fast in harmony.

TRANS. MILLER 1977

In the *Metamorphoses*, an unnamed form-giving god acts from outside the
formless magma of the elements. In the *Fasti*, by contrast, the god, identified
with Janus, is equated with the elements themselves. This is, on the one hand, a
logical consequence of the etymological connection between Janus and chaos.
On the other hand, Ovid echoes Hesiod and the way in which the latter had
emphasized the autonomous generative nature of the original, confused entity.
In doing so, he consciously departs from the traditional, reassuring and "demi-
urgic" representation of the opening of the *Metamorphoses*.

At the end of the section, the god's appearance is justified as a sign of the
primeval *confusio* (as noted above, the Latin equivalent of *chaos*), and the final
couplet echoes the wording of Ovid's initial question, underlying the fact that
Janus stays beyond the linear sense of time that distinguishes past and future,
before and after: *nunc quoque, confusae quondam nota parva figurae*, | ***ante
quod est in me postque videtur idem*** ("Now, as a small token of my once con-
fused shape, / My front and back appear identical," 1.113–114).

The second explanation of his aspect shows how Ovid is concerned to put
the two aspects of Janus, god of beginnings and god of transitions, at the same
level, with a special focus on the second (1.115–120, 125–133):

accipe quaesitae quae causa sit altera **formae**,
     hanc simul ut noris **officiumque** meum.
quicquid ubique vides, caelum, mare, nubila, terras,
     omnia sunt nostra **clausa patentque manu.**
me penes est unum vasti **custodia mundi**,
     et ius **vertendi cardinis** omne meum est.
...
praesideo foribus caeli cum mitibus Horis
     (it, redit officio Iuppiter ipse meo):
inde vocor Ianus; cui cum Ceriale sacerdos
     imponit libum farraque mixta sale,

nomina ridebis: modo namque Patulcius idem
    et modo sacrifico Clusius ore vocor.
scilicet alterno voluit rudis illa vetustas
    nomine diversas significare vices.
vis mea narrata est …

Hear the other cause of the form you ask about,
    So you may know both it and my duties.
Whatever you see around, sky, ocean, clouds, earth,
    They are all closed and opened by my hand.
The vast world's safekeeping belongs to me alone;
    Only I have the right to turn its hinge …
I sit at heaven's doors with the gentle Hours:
    Jupiter goes and comes through my office.
Hence I am called "Janus." When the priest offers cakes
    Of barley and the spelt mingled with salt,
You'll laugh at my names. Sometimes I'm called "Patulcius,"
    Sometimes "Clusius" in sacrifical tones.
Surely crude antiquity wished to signify
    Different functions with these alternate names.
I've told you my power …

While in the previous section the god talks about his aspect (*facies*, "looks," 112), in this one, even if starting with the intention of giving a second explanation for his aspect (*causa … altera formae*, "the other cause of the form," 115), he insists on his function (*officium*, "duties," 116; *vis*, "power," 133), which is various and multiple (*diversas … vices* "different functions," 132), rooted on changing (*ius vertendi cardinis*, "the right to turn its hinge," 120) to the point that he is called by two different names, Patulcius and Clusius (129–130). Janus highlights again his almighty power over the universe (117), a power which expresses itself in overseeing every transition, opening and closing, both of mortal and immortal beings (126–127). The final couplet emphasizes his long-standing divine presence, which justifies his identification with *chaos*. The god's speech contrasts two different entities from the past, one of which (*antiqui*, "the ancients," 103) called him by a foreign name, while the other, ruder one (*vetustas*, "antiquity," 131), gave him two different names. Not only are there double functions, but also double names and double pasts.

    Although his previous speech already contains some hints at an answer (111–113), it is here that Janus explicitly replies to Ovid's second question, i.e. the one concerning his appearance (*causam nunc disce figurae*, "now learn the cause

of my form," 133). Janus refers to his own affinity with doors and gates (which, of course, have two faces) as well as with janitors, who must inspect both the outside and the inside of a given building (133–140). He also mentions the three faces of Hecate Trivia, which allow her to watch over crossroads (141–144). Apparently, both the poet's description of Janus and the latter's own account of his appearance seem to underscore, albeit indirectly, the god's "chaotic" features. Correspondingly, Janus' two faces, far from being a reassuring sign, point to the god's transient nature.

Thus, Janus is characterized as the opposite of the orderly world represented by the demiurge in the *Metamorphoses*. In fact, Janus' distinctive traits include change and fickleness. He sees the past and the future, and stands on the threshold without being either inside or outside. He is not affected by time and space, just like the original *chaos*, which he perfectly personifies. When his formless essence takes the shape of a god, thereby entering "human" time, Janus seems to follow the same path as all other beings (*tunc ego qui fueram globus et sine imagine moles / in faciem **redii** dignaque membra deo*, "Then I, who had been a ball and a faceless hulk, / Got the looks and limbs proper to a god," 111–112). Yet the term *redeo* is mysterious, since it refers to the original birth of the cosmos, before which nothing, not even gods, existed,[14] and confirms that the god is placed outside time and space. Note the parallel with Vergil's description of Proteus in the fourth book of the *Georgics*: after trying to escape Aristaeus through multiple transformations, the god *verum ubi nulla fugam reperit fallacia, victus / **in sese redit** ...* ("but when no stratagem wins escape, vanquished **he returns to himself**," 443–444: trans. Fairclough 1999). In the opening of the passage, Vergil had described Proteus as an old herdsman: this is precisely what the god "goes back to being." In Janus' case, however, there is nothing before the genesis of cosmos, so there is no such original form. Thus, Ovid's formulation points to an altered temporal dimension surrounding Janus, for whom the past is not linear (from chaos to cosmos) but encompasses the genuine, two-faced nature of the god. His true nature is defined as a sort of reminiscence of his origins (*confusae ... nota ... figurae*, "token of ... confused shape," 113). As a result, the god's twofold function is not limited to the spatial dimension (as shown in the second explanation by the image of the door as a threshold between an inside and an outside, 138–140), but affects the temporal one as well (as we have seen in the first explanation: *ante quod est in me postque videtur idem*,

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14 Green 2004, 78 ad loc. This formulation recalls that of Virbius, the double of Hippolytus (Barchiesi 1994, 249–252), cf. *"quique fuisti / Hippolytus" dixit "nunc idem Virbius esto,"* "you who were Hippolytus shall now be Virbius" (*Met.* 15.543–544).

"my front and back appear identical," 114), showing that he belongs to cyclical and not linear time. Hence the verb *redeo*, referring to Janus' authentic, eternal nature, compared to which the *chaos* is but a contingent likeness.[15] Here, Ovid's descriptive nuances seem akin to the deconstructive techniques used in the visual arts by the Cubists. In fact, their fragmented and duplicated figures, seen from different angles simultaneously, have been regarded by some critics as representing a temporal as well as a spatial dimension by condensing multiple instants and motions into one and disrupting any linear sense of time.[16]

3   Janus as a Monster and His Philosophical Precedents

Janus' physical appearance is itself disturbing, because it makes him look like a sort of monster. Pliny the Elder describes a *portentum* somewhat similar to this god, namely as a man endowed with two blind eyes on the back of his head (*NH* 11.272):

> Membra animalibus adgnata inutilia sunt, sicut sextus homini semper digitus. placuit in Aegypto nutrire portentum, binis et in aversa capitis parte oculis hominem, sed iis non cernentem.

> When animals are born with extra limbs these are useless, as is always the case when a human being is born with a sixth finger. In Egypt it was decided to rear a monstrosity, a human being with another pair of eyes at the back of the head, though he could not see with these.
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> TRANS. RACKHAM 1956

Due to this extraordinary feature, the man was regarded as a circus attraction. Pliny also points out that, in living beings, supernumerary body parts do not perform any function. By contrast, Janus asserts that both his faces (and especially his two pairs of eyes) function perfectly (*et mihi, ne flexu cervicis tempora perdam, / cernere non moto corpore bina licet*, "I, too, so I waste no time swiveling my neck, am allowed to see two ways without movement," Ov. *Fast.* 1.143–144). Janus seems to leave the world of the gods (whose appearance is, in effect, identical to that of any human being, except for their size) and enter

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15   For this meaning cf. *illis quae praecipitia ex intervallo apparebant redit lene fastigium*, "the things that from far off seemed precipitous are reduced to a gentle slope" (Seneca, *Const.* 1.2, trans. Ker 2014).

16   Schiesaro 2003, 201–202; Dalrymple Henderson 2013, 15–33, 511–521.

the world of *portenta*, "monsters," sometimes benevolent but always disturbing to the beholder. Indeed the birth of double-headed animals or babies was interpreted as a bad *omen*.[17]

Monsters, creatures with double bodies or limbs, belong to the world of myth and legends. No wonder that Lucretius denies the very existence of such creatures: *sed neque Centauri fuerunt, neque tempore in ullo | esse queunt duplici natura et **corpore bino*** ("but there were no Centaurs, nor is it ever possibile for creatures composed of alien limb, of double nature and bipartite body, to exist," *DRN* 5.878–879, trans. Gale 2008). Centaurs are often called *biformes* ("biformed," e.g. *Met.* 2.664),[18] as Janus is in the *Fasti* (1.89), where the poet introduces the god by mentioning his *bina … ora* ("doubled face," 96). Thus, it is fair to assume that Ovid's portrayal of Janus echoes this Lucretian passage. Note that here Lucretius openly attacks Empedocles,[19] and especially the Empedoclean text now known as fragment B 61 DK = 52 Wright:

> πολλὰ μὲν ἀμφιπρόσωπα καὶ ἀμφίστερνα φύεσθαι,
> βουγενῆ ἀνδρόπρωιρα, τὰ δ' ἔμπαλιν ἐξανατέλλειν
> ἀνδροφυῆ βούκρανα, μεμειγμένα τῆι μὲν ἀπ' ἀνδρῶν
> τῆι δὲ γυναικοφυῆ σκιεροῖς ἠσκημένα γυίοις.

> Many creatures with a face and breasts on both sides were produced, man.faced bulls arose and again bull-headed men, (others) with male and female nature combined, and the bodies they had were dark.
>   TRANS. WRIGHT 1981[20]

Here, the birth of creatures with two faces (ἀμφιπρόσωπα) seems to be part of an evolutionary process. In its first stage, single body parts are generated; then,

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17   Berno 2019a, 123–125; cf. Cic. *Div.* 1.121 *si puella nata biceps esset, seditionem in populo fore*, "when a girl was born with two heads, this foretold sedition among the people" (trans. Falconer 1959); Tac. *Ann.* 15.47 *fine anni vulgantur prodigia imminentium malorum nuntia … bicipites hominum aliorumque animalium abiecti in publicum*, "at the close of the year, report was busy with portents heralding disaster to come … two-headed embryos, human or of the other animals, thrown out in public" (trans. Jackson 1956).

18   The attribute, just like *biceps* (1.65 and 230 "two-headed"), is much less common than the formulaic *bifrons* "with two faces": Bömer 1958, 33–34 ad 1.255–257. We find *biceps* and *biformis* "two-faced" attributed to Janus in Septimius Serenus, fr. 23 Bl., 1: see Mattiacci 2017, 211. On *forma* and *biformis* related to Janus cf. Conso 2015, 109.

19   Campbell 2003, 139–146 ad loc.; Sedley 2003, 4.

20   Cf. Wright 1981, 212–215 ad fr. 52 = Ael. *NA* 16.29. Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1123b recalls this Empedoclean theory as one of the most denigrated by Epicureans. As for the parallel between this fragment and Ovid's Janus, cf. Hardie 1991, 50; Labate 2005, 182.

in the second stage, various types of body parts are combined with one another; finally, the world is full of animated beings that live normally (Emped. fr. A 52 = Aët. 5.19.5; cf. B 57–61 DK). In this framework, a creature like Janus would arise in the second stage. Note that Plutarch, in his description of the god (*Numa* 19.11), uses precisely the same adjective (ἀμφιπρόσωπον) that Empedocles had employed to describe imperfect creatures.[21] By alluding to the *De rerum natura* in the context of his dialogue with Janus, Ovid seems to defend Empedocles against Lucretius. In fact, not only does Ovid assert the existence of Janus, but he also describes him in terms of natural phenomena that Lucretius considered impossible. If, however, Janus is classified among Empedocles' imperfect, "provisional" beings (i.e. nature's ephemeral attempts preceding the birth of "proper" animals), Ovid further emphasizes the god's connection with chaos and *confusio*. Far from being a merely external feature, this connection concerns Janus' very essence. Note also that Empedocles envisioned recurring phases of creation and destruction, each based on the coexistence and alternate prevalence of the two opposite principles already mentioned, Love and Strife. In this model, the world's genesis tends alternately towards destruction (exacerbating division and fragmentation) and absolute harmony (with an emphasis on peace and union). The Empedoclean fragment quoted above has been interpreted in various ways, and it is quite unclear to which of the two phases it belongs; however, recent scholarship assigns it to the phase of Love.[22] In the opening of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid seems to favor harmony over conflict (**concordi pace ligavit**, "he bound them fast in harmony," 1.25), whereas the genesis narrated in the *Fasti* appears to underscore clash and disunity (*ut semel haec secessit* **lite** *suarum | inque novas abiit massa* **soluta** *domos*, "Once dissension of its matter had split the mass, which departed in fragments for new homes," 1.107–108). In Empedoclean terms, Janus may therefore represent a sort of remnant of the cosmic phase of Love, lately destroyed by the Roman tendency toward Strife, i.e. distinction and separation. In sum, a god whose appearance is reminiscent of imperfect, ephemeral creatures can certainly preside over change, but will never be able to ensure stability.

Among the possible antecedents of the perturbing figure of Janus there is another famous double being, clearly derived from Empedocles' theories: Plato's hermaphrodite, as described by Aristophanes in Plato's *Symposium*.[23]

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21   Greek authors usually define Janus as *dimorphos* "two-formed" (Lyd. *Mens.* 4.1–2) or *diprosopos* "two-faced" (Plut. *Quest. Rom.* 22.269a; Ath. 15.692d).

22   O'Brien 1969, 196–209; Martin-Primavesi 1999, 75–82; on the double zoogony, Primavesi 1998; Trinidade Santos 2007.

23   The connection between the two passages has been already suggested by Labate 2005,

The hermaphrodite was the original rational being, generated before the human kind (189e–190a):

> ἔπειτα ὅλον ἦν ἑκάστου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὸ εἶδος **στρογγύλον**, νῶτον καὶ πλευρὰς κύκλῳ ἔχον, χεῖρας δὲ τέτταρας εἶχε, καὶ σκέλη τὰ ἴσα ταῖς χερσίν, καὶ **πρόσωπα δύ᾽ ἐπ᾽ αὐχένι κυκλοτερεῖ**, [190a] **ὅμοια πάντῃ· κεφαλὴν δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἀμφοτέροις τοῖς προσώποις ἐναντίοις κειμένοις μίαν**, καὶ ὦτα τέτταρα, καὶ αἰδοῖα δύο, καὶ τἆλλα πάντα ὡς ἀπὸ τούτων ἄν τις εἰκάσειεν.

> Secondly, the form of each person was round all over, with back and sides encompassing it every way; each had four arms, and legs to match these, and two faces perfectly alike on a cylindrical neck. There was one head on the two faces, which looked opposite ways; there were four ears, two privy members, and all the other parts, as may be imagined, in proportion.
>
> TRANS. LAMB 1961

His πρόσωπα δύο were ὅμοια πάντῃ, "similar in every respect," with a single head but two faces (κεφαλὴν δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἀμφοτέροις τοῖς προσώποις ἐναντίοις κειμένοις μίαν, "one head on the two faces, which looks opposite ways," 190a), which may be recalled by the Ovidian expression *bina ... ora*, "double faces" (*Fast.* 1.96); this figure was rounded (ὅλον ἦν ἑκάστου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὸ εἶδος στρογγύλον, "the form of each person was round all over," 189e) and double in each part, so that he had no front and back, just like Janus (*ante quod est in me postque videtur idem*, "my front and back appear identical," 1.114). Another similarity with Janus is that the actual aspect of human beings, resulting from the halving of the hermaphrodite realized by Apollo on Jupiter's order, has still something in common with the originary one (190e–191a):

> καὶ τὰς μὲν ἄλλας ῥυτίδας [191a] τὰς πολλὰς ἐξελέαινε ... ὀλίγας δὲ κατέλιπε, τὰς περὶ αὐτὴν τὴν γαστέρα καὶ τὸν ὀμφαλόν, μνημεῖον εἶναι τοῦ **παλαιοῦ πάθους.**

> and he [Apollo] smoothed away most of the puckers ... though he left there a few which we have just around the belly, to remind us of our early fall.
>
> TRANS. LAMB 1925

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183 and 2010, 198. Ovid himself, speaking about Hermaphroditus in the *Metamorphoses*, defines him as a *forma duplex*, a "twofold figure" (4.378); cf. Landolfi 2002.

When reduced to a human being, he preserves some wrinkles around the belly as a memory of his former shape, just as Janus, after gaining a human figure, preserves a double face as "a small token of my once confused shape" (*confusae quondam nota parva figurae*, 1.113). The hermaphrodite is far from a peaceful being, to the point that Jupiter divides him into two parts to make him weaker and less dangerous (190c–d).[24] So, this precedent of Janus too goes in the direction of conflict.

The god's disturbing appearance contrasts sharply with his benevolent and conciliatory attitude[25]—after all, he does not refrain from answering any of the poet's questions. It is hardly accidental that, during the dialogue, the poet seems to ignore the god's terrifying appearance, and describes him as if he had only one face (1.145–146, 255, 259). Apart from the god's own words, references to the twofold nature of Janus appear only before and after the dialogue (1.95–96, 283–284).

4   Ovid's Janus and Propertius' Vertumnus

It is also of interest to compare Janus with Vertumnus, as described in Propertius 4.2. The two figures, besides sharing a similar metapoetic function,[26] show a structural and behavioral analogy.[27] Both deities represent many *formae* conflated into one (*quid mirare meas tot in uno corpore formas?* "do you marvel than my one body has so many shapes?" Prop. 4.2.1, trans. Goold 1990);[28] both are alien to the traditional Pantheon—the one being Etruscan, the other local and Roman, but of mysterious origins. Both, moreover, undergo a transition from formlessness to order (Prop. 4.2.59–64, *Fast*. 1.113) and exert power over the

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24   Plato, *Symp*. 190c–d μόγις δὴ ὁ Ζεὺς ἐννοήσας λέγει ὅτι "δοκῶ μοι," ἔφη, "ἔχειν μηχανήν, ὡς ἂν εἶέν τε ἄνθρωποι καὶ παύσαιντο τῆς ἀκολασίας ἀσθενέστεροι γενόμενοι. νῦν μὲν γὰρ αὐτούς, ἔφη, διατεμῶ δίχα ἕκαστον, καὶ ἅμα μὲν ἀσθενέστεροι ἔσονται, ἅμα δὲ χρησιμώτεροι ἡμῖν διὰ τὸ πλείους τὸν ἀριθμὸν γεγονέναι· καὶ βαδιοῦνται ὀρθοὶ ἐπὶ δυοῖν σκελοῖν. ἐὰν δ᾽ ἔτι δοκῶσιν ἀσελγαίνειν καὶ μὴ θέλωσιν ἡσυχίαν ἄγειν, "πάλιν αὖ," ἔφη, "τεμῶ δίχα," ("Then Zeus, putting all his wits together, spoke at length and said: 'Methinks I can contrive that men, without ceasing to exist, shall give over their iniquity through a lessening of their strength. I propose now to slice every one of them in two, so that while making them weaker we shall find them more useful by reason of their multiplication; and they shall walk erect upon two legs. If they continue turbulent and do not choose to keep quiet, I will do it again,' said he 'I will slice every person in two'"; trans. Lamb 1925).

25   Miller 1983, 164–174.

26   Myers 1994, 127–128; Green 2004, 71.

27   Hardie 1998, 74–75; Myers 1994, 248–249; Merli 2000; Aresi 2015.

28   Cf. Fedeli 2022, 292 ad loc.; *Fast*. 1.106 *ignis, aquae, tellus, unus acervus erat*, "fire, water and earth, were a single heap."

flow of water (*Vertumnus verso dicor ab amne deus*, "I am, from the diverting of *amnis*, the river, called Vertumnus," Prop. 4.2.10; *oraque, **qua pollens ope sum**,*[29] *fontana reclusi / sumque repentinas eiaculatus aquas*, "I unlocked the mouths of springs with my power, and jetted sudden spurts of water," *Fast.* 1.269–270). Finally, Ovid's Janus ascribes to himself the *ius vertendi cardinis* ("the right to turn the hinge," 1.120), whereas Propertius' Vertumnus, whose connection with *vertere* is self-evident, mentions the "turning [of the] year" (*annus vertens*, Prop. 4.2.11), a moment consecrated to Janus,[30] among the possible etymologies of his own name. Vertumnus is a god of change, capable of changing himself. Janus, by contrast, is a god of change understood as transition: change is *within* him. It is only in a pre-cosmic state of chaos, in a confused unity free from multiplicity, that the two gods can be equated with each other. In the universe as we know it, Vertumnus represents change in a phenomenological sense, whereas Janus embodies its essence in an ontological sense. On the one hand, this distinction may explain why Ovid avoids any explicit connection between the two gods in the *Fasti*, although the fourteenth book of his *Metamorphoses* shows his great familiarity with Vertumnus. On the other hand, the affinity between the two deities confirms that Ovid, whose *Fasti* begin with Janus, is much more interested in the dynamic instability of the god than in his "static," more reassuring role as the protector of beginnings.

5   Janus as a Peaceful Warrior

Taking the cue from Ovid's question concerning symbols depicted on coins, and particularly focusing on the image of a ship, Janus embarks on a narrative of his own reign (1.241–253). The description is clearly reminiscent of the Golden Age[31] and of the reign of Numa Pompilius, the king who had built Janus' temple[32] and had led the Romans towards an age of peace and com-

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29   Above, n. 6.

30   Fedeli 2022, 203 ad loc.; *Fast.* 1.65 *anni tacite labentis origo*, "source of the silent gliding year."

31   Green 2004, 117–120 ad loc. highlights the affinities with the reign of Evander as described in Vergil's *Aeneid* 8; see also Landolfi 1996, 93–118.

32   Livy's narrative of this event explicitly links the foundation of the temple with the exigencies of living in peace: *mitigandum ferocem populum armorum desuetudine ratus, Ianum ad infimum Argiletum indicem pacis bellique fecit* ("he thought it needful that his warlike people should be softened by the disuse of arms, and built the temple of Janus at the bottom of Argiletum, as an index of peace and war," 1.19.2, trans. Foster 1957). Plutarch draws a parallel between Numa and Janus (*Numa* 20.3–4 and 20.10; *Quaest. Rom.* 19.268b; cf. *Fort. Rom.* 9), also with regard to the opening of the year in January instead of March: "The name of January, the first month, derives from Janus. I believe that Numa took primacy

munion between humans and gods—an age in which Justice ruled, not having abandoned the Earth quite yet. Janus concludes, *nihil mihi cum bello: pacem postesque tuebar* ("War was not my business. I watched peace and doorposts," 1.253; cf. 1.13). This attitude differs sharply from that shown by Janus at the (fictional) time of Ovid's *Fasti*, when he is busy keeping war in check (1.113–114) and asserts the necessity of litigation in court, which is an obvious sign of human beings' painstaking search for justice. Indeed, Ovid asks Janus why the first day of the year is not free from litigation (*lites*, "lawsuits," 165), and the god replies that idleness ought to be eschewed at the beginning of the year (1.165–168):

> post ea mirabar cur non sine litibus esset
>> prima dies. "causam percipe," Ianus ait.
> "tempora commisi nascentia rebus agendis,
>> totus ab auspicio ne foret annus iners."

> After this I was wondering why the first day
>> had lawsuits. "Learn the cause," Janus says.
> "I entrusted this newborn time to business
>> Lest the year's start enervate the whole."

Note that, before his encounter with Janus, Ovid had described a pacified world experiencing relaxed inactivity thanks to Augustus' imperial government (*secura ... otia*, "secure peace," 67–68); the poet had also hoped for a peaceful society, free from *lites* and *iurgia* (*lite vacent aures, insanaque protinus absint / iurgia*, "listen to no lawsuits, clear the air of frenzied strife," 73–74). Janus, however, had immediately contradicted him. In the *Fasti*, *lis* also refers to the clash of elements, which lies at the origin of the universe itself (*ut semel haec rerum secessit lite suarum*, "once dissension of its matter had split the mass," 1.107; see section 2 above). At a cosmic level, strife is crucial to the taxonomy of different beings; note that it is equally important at a human level, since it characterizes the citizen's everyday activity. This description of the genesis of the world, along with Janus' reply, may appear to contradict Ovid's initial assertions concerning

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away from March, whose eponymous god is Mars, in order to assert the preeminence of civic virtues over military endeavors" (Plut. *Numa* 19.9–10). There is a hint of this fact in *Fast.* 1.43–44, where Ovid asks Janus the reasons for this choice: *dic, age, frigoribus quare novus incipit annus / qui melius per ver incipiendus erat?* ("come now, tell me why the new year starts in the cold, which would far better commence in the spring," 149–150), but the god's reply is laconic: the year begins with the new sun (163–164); cf. Martelli 2013, 116–131; Badura 2021b, 256–257.

Rome's state of peace. Such an impression is confirmed when Janus describes his kingdom as peaceful and predating the departure of Justice from the Earth (1.247–255).[33]

The image of a peaceful god-king is immediately contradicted by Janus' mention of the Roman-Sabine conflict, a military event full of disturbing connotations which dates back to Romulus' reign. Janus refers to it without being prompted by the poet. Ovid, in fact, simply asks the god why, while there are many archways in Rome, only one of them is consecrated to him (*cum tot sint iani, cur stas sacratus in uno / hic ubi iuncta foris templa duobus habes?* "though *iani*, archways, abound, why is your cult based in the one where your shrine joins two forums?" 257–258). Janus, however, replies with a narrative of the war between Romans and Sabines at the time of Titus Tatius. As the Sabines threaten to invade the Forum as a result of Tarpeia's treason, Janus resorts to cunning, in order to block the enemy's advance. The god redirects the flow of water from certain springs, thereby flooding the Sabines' passage with boiling water and sulphur. Then, when the war is over, he restores normalcy.

The story is dear to Ovid,[34] who had already narrated it in the *Metamorphoses* (14.778–804)—in one of the rare passages in which Janus appears outside *Fasti* 1.[35] This prompts us to compare the two versions. In the *Metamorphoses*, Janus is mentioned only as the dedicatee of the temple. This time, the heroic intervention against the Sabines is ascribed to the sea nymphs spurred by Venus to support the Romans, while Juno is said to have opened the gates of the recently founded city. In the *Fasti* account, by contrast, there is no trace of open battle. Janus credits himself alone with Rome's victory, and blames Tarpeia for betraying the Romans; Juno, for her part, intervenes only at a later stage. In *Fast.* 1.261, Tarpeia is called *levis custos*, "fickle [gate]keeper," the very opposite of Janus, who has been entrusted with *custodia mundi*, "the world's safekeeping" at 1.119.[36] Thus, in the *Metamorphoses*, the tutelary deity of the

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33   Landolfi 1996, 93–118.

34   Heinze 1919, 35–37; Barchiesi 1992, 15–16; Merli 2000, 192–198; Galasso 2006; Merli 2010, 32–33; Murgatroyd 2005, 32–34; Green 121. Galasso 2006, 265 notes that Juno's representation in the *Metamorphoses* recalls Ennius' *discordia* and its Vergilian echo. The story is summarized by Macrobius (*Sat.* 1. 9.17–18) in a version similar to that given by the *Fasti*; cf. Serv. on *Aen.* 1.291.

35   Except for some occurrences related to the starting of the new year (*Pont.* 4.4.23, 9.59–60; *Ib.* 65), the god is mentioned as the father of the bride at Picus' marriage in *Met.* 14.334 and as the rapist of the nymph Carna in *Fast.* 6.119–130.

36   Börtzler 1930, 121–123 suggests that this expression could derive from Nigidius Figulus, who defined Janus *utriusque ianuae caelestis potens* ("both heavenly doorways are in his power," Macrob. *Sat.* 1.9.9).

gens Iulia (Venus) is credited with intervening on the Romans' side, albeit indirectly. In the *Fasti*, a peacekeeping god (Janus) is the main actor, whose intervention is driven by much less noble motivations (such as his fear of Juno). While the *Metamorphoses* account is a variation on the theme of Vergil's *Aeneid*, in the *Fasti* the same deity, who seems to regard Jupiter as depending on him,[37] proves to be incapable of facing the enemy in battle (*cum tanto veritus committere numine pugnam* "afraid to enter battle with so mighty a god," 267).

Significantly, in the *Metamorphoses* the conflict between Romans and Sabines is explicitly described as a civil war: *et strata est tellus Romana Sabinis / corporibus strata estque suis, generique cruorem / sanguine cum soceri permiscuit impius ensis* ("and soon the Roman plain was strewn with the Sabine dead and with its own as well, and the impious swords mingled the blood of son-in-law with blood of father-in-law," 14.800–802; trans. Miller 1984).[38] The parallel structure and the deliberate repetition of the verb (*strata est*, 800), along with the juxtaposition of the two ethnonyms (*Romana Sabinis*) foreshadows a dark conclusion: the *impius ensis* (802), mixing the father-in-law's blood with that of the son-in-law. Ovid obviously refers to the well-known episode known as the Rape of the Sabine Women. In fact, Romulus' young followers had children by the women they had abducted, thereby becoming the sons-in-law of the women's fathers. Livy employs a similar fomulation in the context of the women's plea for peace: *ne sanguine se nefando soceri generique respergerent*, "that fathers-in-law and sons-in-law should not stain themselves with impious bloodshed" (1.13.2). Nevertheless, a much more recent event comes to mind: Pompey's marriage to Julia, Caesar's daughter, a last attempt at reconciliation before the outbreak of a devastating civil war: *socer generque, perdidistis omnia*, according to Catullus, "you, father-in-law and son-in-law, have ruined everything" (29.25, trans. Cornish 1988). Lucan, for his part, explicitly draws a connection between Julia and the Sabine Women (1.114–118) and frames his entire poem in terms of the impious conflict between son-in-law and father-in-law, symbolizing civil strife. In the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid himself numbers civil war among the events that show the world's irredeemable impiety (1.145), thereby prompting Jupiter to annihilate humankind through the Flood.

Although the narrative that Ovid provides in *Fasti* 1 does not explicitly refer to civil war, the mere mention of the Romano-Sabine conflict could readily prompt the reader to associate the two events. The political implications

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37   *Fast.* 1.126 *it, redit officio Iuppiter ipse meo*, "it is thanks to me that Jupiter goes and comes."
38   Galasso 2006, 268–269; Hardie 2004, 468–469 ad loc. quotes *Aen.* 6.830 with reference to Caesar and Pompey.

of Ovid's account and its connections with the god Janus are confirmed by Plutarch. In the *Life of Caesar*, after narrating Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon, Plutarch employs an image that closely recalls Janus' gates of war (below, section 6), although Greek culture does not have an equivalent of the Janus temple (33.1):

ἐπεὶ δὲ κατελήφθη τὸ Ἀρίμινον, ὥσπερ ἀνεῳγμένου **τοῦ πολέμου πλατείαις πύλαις** ἐπὶ πᾶσαν ὁμοῦ τὴν γῆν καὶ θάλασσαν, καὶ συγκεχυμένων ἅμα τοῖς ὅροις τῆς ἐπαρχίας τῶν νόμων τῆς πόλεως, οὐκ ἄνδρας ἄν τις ᾠήθη καὶ γυναίκας, ὥσπερ ἄλλοτε, σὺν ἐκπλήξει διαφοιτᾶν τῆς Ἰταλίας, ἀλλὰ τὰς πόλεις αὐτὰς ἀνισταμένας.

After the seizure of Ariminum, **as if the war had opened with broad gates** to cover the whole earth and sea alike, and the laws of the state were confounded along with the boundaries of the province, one would not have thought that men and women, as at other times, were hurrying through Italy in consternation, but that the very cities had risen up in flight and were rushing one through another.

<div align="right">TRANS. PERRIN 1919</div>

The attenuating force of ὥσπερ does not diminish the powerful pathos of the image, which is probably meant to allude to a Latin expression commonly used in relation to Janus' gates: *belli portae*.[39]

In the *Fasti*, Ovid's account of the Roman-Sabine war is substantially different from the *Metamorphoses* version. Venus (the protectress of the *gens Iulia*) no longer appears, whereas Juno (the goddess hostile to the *gens Iulia*) looms large: *et iam contigerat portas, Saturnia cuius | dempserat oppositas invidiosa seras* ("Tatius has already approached the gateway, whose bars spiteful Saturnia had slipped," 1.265–266).[40] In *Fasti* 1, however, there is no trace of actual warfare, almost as if Janus' bloodless intervention (the water springs) could suffice

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39   Also Petronius, in the poetic fragment known as *Bellum civile*, includes in his description of Pompey's retreat from the battlefield a reference to *furor* freed from chains, using Vergilian language (*quas inter Furor, abruptis ceu liber habenis, | sanguineum late tollit caput, oraque mille | vulneribus confossa cruenta casside velat*, "and among them Madness, like a steed loosed when the reins snap, flings up her bloody head and shields her face, scarred by a thousand wounds, with a blood-stained helm," 124.1.253–255, trans. Heseltine 1969).

40   The passage echoes a scene in the *Aeneid*, in which Juno is described as tearing away the gates of Janus' temple in order to cause a war between the Latins and the Trojans (*Aen.* 7.620–622, quoted below).

to resolve the conflict. This difference between Ovid's two accounts has been interpreted in terms of generic differences between the two poems: a mythological epic narrative vs. an aetiological one. Further remarks, however, should be added to this point: note, for instance, Janus' unprompted insistence on a conflict, as well as the god's evident weakness (Juno is seen by him as an object of fear). Consider, finally, the conclusion of the episode: *cuius ut utilitas pulsis percepta Sabinis* / **quae fuerat** *tuto* **reddita forma** *loco est*, "after its service in repelling the Sabine, the place safely resumed its former shape" (273–274). The similarity between this line and the one that concludes Janus' cosmogony (*tunc ego* **qui fueram** *globus et sine imagine moles* / *in* **faciem redii** *dignaque membra deo*, "Then I, who had been a ball and a faceless hulk, / Got the looks and limbs proper to who had been rounded mass without shape **returned** to an articulated form worthy of a god," 111–112) is evident. Ovid uses two identical verbs (*sum* and *redeo*) and identical tenses, along with the noun *forma*, an abstract counterpart of *facies*. So, as Janus restores normalcy, the process is described in terms analogous to the transition from chaos to cosmos. As a result, war is perceived as a return to the primeval confusion, and the fragility of the world's orderly structure is emphasized. In the *Metamorphoses*, the newborn universe was described as rapidly degenerating into impiety, only to be regenerated after the Flood. In the *Fasti*, the stability of Rome in the city's remote past is equally fragile: a slight oversight on a *custos*' part suffices to throw an orderly society into chaos.

6   The Gates of War

The looming threat of entropy, which we have examined so far, is also evident in Ovid's description of the gates of war.

Interpreters have frequently puzzled over the twofold, contradictory explanation that Janus offers concerning the gates. Are they closed to trap war inside, as he initially seems to maintain, or to keep peace, as he says later on? Scholars are divided between those who propose alternative readings of the passage, so as to avoid the contradiction,[41] and those who regard the contradiction as hardly surprising in a poem often featuring multiple explanations. Labate aptly draws attention to the Hesiodic connotations that befit both the scene considered here and Janus' reference to chaos.[42] My reading of Janus' contradictory

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41   Green 2000.

42   Labate 2005, 191; Labate 2010, 201–207 and quoted bibliography. Herbert-Brown 1994,

explanations takes its cue from Labate's interpretation. In my view, Janus juxta-poses a typically epic account, attested since Ennius, with a "minority" explana-tion, partly confirmed by Horace alone, and this happens because Janus himself transitions from being a powerful to a weak figure.

Let us start by analyzing the two passages that concern the issue:

> cum libuit Pacem placidis emittere tectis,
>   libera perpetuas ambulat illa vias,
> sanguine letifero toto miscebitur orbis
>   ni teneant rigidae condita Bella serae.

> When I choose to release Peace from her tranquil house,
>   She strolls the unending highways freeely.
> The whole globe would be confounded with deadly blood,
>   if unbending bars did not closet War.
>   *Fast.* 1.121–124

> ut populo reditus pateant ad bella profecto
>   tota patet dempta ianua nostra sera.
> Pace fores obdo, ne qua discedere possit:
>   Caesareoque diu numine clusus ero.

> My doorway remains clear and is unbolted
>   So warring people have a clear way back.
> In peacetime I lock the doors so peace must stay.
>   I'll be closed long under Caesar's godhead.
>   *Fast.* 1.279–282

The first thing to say is that Janus, differently from the epic tradition, focuses on peace, which is personified in both passages, instead of war. Secondly, the affinity between the two passages is evident. In both, two lines are devoted to peace and two to war. Peace and War are referred to in identical terms (*pax*, *bella*) and are arranged chiastically. Their coexistence seems to echo the open-ing lines of Janus' speech, which described the coexistence of harmony and strife, two forces simultaneously necessary to the cosmos. The similarity in structure highlights the differences between the passages: in the first one, War

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187–196 maintains that Ovid's inconsistency reflects the general uncertainty about when exactly Augustus closed the gates and how many times he did it.

is a well-defined personification, whereas it is but a secondary image in the second. Peace, for its part, appears to either exit the temple (in the first passage) or remain inside (in the second), but it seems fair to assume, at least in the first scene, that Janus keeps both forces inside his temple and lets out one at a time, depending on his will.[43] As Aeolus has a single wineskin in which all the winds are enclosed (hot and cold ones, breezes and storms) and can only let out some of them, so does Janus, as described in 1.121–124, preside over both Peace and War, which are enclosed in one and the same temple. In the *Metamorphoses*, Jupiter himself causes the Flood by exercising the power of Aeolus: *protinus Aeoliis Aquilonem claudit in antris* / *et quaecumque fugant inductas flamina nubes*, / *emittitque Notum* ("straightway he shuts the North-wind up in the cave of Aeolus, and all blasts soever that put the clouds to fight; but he lets the South-wind loose," 1.262–263). Thus, the idea that both favorable and unfavorable powers can coexist within the same space is far from meaningless—all the more so in the case of a two-faced god, whose two opposite functions (opening and closing) are tied to both peace and war.

Note too that the first passage equates a state of peace with the image of an entity freely roaming around the city, whereas the second passage features the same entity carefully enclosed within the Janus temple. The contrast is underscored by the phrase *placidis tectis* ("tranquil house," 1.121),[44] which clearly turns a negative, typically epic image—the *belli portae* or *ianua belli*, "gates of war" of Janus' temple, often described as keeping discord enclosed—into a positive one.[45] The following couplet (123–124) refers precisely to that epic image. The gates opening to let Peace out are *placidae* "tranquil"; however, when they are closed to keep War in, they are described as insurmountable hurdles (*rigidae ... serae*, "unbending bars," 124).

In Latin poetry, the image of *belli portae* is regularly used to refer to a sort of prison in which various types of negative powers (*discordia*, "discord"; *furor*, "madness"; etc.) are enclosed, from which they are released, regardless of whether the temple of Janus is mentioned. Thus, in such cases, war is represented as the result of an unrestrained lethal passion coming from deep

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43   Ovid insists on the idea of "letting go," since there was the custom of opening the gates of all temples at the beginning of the year (*resera nutu candida templa tuo*, "unlock our gleaming temples with your nod," *Fast*. 1.70; *templa patent auresque deum*, "the gods' temples and ears are now open," 181).

44   *Tectum* as a synonym of *porta* is also found in *Met*. 4.489 (*tectoque exire parabant*, "they made to leave their palace").

45   Labate 2005, 184–191.

recesses, a sort of hypostasis of humans' aggressive impulses. The first example of this image is a fragment of Ennius (*Ann.* 225–226 Sk.):[46]

> postquam Discordia taetra
> Belli ferratos postes portasque refregit
>
> After loathsome Discord
> broke open the ironbound posts and portal of War
> TRANS. GOLDBERG and MANUWALD 2018

Ennius is the first to use the phrase *belli portae*, depicting *discordia* as a trapped fury that manages to escape from its prison. Although there is no reference to Janus, the image clearly recalls the god's temple. However, it is discord that breaks the gates open, without the god's intervention. Thus, the text underscores the unrestrained power of war's destructive force.

Vergil reworks the Ennian image in the first book of the *Aeneid*, following the praise of Caesar and Augustus' providential birth in Jupiter's prophetic words (1.291–296):[47]

> aspera tum positis mitescent saecula bellis
> cana Fides et Vesta, Remo cum fratre Quirinus
> iura dabunt: dirae ferro et compagibus artis
> claudentur Belli portae; Furor impius intus
> saeva sedens super arma et centum vinctus aenis
> post tergum nodis fremet horridus ore cruento.
>
> Then wars shall cease and savage ages soften; hoary Faith and Vesta, Quirinus with his brother Remus, shall give laws. The gates of war, grim with iron and close-fitting bars, shall be closed; within, impious Rage, sitting on savage arms, his hands fast bound behind with a hundred brazen knots, shall roar in the ghastliness of blood-stained lips.
> TRANS. FAIRCLOUGH 1999

It is unclear who is responsible for closing the *Belli portae*, but the laws are ascribed to Romulus and Remus, who are described as supporting each other and exercising joint powers. By contrast, *Furor impius* is detained in a prison and described as a raging, bloodthirsty beast. Thus, the forces of peace are

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46   Skutsch 1985, 401–405 ad loc. The original context of the passage is still in doubt.
47   Austin 1989, 113–114 ad loc.

stronger than those of war—the latter being subdued by the former. Conflict, however, is numbered among the typical features of a tough generation of early Romans (the *aspera … saecula*, "savage ages," of line 291), which eventually "will soften" (*mitescent*, 291). In other words, coercive action must be taken not only against an infernal being like *furor*, but also against humanity as a whole, naturally pervaded by *furor* itself.

The second occurrence of the phrase in the *Aeneid* (a clear echo of Ennius) explicitly ascribes a peacekeeping role to Janus (7.607–614):[48]

> sunt geminae Belli portae (sic nomine dicunt)
> religione sacrae et saevi formidine Martis:
> centum aerei claudunt vectes aeternaque ferri
> robora, nec **custos** absistit limine **Ianus**;
> has, ubi certa sedet patribus sententia pugnae,
> ipse quirinali trabea cinctuque gabino
> insignis reserat stridentia limina consul,
> ipse vocat pugnas: sequitur tum cetera pubes,
> aereaque adsensu conspirant cornua rauco.

> There are twin gates of War (so men call them), hallowed by religious awe and the terrors of fierce Mars; a hundred brazen bolts close them, and the eternal strength of iron, and Janus their guardian never quits the threshold. Here, when the sentence of the Fathers is firmly fixed on war, the Consul, arrayed in Quirinal rob and Gabine cincture, with his own hands unbars the grating portals, with his own lips calls forth war; the rest of the warriors take up the cry, and brazen horns blare on their hoarse accord.
>
> TRANS. FAIRCLOUGH 2000

Here, there is no trace of infernal powers enclosed within the temple. Bolts are used simply to fasten the gates, which are consecrated to Mars. The opening of the gates alludes to groups of armed soldiers leaving the city. It is to be noted that the act of opening them is ascribed to the consul (612–613) and not to Janus, who is defined only as a "guardian" (*custos*, 610). In the context of this passage, Vergil narrates the Latins' war against the Trojans; king Latinus refuses to open the gates and flees in terror (616–619). Then, Juno herself violently breaks the gates open and unleashes the citizens' warlike fury (*tum regina deum caelo delapsa morantis | impulit ipsa manu portas et cardine verso|*

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48 Horsfall 2000, 394–396 ad loc.

belli ferratos rumpit Saturnia postes, "then the queen of the gods, gliding from the sky, with her own hand drove in the lingering doors, and on their turning hinges Saturn's daughter burst open the iron-bound gates of war," 7.620–622). As Labate[49] points out, in this passage Vergil overlaps two different representations of war: the first, a legal war, linked to the imperial power, and the second, a destructive and irrational event, provoked by an infernal power. This second event is the one actually narrated in the *Aeneid*.

The image of *belli portae*, mostly recurring in epic poetry,[50] tends to represent a negative power, such as *discordia* or *furor*, subdued by a superior, pacifying one.[51] This pacifying power is equated by Vergil with Augustus, the *princeps* who finally closes the gates of the Janus temple (and keeps them closed for many years) after a long period of civil strife. In fact, Augustus himself proudly lays claims to the closing of the gates in *Res Gestae* 2.42.[52] Note that *Quirinus*, the standard epithet of the warlike king Romulus, was also used of the Janus temple[53] as well as of Janus himself. Ovid, however, does not mention it. Moreover, while Vergil describes the soldiers who pass through the open gates in a crowd to go to battle, thus referring to the initial moments of the war (*Aen.* 7.613–614), Ovid, on the contrary, says that the gates are open in anticipation of the return of the soldiers, focusing on the war's end (*Fast.* 1.279–280); and, as we have seen, Vergil reduces Janus' role to that of a guard of his temple (*Aen.* 7.610) while power over the gates is attributed to the consul. This is possibly inspired to a picture by Apelles displayed by Augustus in his *Forum*, where Alexander the Great triumphs over War personified and depicted in chains. Pliny, who reports this fact, notes that while Augustus did not alter the picture, Claudius replaced Alexander's face with that of Augustus (*NH* 35.93–94):

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49   2005, 187–188.

50   A further passage to be quoted is Manilius, *Astronomica* 1.922–924 *sed satis hoc fatis fuerit: iam bella quiescant / atque adamanteis discordia vincta catenis / aeternos habeat frenos in carcere clausa* ("let Fate content itself with this! May wars now cease and, fettered with bonds of adamant, may discord, prisoned fast, be curbed for evermore!" trans. Goold 1977; see Feraboli 1996, 283–284 ad loc.). Manilius closely reworks Ennius' image. Here, too, the poet refers to Augustus and the aftermath of Philippi (908–909) and Actium (914–915). War is over, as was the case with Jupiter's prophecy in *Aeneid* 1, where the king of the gods urged the toughest generations to abandon their warlike pursuits.

51   Cf. Silius, *Punica* 17.356 *claudenda est ianua belli*, "the gate of war must be shut" (trans. Duff 1961), at the end of the second Punic war.

52   Cf. below, p. 344 and n. 59.

53   Hor. *Carm.* 4.15.9 and Porph. ad loc. On this attribute Keune 1918, 1181–1182; Frazer 1929, 104; Herbert-Brown 1994, 194–195.

> item Belli imaginem restrictis ad terga manibus, Alexandro in curru tri-
> umphante. Quas utrasque tabulas divus Augustus in fori sui celeberrimis
> partibus dicaverat simplicitate moderata; divus Claudius pluris existi-
> mavit utrisque excisa Alexandri facie divi Augusti imagines addere.

> And also, his figure of War with the hands tied behind with Alexander
> riding in triumph in his chariot. Both of these pictures his late lamented
> majesty August with restrained good taste had dedicated in the most fre-
> quented parts of his Forum; the emperor Claudius however thought it
> more advisable to cut out the face of Alexander from both works and sub-
> stitute portraits of August.

> TRANS. RACKHAM 1961

Here the image is that of a military triumph over foreign enemies, but the lex-
ical choices and the description of the War in chains allude to Janus and his
prerogative as peacekeeper, and show a tendency by his successor to replace
him with the emperor. We have to note also that the senate named the *Ara Pacis
Augustae* in the emperor's honor, and that its dedication on January 30th of the
year 9 BCE is recalled in *Fast.* 1.719–720, so that the poem ascribes to Augustus
not only the closing of the gates, but also the preservation of peace.[54]

Let us now go back to Janus' inconsistency concerning the gates. The whole
speech seems to point to an evolution in the god's role. Janus, in fact, interprets
his own peacekeeping function in two different ways. While he initially seems
rather optimistic (thanks to his mythical experience as a peaceful king, whose
power restrains humans' aggressive impulses), he then adopts a pessimistic
view connected with Rome's recent history, which shows that the aggressive
attitude is endemic to the social body and that peace ought to be protected
from such aggression. This evolution is paralleled by the god's abandonment
of the epic genre, to which the first image belonged. On one hand, Augus-
tus' imperial government gradually takes center stage, and the *princeps* is the
object of several laudatory remarks.[55] On the other hand, Janus gradually loses
his power: while he initially claims to be almost superior to Jupiter,[56] he then
acknowledges himself to be subordinate to Caesar, thereby effectively abdicat-
ing his own responsibility to preside over opening and closing (*Caesareoque
numine clusus ero*, "I'll be closed long under Caesar's godhead," 1.282). The *deus*

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54 On this monument and its role in the Augustan propaganda see Sauron 2018.
55 Green 2004, 66, 130–132, 296–298, and 318 on *Fast.* 1.85–86, 281–288, 645–650, and 701–702.
56 *Fast.* 1.126 *fit, redit officio Iuppiter ipse meo* "it is thanks to me that Jupiter goes and comes,"
    as cited above.

whose nature and identity Ovid questions at the beginning of *Fasti* 1, where he looks for a Greek counterpart to Janus, finally seems to have materialized now, in the house of Augustus. More specifically, the *deus* is now identified with Germanicus, whom Ovid addresses at the beginning of the book with the same expression he subsequently uses for Janus: *dexter ades* ("be present": Germanicus, 1.6; Janus, 1.67 and 69). As Janus exercises his power over the waters in order to save Rome from the Sabines' attack (1.269–270), Germanicus triumphs on the Rhine, thereby preserving Rome's peace (*tradiderat famulas iam tibi Rhenum aquas*, "Rhine had yelded you its waters enslaved," 1.286).[57] Janus' loss of power amounts to a sort of self-censure. In fact, the god never mentions the *belli portae* or *ianuae*, whereas he refers multiple times to *concordia*, a deity highly regarded during the Augustan age and evidently opposed to Ennius' enchained *discordia*. A similar idea seems to be found in Horace (*Epist.* 1.2.253–255):

> tuisque [sc. Auguste]
> auspiciis totum confecta duella per orbem
> claustraque custodem pacis cohibentia Ianum.

> Wars
> waged throughout the world under your standard,
> Janus, keeper of peace, locked in his temple.
> TRANS. MACLEOD 1986

There Janus himself seems to be the imprisoned one.[58] Ovid, too, hints at this interpretation by asking the god: *cur pace lates …?* ("why do you hide during peace?" *Fast.* 1.277). Horace describes Augustus as the guarantor of peace, and the Janus gates as oddly enclosing the *custos* of peace itself. In this way, Horace succeeds in giving preeminence to Augustus without sacrificing religious accuracy. Augustus frees the world from war, while Janus merely preserves an orderly structure that the *princeps* has established.[59]

As his power is usurped by the emperor, Janus is no longer able to keep War in check. In order to foster Peace, it is not enough to let it freely wander around the city—it has become necessary to shelter and safeguard it, because aggression and violence have endemically spread throughout the empire. Correspond-

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57 Cf. Herbert-Brown 1994, 185–196. Also the eulogy of astronomical researches in *Fast.* 1.295–310 may allude to Germanicus' interests: Gee 2000, 47–65.

58 Brink 1982, 256–257; Fedeli 1997, 1388 ad loc.

59 Cf. *Pont.* 1.2.124: *clausit et aeterna civica bella sera*, "[Augustus who] has shut in civil war with an everlasting bar," trans. Wheeler 1988.

ingly, Janus' strategy is no longer an active and offensive one (since fighting and imprisoning War is no longer in his power), but a passive and defensive one, a sort of withdrawal: Peace must be protected. The mythical archetype of this no longer omnipotent Janus is not Aeolus anymore, but Pandora,[60] the wretched woman who imprudently let all the evils escape from the jar, until hope alone was left within. In the latter part of *Fasti* 1, Ovid goes on to rework the image of the enchained discord—without, however, mentioning Janus, whereas the house of Augustus is allotted ample space: *gratia dis domuique tuae, religata catenis / iampridem vestro sub pede bella iacent* ("thanks be to gods and to your house. For a long time / wars have sprawled enchained at your feet," 1.701–702). Here, Ovid uses the epic image of the victorious warrior trampling on his conquered foe. What follows is a vague invocation to Peace, asked to enter and remain in the empire (1.709–721). The Janus temple is no longer mentioned: unspecified deities, put on a par with the imperial family, are credited with the confinement of War. No room is left for Janus. Indeed the second book of the *Fasti* opens with these words: *Janus habet finem* ("Janus has ended," 2.1).[61]

To be sure, in the opening of *Fasti* 1, Ovid had credited Roman generals with establishing peace, asking Janus to foster them: *dexter ades ducibus, quorum secura labore / otia terra ferax, otia pontus habet* ("be present for our leaders, whose labours secure / peace for the feeding earth, peace for the ocean," 1.67–68). The poet's farewell to Janus in the first part of the *Fasti* contains a prayer: *Iane, fac aeternos pacem pacisque ministros / neve suum praesta deserat auctor opus* ("Janus, make peace and the servants of peace eternal; / grant that the author not desert his work," 1.287–288). Janus is asked to perpetuate peace without, however, being portrayed as responsible for it. Ovid reasserts the god's loss of power.[62]

7 Concluding Remarks

I have shown that Janus in the *Fasti* undergoes an evolutionary process similar to that experienced by Ovid as a poet—from mythological epic to didactic poetry. The process is also mirrored by the history of the Augustan principate, from the ashes of civil war to peace, safeguarded and celebrated on the well-

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60   Hes. *Op.* 90–105; Labate 2005, 190–191.
61   Hardie 1998, 53–54.
62   Hardie 1995, 74.

known altar dedicated to the "Augustan Peace." Janus' figure is finally that of a benevolent god, invoked as protector of peace. His appearance and behavior, however, retain some of the disturbing elements of his chaotic origin. The god's action is necessarily connected with conflictual tendencies, which gradually become harder and harder to keep in check. Janus' evolution is confirmed by the weakening of his power in favor of Augustus' *numen*. The god, who used to have full control over Peace and War, with the ability to free the former and imprison the latter, must now protect Peace during Augustus' reign, but can no longer restrain endemic violence. All this is clear from Ovid's own words as well: both before and after the dialogue between the poet and the deity, the poet credits the imperial family with Rome's present state of peace. Janus, who is initially depicted as an almighty god, gradually weakens and finally disappears.

The instability embodied by the two-faced god, and never fully dispelled, is active on all levels. On the epistemic level, it lies at the heart of the god's inconsistencies and the poet's constant doubts. On the aesthetic level, it is mirrored by the literary *poikilia* of the *Fasti*, in which epic, antiquarianism, and didactic poetry blend together. On the ontological level, the original chaos ceaselessly threatens to come back.

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Intertextuality, Parody, and the Immortality of Poetry: Petronius and Ovid

Giuseppe La Bua

Ovid's claim to immortality is a recurrent theme in his poetry. In the last poem of the first book of the *Amores* (1.15), Ovid exploits the traditional features of the literary sphragis and contrasts his own way of life as a poet with that of his detractors, who are infected by envy (*livor edax*),[1] by offering a catalogue of poets who have achieved world-wide immortal fame.[2] Ovid's assertion of immortality is reaffirmed in the epilogue to the *Metamorphoses* (15.871–879), a sophisticated and elegant closure to the monumental epic poem which recounts stories of metamorphosis and transforms "the world of myth, by imparting plausibility to the fantastic or incredible, into a parable of the human condition."[3] It is worth quoting Ovid's passage (15.871–879):

> Iamque opus exegi, quod nec Iovis ira nec ignis
> nec poterit ferrum neque edax abolere vetustas.
> cum volet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius
> ius habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aevi;
> parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis
> astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum;
> quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris
> ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama
> (si quid habent veri vatum presagia) vivam.

> And now my work is done, which neither the wrath of Jove, nor fire, nor sword, nor the gnawing tooth of time shall ever be able to undo. When it will, let that day come which has no power save over this mortal frame, and end the span of my uncertain years. Still, in my better part I shall

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1 For the expression *livor edax* in *Rem.* 389 and Ovid's treatment of the motif of envy (also in *Trist.* 4.10.123 and *Pont.* 4.16.47), in the footsteps of Horace, see McKeown 1989, 389–390.
2 For a commentary on the elegy, see McKeown 1989, 387–421. A catalogue of contemporary Latin poets occurs later in Ov. *Pont.* 4.16; see now Leimmle 2021.
3 Kenney 2009, 145.

be borne immortal far beyond the lofty stars and I shall have an undying name. Wherever Rome's power extends over the conquered world, I shall be read in the mouth of the people, and, if the prophecies of bards have any truth, through all the ages shall I live in fame.[4]

The epilogue patently echoes Horace's closural poem *Odes* 3.30.[5] In addition to close verbal correspondences,[6] Horace and Ovid share the metaphor of architecture, the equation of the *monumenta* erected by Augustus to commemorate his political achievements with the *monumentum* of poetry, destined to ensure the posthumous, immortal fame of the poet. At the end of his long literary career, Ovid reasserts the eternal value of poetry and establishes himself as a "living presence," a textual entity whose survival and transformation in pure voice are enacted by his elegiac and epic work.[7] Ovid's last words in the *Metamorphoses* duplicate the sphragis of *Am.* 1.15[8] and point to the unity of his textual *corpus*.[9] More significantly, in the final *vivam* the poet celebrates his own apotheosis and predicts his own *post mortem* "metamorphosis" into a canonical elegiac text. As Hardie puts it, Ovid's living glory "is identical with the life-breath itself of the poet; the life is the text, and so, in terms of the Horatian model of poem as tomb, the poet's monument is his life, a tomb that contains the poet's presence in its full and eternal vitality."[10]

As is to be expected, Ovid's textual *corpus* is abundant in comments on fame and poetic immortality, especially in the elegies from exile. Hinds has called attention to the exile poetry's rewriting of the final prediction of immortality in the last book of the *Metamorphoses*, focusing on the inaugural elegy from exile, *Tr.* 1.1, as illustrative of the Ovidian meditation about time and his own fortune during relegation.[11] In *Tr.* 3.3.77–80 the elegist, *tenerorum lusor amorum*, rounds off his own epitaph by prophesying immortality for his erotic poems, which, even if a source of sorrow and pain, will be remembered over time and eventu-

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4   I cite the Latin text and English translation of the *Metamorphoses* from Miller 1984 (with some variations).

5   Hardie 2015, 617–622. On Horace and Ovid, see also Sharrock 2005, 58–59 (and in general on the connections between Horace's *Ars Poetica* and Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*); Tarrant 2007, 277–278. On the relationship between Ovid's erotodidactic and Horace, see Toohey 1996, 146–173.

6   Hardie 2015, 617. *Hoc opus exegi* recurs also in *Rem.* 811.

7   Hardie 2002, 94.

8   On Ovid's narrative of poetic immortality as central to the dominant plot of the *Amores*, see Boyd 1997, 165–202.

9   Korenjak 2004.

10   Hardie 2002, 96.

11   Hinds 1999. See also Kyriakidis 2013 (on Ovid's concern about the fate of his *Metamorphoses* and *Tr.* 1.7).

ally bring perennial fame to their author (*nomen et tempora longa*, "name and a long enduring life"). Again, reformulating words and themes of *Am.* 1.15[12] and the closing lines of *Met.* 15, Ovid links his fame to the eternal power of Rome in *Tr.* 3.7.49–52, a pathetic letter addressed to the female poet Perilla, a *scripta puella* who "represents the covert survival of Ovid's erotic program in defiance of Augustus."[13]

The transfiguration of Ovid into a canonical elegiac poet implies the separation of body and text. *Ore legar populi* (literally: "I shall be read in/by the mouth of the people," *Met.* 15.878): the poet transforms himself into an *auctor* and a poetic word through a figurative metamorphosis of his mortal body into an immortal textual body. As Farrell has noted, in the epilogue to the Ovidian epic we contemplate "an elevated afterlife as pure voice." By virtue of this transformation "both the author and his poem attain a more exalted state of disembodied immortality as voice and song, respectively."[14] Naturally, the reduction of the poet to pure abstraction, textual entity and elegiac voice, constitutes the first stage in the process of textual reception. Reading is central to the survival of Ovid as *auctor* and as text, as the model par excellence of love elegy. Yet the secret of poetic immortality is in his readers' continual refashioning and polymorphic manipulation of Ovid's elegiac (and epic) topics and language. In the hands of cultured readers, refined "readers-addressees" and "readers-interpreters" (to reformulate Conte's words),[15] Ovid is reworked, imitated and then immortalized as elegiac voice.

The reader-imitator responds to his text-exemplar by interpreting and replicating motifs, forms and stylistic features of the model. In entering into a virtual dialogue with his model, he deciphers (and questions) the message conveyed by the text, transmits the paradigms of the genre and, at the same time, reacts empathically to the system of values that are peculiar to the elegiac discourse. The ideal reader does not only recognize and reproduce the distinctive features of the didactic erotic elegy of the *Ars* and *Remedia* or the aetiological calendar of the *Fasti*. He also revitalizes and makes eternal the elegiac message. He consecrates his model as a canonical elegiac author. To resume the celebrated words of Ennius' epitaph, Ovid *volitat vivos per ora virum* ("flies, living, through the mouths of men") and engages his posthumous readers in propagating his

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12   Cf. also *Am.* 3.15.19–20.

13   Ingleheart 2012, 228 (for Perilla as a poetic construct which responds to other elegiac depictions of women). On poetic immortality in exile poems cf. also *Tr.* 1.6.35–36; 4.9.15–26; 4.10.121–131; 4.16.1–4; 5.14.5–6.

14   Farrell 1999, 139.

15   Conte 1994. See also Conte 1986.

words. The Ovidian reader is charged with transmitting an image of the poet as the personification of elegy.

Intertextuality is a keyword in this process of textual canonization. It is not my intention to readdress intertextuality in Roman poetry, a topic which has received due attention in the last decades.[16] Modern scholarship has also successfully concentrated on the intertextual nexus between Ovid's elegiacs and epic and their literary antecedents.[17] What I want to draw attention to here is the strict interrelationship between intertextuality and transformation or manipulation of the source-text. Re-read, dissected, manipulated and re-adapted to a different context, the text quoted or alluded to is constantly transformed and revitalized in varying forms and genres. In other terms, the text is transfigured by intertextuality.

The allusive art assumes the reader is an active interpreter of the cognitive process involved in reading.[18] Within a virtual dialogue between model, text and reader, regulated by poetic memory, the transformation of the source-text into new literary forms draws on the manipulation and exploitation of *topoi*, stereotyped expressions, and stylistic patterns peculiar to the genre of the imitated text. Reading becomes then an act of textual regeneration. As such, it is also an act of love. The poet preserves his memory through allusion as a form of love that relates the author and his reader-imitator. In dealing with later receptions of the *Ars*, Casali notes that the Ovidian book aspires to *teach* love and *be* loved at the same time.[19]

Parody is an integral part of the process of textual reconstruction and transformation. In the footsteps of Hutcheon[20] and Genette,[21] Lowell remarks that "parody is a convenient term for comic intertextuality, or the distortion of an earlier text, or source text, in a humorous fashion."[22] Within the play of parody, the poet-imitator exploits and ridicules motifs and style of the source-text, distorted and regenerated in different, humorous forms.[23] Relying on his readers' literary memory, the parodist stimulates recognition of the source-text and its deformed paradigms. The mechanisms of comic intertextuality transfigure the source-text, to be later received in revitalized, though distorted, forms. In individuating (and appreciating) the varying degrees of comic transgression, the

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16   Hinds 1998; Edmunds 2001.
17   Barchiesi 2001; see also Casali 2009.
18   Conte-Barchiesi 1989.
19   Casali 2005, 25.
20   Hutcheon 1985.
21   Genette 1997.
22   Lowell 2001.
23   Genette 1997, 88–89.

reader laughs at the parodic reversal of the model and finds pleasure in observing the potentialities of recreation of the intertext in satirical forms. Literary and poetic memory rests then on the deterioration of the original message of the source-text codified in easily recognizable paradigms yet susceptible to ironic inversion. Parody generates a new text, or, rather, a text manipulating the style and topic of the imitated model with humorous effect.[24]

Petronius' narrative may well be regarded as a limpid example of parodic intertextuality.[25] The *Satyrica* provide us with a sophisticated texture of literary allusions to multiple generic categories, manipulated and regenerated by destructive and inventive parody. Modern scholarship has long concentrated on the extraordinary vitality of the *arbiter elegantiae* in satirizing and refashioning the source-text, whose authoritative position is challenged by the very act of textual transgression. Scholars have also focused on the readers' engagement in the process of parodic intertextuality within the polyphonic narrative of the *Satyrica*. Parodic play assumes a competent, literate reader as its ideal recipient. Petronius' parody, to be effective, demands even higher literary sensitivity and competence from a cultured readership. Conte correctly points to Petronius' strategy of irony as an alternative reading that requires a higher degree of acculturation to transform itself into a powerful instrument of textual regeneration.[26]

Ovid's erotic elegy offers a unique richness of love themes to Petronius' elegant parody and his ironical construction of troubled sexual relationships between deluded lovers.[27] As a genre encompassing various forms and patterns, from erotodidactic to the elegy of lamentation, Ovid's versatile love elegy serves as a potent source for parody in the armory of the satirist Petronius.[28] This paper re-examines a significant case of parodic intertextuality in the Petronian novel based on a mélange of Ovidian texts, that is, the notorious episode of Encolpius-Polyaenus' impotence, which constitutes an important part of the surviving Crotonian section of the narrative (124.2–141). In particular, it focuses on the epistolary exchange between Circe, the libidinous mistress, and Polienus, the despairing, inept elegiac *miles* penalized by divine persecution with sexual enervation (129–130). It argues that Petronius' creation centers on the derisory manipulation of both the single and double *Heroides*. A fresh read-

24   Genette 1997, 90.

25   For intertextuality in the Roman novel, see Morgan and Harrison 2008.

26   Conte 1997, 41–42.

27   On Ovid in Petronius, see Currie 1989; Baldwin 1992. See also Sullivan 1968, 189–190.

28   On parody in Petronius, see in general Connors 1998, 22–24. For parody of elegy, see Hallett 2003.

ing of the Petronian episode not only reveals an Ovidian literary substrate, a sophisticated system of allusions to the world of elegant, witty loves of the elegiac poet. It also allows for an appreciation of Petronius' light-hearted *jeu d'esprit*, his refined and veiled parodic play that rests on the deconstruction of the memorable figures of certain Ovidian lovers.

Ovid, the lover-poet, eager to be read, cited and loved, knows the rules of parodic intertextuality. He is conscious that his poetic immortality may depend on the ironic distortion of his textual body. Petronius cooperates with his model in perverting the paradigms of conventional love elegy. Most notably, his parody actively participates in perpetuating the perennial fame of Ovid's elegiac poetry. Intertextuality is a dominant feature of the episode of the licentious love of Circes and Encolpius-Polyaenus.[29] The Odyssean paradigm, parodied by the replacement of the name Encolpius with the pseudonym Polyaenus and the combination of erotic failure, sexual impotence, with the tragic destiny of a hero victimized by the god's wrath (much as Poseidon persecuted Odysseus, Priapus harasses Encolpius),[30] blends into a generic mix of intertextual references to Ovid's elegiac love.

Starting from the initial monologue of Circe's maid, in which echoes from Ovid's little handbook of cosmetics, the *Medicamina faciei femineae* (*Sat.* 126.2),[31] combine with allusions to the typical elegiac motif of *eros* as prostitution, a topic touched upon by both Propertius and Ovid,[32] Petronius' intertextual construction of his amorous heroes and his use of stock characters from erotic elegy is patently indebted to Ovidian elegiac discourse.[33] As Dimundo makes clear, the description of Circe's astonishing beauty, a traditional *laudatio vetustatis* which is rhetorically opened up by the speaker's usual admission of inability to duly celebrate the physical virtues of the female personage (126.14 *nulla vox est quae formam eius possit comprehendere …*), reminds us of the representation of Diana in *Met.* 1.495–502.[34] Analogously, the image of the disappointed mistress, the libidinous *femme fatale* who takes on the role of the "goddess-sorceress" exacting revenge on the defiant male lovers, has been seen as the result of an intertextual contamination between the Homeric intertext and Ovid's *Fasti*.[35]

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29   For intertextuality in the Petronian episode, see Pacchieni 1976; Fedeli 1988; Conte 1997, 93–105; Dimundo 1998; 2007.

30   Conte 1997, 93–95. See also Rimmel 2002, 148. For parody of the *Odyssey* in Petronius, see McDermott 1983.

31   Dimundo 1998.

32   Ov. *Am.* 1.10.29–34; 42; Prop. 1.2.4.

33   Antoniadis 2013.

34   Dimundo 1998, 72–74.

35   Wesolowska 2014.

Again, if Chrysis acts as an Ovidian *praeceptrix amoris*, displaying knowl-edge of erotic *lusus* (one might be tempted to say that she has good familiar-ity with Ovid's didactic poetry),[36] the poem about sexual impotence, *Am.* 3.7, "Ovid's manly poem on his bedtime failure with Corinna,"[37] serves as signifi-cant source-text of Encolpius' lamentation against his *inermis* and silent male member.[38] Corinna's anxiety in Ovid's poem, a prelude to the revelation that the lover's sexual failure stems from Circe's magic philtres (*"Quid me ludis?" ait, "quis te, male sane, iubebat / invitum nostro ponere membra toro? / aut te traiectis Aeaea venefica lanis / devovet, aut alio lassus amore venis,"* "Why do you insult me? Are you out of your mind? Who asked you to come to bed if you are not in the mood? Either some practitioner of Circe's spells has been piercing a woollen figure of you and has you bewitched or you have come here exhausted from love-making elsewhere," *Am.* 3.7.77–80),[39] is paralleled by the Petronian mistress' disappointment with Polyaenus' sexual inability, a senti-ment of displeasure and anger manifested by a sequence of pathetic, incessant questions about her physical appearance (128.1–3).[40] Elaborating on the Ovid-ian failure of the lover-poet,[41] Petronius equates sexual impotence with the failure of the elegiac world and calls attention to the humiliation of the ele-giac *miles*, a weaponless and inadequate love soldier,[42] reversing the traditional paradigms of the genre in parodied and degraded terms.[43]

In the invective (in sotadean meters) against his penis (132.7), an epic par-ody in Vergilian terms that reminds us of Ovid hurling abuse at the *pars pessima nostri* in *Am.* 3.7.69–72,[44] Encolpius-Polyaenus appears as an "aspiring but alto-gether inadequate elegiac lover, both physically and literarily."[45] As has been observed, Polyaenus responds to Ovid, the lover poet of the *Amores*, "in the

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36   Dimundo 1998.

37   Rimell 2002, 118. For Ovid's poem and Petronius, see Pacchieni 1976; Dimundo 2007; important also Holzberg 2009; Hallett 2012; Bater 2016. For a metaliterary analysis of Ovid's elegy, see Sharrock 1995.

38   Fedeli 1989 (on the relationship between Encolpius' silent member and Dido's silence in Verg. *Aen.* 6.469–471).

39   English translation of Ovid's *Amores*: Showerman 1914. See Rimmell 2002, 148 for the asso-ciation of Circean magic with femaleness in elegy.

40   Courtney 2001, 194–196: "Circe's opening tricolon of indignant questions with anaphora of *numquid* is modelled on Ovid's opening with a tricolon and anaphora of *at*."

41   McMahon 1998, 189–192 on the self-deprecating tone of irony that characterizes Ovid's treatment of his own sexual failure in *Amores* 3.7.

42   Schmeling 1994–1995.

43   Dimundo 2007.

44   Bettini 1982.

45   Hallett 2012, 221.

realms of both phallic and literary performance, much as Ovid responds in that poem to Catullus 32 and 50, but as unsuccessfully in his competitive efforts."[46] In contrast to Ovid, Polyaenus is unable to recover from impotence; he is forced to confess his own powerlessness as elegiac lover and to endure thereby humiliation from the disappointed noble mistress. As much as Polyaenus' blameworthy penis does not speak and remains silent in painful pangs of guilt, in a sort of comical refashioning of Dido's scornful silent gaze at her mendacious lover, Petronius' hero-narrator admits to his inadequacy and inferiority to the Ovidian model of the elegiac *miles*.

But there is more. The sophisticated intertextual play between Ovid's world of love and Petronius' ironical account of Encolpius' *defaillance* becomes more evident in the epistolary exchange between the two frustrated lovers (through Chrysis' mediation, *Sat.* 129.3–130) and the *codicilli* in prosaic language that have illustrious antecedents in Greek romance, Plautus' comedy, and Latin love elegy.[47] As usual, Petronius' experimental prose draws on a multiplicity of literary models, amalgamated and regenerated in distorted forms. Yet Circe and Polyaenus' love correspondence appears to be specifically indebted to the Ovidian collection of love letters imagined as written by female heroines to their deceitful male lovers, the *Heroides*, and in particular the "double letters" (here in inverted order, with the female letter preceding the male reply). The initial lines of Circe's epistle reverse the classic lament of the abandoned woman in paradoxical terms (129.2):

> Cubiculum autem meum Chrysis intravit, codicillosque mihi dominae suae reddidit, in quibus haec erant scripta: "Circe Polyaeno salutem. Si libidinosa essem, quererer decepta; nunc etiam languori tuo gratias ago. In umbra voluptatis diutius lusi. Quid tamen agas quaero, et an tuis pedibus perveneris domum; negant enim medici sine nervis homines ambulare posse. Narrabo tibi, adulescens, paralysin cave. Numquam ego aegrum tam magno periculo vidi: medius fidius iam peristi. Quod si idem frigus genua manusque temptaverit tuas, licet ad tubicines mittas. Quid ergo est? Etiam si gravem iniuriam accepi, homini tamen misero non invideo medicinam. Si vis sanus esse, Gitonem roga. Recipies, inquam, nervos tuos, si triduo sine fratre dormieris. Nam quod ad me attinet, non timeo ne quis inveniatur cui minus placeam. Nec speculum mihi nec fama mentitur. Vale, si potes."

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46   Hallett 2012, 222.

47   Cf. Propertius 4.3; Ov. *Am.* 1.11 and 1.12.

Chrysis made her way into my room, and handed me a letter from her mistress, which read as follows: "Dear Polyaenus, if I were the randy sort, I would complain that you had let me down. But as things stand, I am thankful for your lack of urgency. For too long I have sported in pleasure's shadow. I am writing to enquire about your health, and to ask whether you were able to arrive home on your own two feet. Doctors say that people who lose their sexual powers are unable to walk. I warn you, young man: you may become a paralytic. No sick person I have ever set eyes on is in such grave danger. I swear that already you are as good as dead. If the same chill gets to your knees and hands, you can send for the funeral-pipers. So what must you do? Though you have mortally insulted me, when a man is down I do not begrudge him the remedy. If you wish to get better, you must beg Giton for a break. If you sleep for three days without him, you will recover your strength. As for myself, I have no fear of encountering any man who will find me less attractive than you do. After all, my mirror and my reputation do not lie. Keep fit, if you can."[48]

Queror and *decipio*, peculiar to the rhetorical language of lamentation and deceit, are the distinctive marks of the Ovidian texture of Petronius' passage. In the *Heroides* the heroine laments abandonment by her male lover. The female monologue (a written letter expecting no reply from the male) gives voice to physical and mental pain over the loss of love (in Catullan terms). The Ovidian female writer personifies love's deceit: Phyllis' pathetic reflection on her condition as abandoned woman (*sum decepta tuis et amans et femina verbis*, "I was deceived by your words—I, who loved and was a woman," *Her.* 2.65)[49] bears a universal message of sorrow and fear.[50] Petronius' parody substitutes abandonment and loneliness with the lover's sexual impotence as the basis for Circe's letter. The deceived female lover complains about her male lover's sexual failure. Breaking the rules of erotic love represents an unacceptable physical and moral violation. In some sense, Polyaenus' *paralysis*, the death of his penis, may symbolize the end of elegy, the annihilation of the characteristics of a sexual relationship, which are at the very heart of Ovid's notion of elegiac love.

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48   English translation of Petronius: Walsh 1997.
49   English translation of Ovid's *Heroides*: Showerman 1914.
50   On the Ovidian language of the *Heroides*, see in general Fulkerson 2005; also Landolfi 2000.

The opening words of Helen's reply to Paris in *Heroides* 17.1–4 (*Nunc oculos tua cum violarit epistula nostros, / non rescribendi gloria visa levis. / Ausus es hospitii temeratis advena sacris / legitimam nuptae sollicitare fidem!* "Now that you letter has profaned my eyes, the glory of writing no reply has seemed to me but slight. A stranger, you have dared to violate the sacred pledge of hospitality, and tamper with the faith of a faithful wife") may help to clarify Petronius' intertextual parody. Helen vindicates herself as a virtuous and chaste woman (*proba et rustica*): her purity has been violated by Paris' words of seduction. Notably, Helen paradoxically blames her lover for writing a love letter and profaning her *legitima fides*. If she had not read his erotic words, Helen says, she would certainly have preserved her chastity. To Helen's eyes, writing about love is the first act of seduction and deceit. The Petronian character, Circe, is the opposite of Helen, the personification of purity violated by the power of erotic words. Circe, a not *libidinosa* noble woman, pretends not to feel cheated, ascribing this to her own absence of sexual appetite. Whereas Paris' outrageous letter has transformed Helen into a libidinous woman, Polyaenus' silent male member has not offended Circe's sense of rectitude. The disappointed mistress apparently holds no anger and resentment at her lover's sexual failure. Ironically, Polyaenus' impotence has put no pressure on Circe, who has amused herself long with what she terms "the shadow of pleasure" (*in umbra voluptatis diutius lusi*). Again, Circe's prolonged voluptuous pleasure contrasts with Helen's pleasure and joy at having preserved her reputation and fame for such a long time (*Her.* 17.17–18 *Fama tamen clara est, et adhuc sine crimine lusi, / et laudem de me nullus adulter habet*, "My good name is nevertheless clear, and thus far I lived without reproach, and no false lover makes his boast of me"),[51] an opposition which relies on the sophisticated manipulation of *ludo*, the verb crucial to the activity of the stereotyped elegiac lover. In other words, Circe, insulted and humiliated by her lover's sexual impotence, reworks and refashions the character of Helen, the Ovidian heroine insulted and humiliated by the *logos* of seduction. Yet both maintain a peculiarity of the elegiac *domina*: their beauty and attractiveness, a potentially life-long guarantee of future libertine loves and occasions for male jealousy (*Sat.* 129.4 *Nam quod ad me attinet, non timeo ne quis inveniatur cui minus placeam. Nec speculum mihi nec fama mentitur*, "As for myself, I have no fear of encountering any man who will find me less attractive than you do. After all, my mirror and my reputation do not lie"; *Her.* 17.167–174 *Fama quoque est oneri; nam quo constantius ore / laudamur vestro, iustius ille timet ... De facie metuit, vitae confidit, et illum / securum pro-*

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51   English translation of the *Heroides*: Showerman 1914.

bitas, forma timere facit, "My fame, too, is a burden to me; for, the more, you men persist in your praise of me, the more justly does he fear ... My face makes him fearful, my life makes him sure; he feels secure in my virtue, my charms rouse his fear").[52]

Similarly, as much as Circe reformulates words and features of the Ovidian Helen satirizing the classic bipolarity *libido-pudicitia*, Encolpius-Polyaenus appears to be a parodic imitation and transfiguration of the inept elegiac lover, Paris, prone to accept any form of humiliation in order to obtain love. Forced to reply, in seductive and gratulatory terms, to Circe's complaint (*convicium*, 129.5),[53] Petronius' impotent hero (who has attentively read, *perlegit*, his lover's words)[54] apologizes for his behavior and offers words of reconciliation (130.1–2):

> Polyaenos Circae salutem. Fateor me, domina, saepe peccasse; nam et homo sum et adhuc iuvenis. Numquam tamen ante hunc diem usque ad mortem deliqui. Habes confitentem reum; quicquid iusseris, merui. Proditionem feci, hominem occidi, templum violavi; in haec facinora quaere supplicium. Sive occidere placet, ferro meo venio; sive verberibus contenta es, curro nudus ad dominam. Illud unum memento, non me, sed instrumenta peccasse. Paratus miles arma non habui. Quis hoc turbaverit nescio. Forsitan animus antecessit corporis moram, forsitan dum

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52 On this *topos* in the *Heroides*, see Dimundo 2007. For jealousy in love elegy, see Caston 2012.

53 *Ut intellexit Chrysis perlegisse me totum convicium: "Solent," inquit, "haec fieri, et praecipue in hac civitate, in qua mulieres etiam lunam deducunt ... Itaque huius quoque rei cura agetur. Rescribe modo blandius dominae, animumque eius candida humanitate restitue. Verum enim fatendum est. Ex qua hora iniuriam accepit, apud se non est." Libenter quidem parvi ancillae, verbaque codicillis talia imposui* ("When Chrysis saw that I had reached the end of this reproving letter, she said: 'Yours is a common state of affairs, and especially in this town, where women can even draw down the moon from the sky. So a remedy will be devised for your difficulty, as for the others. Merely reply to my mistress with some flattery; restore her spirits with ingenuous kindness. I have to say that she has not been herself since she was subjected to your affront.' I obeyed the maid with alacrity, and put pen to paper like this").

54 *Perlegere* occurs also in *Her.* 4.3 (Phaedra: *perlege, quodcumque est: quid epistula lecta nocebit*, "Read to the end, whatever is here contained—what shall reading of a letter harm?"); 5.1–2 (Oenone: *Perlegis? An coniunx prohibet nova? Perlege; non est / ista Mycenaea littera facta manu*, "Will you read my letter through? Or does your new wife forbid? Read—this is no letter writ by Mycenaean hand"); 20.3–4 (Acontius to Cydippe: *Perlege! Discedat sic corpore languor ab isto, / quod meus est ulla parte dolere dolor*, "Read to the end, and so may the languor leave that body of yours; that it feel pain in any part is pain to me").

omnia concupisco, voluptatem tempore consumpsi. Non invenio, quod feci. Paralysin tamen cavere iubes: tamquam iam maior fieri possit, quae abstulit mihi per quod etiam te habere potui. Summa tamen excusationis meae haec est: placebo tibi, si me culpam emendare permiseris.

Dear Circe, I confess, dear lady, my frequent faults, for after all I am human, and still in my youth. But never before this day has my wrongdoing incurred death. I admit my guilt to you, and deserve whatever punishment you impose. I am a traitor, a murderer, one who has profaned your shrine; devise a penalty for these crimes. If your verdict is to be execution, I shall come to you with my sword; if you are satisfied with a whipping, I shall hasten to my mistress unclothed. Only remember that the fault lay not in my person, but in my equipment. I myself was ready to campaign, but was bereft of arms. Who was responsible for this debacle, I do not know. Perhaps my body was dilatory, and my desire outstripped it. Perhaps my longing for complete fulfilment caused me to wait too long, and so exhausted the pleasure—I cannot account for what happened. You bid me beware of the onset of paralysis—as if the malady which robbed me of the possibility of possessing you could intensify! This is the burden of my apology. If you will allow me to expiate my guilt, I will render you satisfaction.

The female lament of the *Heroides* is totally reversed by Polyaenus' response to Circe's invective. The male letter turns out to be a conciliatory piece of writing, a reflection of the writer's *candida humanitas*. By writing, the male hero attempts erotic reconciliation and rehabilitates himself as a victim of his guilty male member. And also by writing, the deceived woman, furious at her lover's insulting behavior, returns to a state of serenity, as a prelude to future successful sexual activities.

Polyaenus, an inept elegiac *miles*, has fought his erotic battle without weapons. He admits he has deserved (*merui*) punishment. Again, reformulating a typical elegiac motif, he predicts (and envisages) his future corporal punishment. In contrast to the *decepta puella* of the *Heroides*, who foresees her death as the end of all suffering, Polyaenus interprets his heroic *mors* as a benefit, a form of redemption of the *facinus* committed by his failed member. Polyaenus' *excusatio* ends with the promise of future sexual intercourse. If pardoned, Polyaenus assures her that he will return to the world of love elegy.

In a similar way, Paris opens up his lascivious letter by confessing his love and asking kindness and benevolence from his female lover (*Her*. 16.11–14):

> Parce, precor, fasso, nec vultu cetera duro
> Perlege, sed formae conveniente tuae.
> Iamdudum gratum est, quod epistula nostra recepta
> Spem facit, hoc recipi me quoque posse modo.

> Spare me for confessing it, I beg you, and don't read the rest of this with a harsh expression, but rather one suited to your beauty. I've long been grateful; since the fact that you accepted my letter gave me hope that, by that token, you might also accept me.

Pleading guilty to love, the Ovidian elegiac *miles* seeks to seduce Helen by means of blandishment and flattering words. He constructs his letter as an exaggerated defense of dissolute and licentious love, legitimized by the laws of *eros*, at the same time showing great promise as a successful lover. Most significantly, he insists on his story as an *exemplum* of "true love," destined to be immortalized and replicated by generations of lovers.

Paris admits to his inability to overcome the fires of love and passion (*Her.* 16.10). Depicting himself as an inexpert young lover, he focuses on his own inability to resist love. Similarly, Encolpius-Polyaenus admits to his erotic failure: he portrays himself as an unskilled lover, unable to prevent the pitiable end of his love story. Both Paris and Polyaenus apologize for their failure as elegiac lovers.

The parodic reversal by Ovid of the paradigms of elegy is best illustrated in the final words of Helen, who urges her lover to "fight erotic battles" and return to the *militia amoris*, abandoning all pretense of being an epic soldier (*Her.* 17.253–256 *Apta magis Veneri, quam sunt tua corpora Marti: / bella gerant fortes, tu, Pari, semper ama! / Hectora, quem laudas, pro te pugnare iubeto; / militia est operis altera digna tuis*, "Your parts are better suited for Venus than for Mars. Be the waging of wars for the valiant: for you, Paris, ever to love. Bid Hector, whom you praise, go warring in your stead: 'tis the other campaigning befits your prowess"). Refashioning Ovid, Petronius ironically marks the end of elegy. His Encolpius-Polyaenus has completely failed in his attempt to act as a successful elegiac lover. The narrator of the *Satyrica*, the "hidden author," takes pleasure in celebrating the paradoxical "conclusion" of love elegy.

To sum up, Ovid, the lover-poet, has taught love, formulated and reestablished the canons of elegiac love, and, in particular, given voice to female lovers' lament. In the *Heroides*, love as physical and psychological illness, *eros-nosos*, is crucial to the construction of the elegiac code. By reversing, manipulating and reworking the *persona* of the Ovidian elegiac lover, Petronius destabilizes and subverts the very nature of elegiac love. In the parodic re-visitation of

the Ovidian Helen in the character of a noble *femme fatale* Circe, we enter the realm of Petronian irony, intended to function as an instrument for the transformation of the source-text into degraded forms. If in the couple Paris-Helen Ovid memorializes the end of love as illness and reformulates the archetypical paradigms of love elegy as seduction and licentiousness, in the couple Polyaenus-Circe, Petronius celebrates the end of erotic elegy by commemorating the "death" of the male member. Petronius' literate reader certainly will catch on and enjoy the sense of literary intertextual parody. One might ask if Ovid, the pure "voice" of elegy, the poet eager to be read and loved, would have appreciated the sophisticated and elegant transformation by his parodist-imitator.

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Tod und Erklärung: Ovid on the Death of Julius Caesar (*Met.* 15.745–851)

Katharina Volk

This chapter treats one of the most idiosyncratic and bizarre episodes of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a poem that, after all, begins with the programmatic words *in nova* and is generally not lacking in the unheard-of and outlandish department. I focus on Ovid's narrative of the death and apotheosis of Julius Caesar, a tale that occurs towards the very end of the poem.[1] Taking up over a hundred lines, the Caesar episode features the last proper metamorphosis of the *Metamorphoses*, and the only one that happens to a historical character. The events recounted truly bring the poem *ad mea tempora*, "to my own time," as the poet had announced in the proem: Caesar died in 44, the year before Ovid was born, and while the deified Julius officially passes the baton to Augustus, there is also a sense that the poet is the one taking over once history has been transformed into the present. The dynastic theme features prominently, in all its ambiguities: the episode is presented as an extended *praeteritio* since Caesar's main claim to fame, so the poet, is to have fathered Augustus. The father's apotheosis is necessary, because the son needs a divine parent, and the great Julius' assumption into heaven is thus but the trailer for the anticipated main attraction, the turning into a god of his adoptee. This, however, is not how the poem ends. Rather than an unequal pair, Caesar and Augustus turn out to be but the first two cola of a triumphant *tricolon crescens*, which culminates in the prophecy of Ovid's own afterlife and the immortality of the *Metamorphoses* itself.

Of course, Ovid did not invent the story of the Ides of March; nor did he, as in most of the *Metamorphoses*, simply rework a myth that was part of his and his contemporaries' literary and artistic heritage: Caesar really was assassinated—and he really became a god. This, at least, was the public narrative, sanctioned by the decree of the senate of January 1st, 42 BCE that made the late dictator's

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1 Discussions of the episode include Voit 1985, Flammini 1993, Hardie 1997, 189–195, Fink 2005, and Pandey 2013, 437–445 and 2018, 74–80; for detailed commentary and further references, see Bömer 1986 and Hardie 2015 ad loc. For the historical deification of Caesar and its intellectual antecedents, see Volk 2021, 286–296, with further references.

status as *divus* official. Ovid had grown up with the deified Julius, seen his temple, and handled the coins that attested to his apotheosis. Fifty years after the conspiracy and murder, Romans were familiar with the idea that Caesar was a god and were getting ready for the aged Augustus to undergo a similar transformation upon his own death.

Still, what exactly *had* happened to Julius Caesar? What did it mean to worship him in his temple in the forum? What kind of god was he, and what were Augustus, Ovid, and their contemporaries thinking when they referred to a deceased human being as *divus*? These questions have been much discussed, in innumerable publications on the Roman emperor cult in general and Caesar's deification in particular, and there is no end to the debate in sight. The way I propose to approach the problem here is not through modern scholarship, but instead via a contemporary Roman way of looking at the divine, the *theologia tripertita* developed by the great polymath of the late Republic, M. Terentius Varro. Ovid knew Varro's work and made extensive use of it in the *Fasti*—and Caesar, too, was a reader of Varro. As a matter of fact, he was the dedicatee of the *Antiquitates rerum divinarum*, Varro's monumental antiquarian exploration of Roman religious institutions and the very work in which Varro explains that there are three ways of conceiving of the gods: "The [kind of theology] used mostly by poets is called *mythicon*, the one by philosophers *physicon*, the one by communities *civile*."[2]

What this means is that, when we talk about someone being a god, we may be thinking (a) of a member of the familiar polytheistic pantheon, anthropomorphic and the protagonist of mythological stories told by poets, just like the stories featured in the *Metamorphoses* itself. Alternatively, (b) (and note that I am here changing Varro's order) we may imagine an entity who receives official cult, with a temple, statue, and appropriate sacrifices and other rituals. Or, finally, (c) we may take a more abstract view of the divine and define it as an either metaphysical or physical force, whether Aristotle's unmoved mover, the Stoic immanent god, or natural forces or phenomena that can be interpreted as divinities. Of course, the three theologies may be meaningfully combined: one can take the view that the Jupiter worshiped at Rome is both an Olympian *pater familias* and the personified sky. Still, in historical practice and discourse, these ways of looking at the gods often just happily live side-by-side in what

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2 Varro, *Antiquitates rerum divinarum* fr. 7 Cardauns *mythicon* [sc. *genus theologiae*] *appellant, quo maxime utuntur poetae; physicon, quo philosophi; civile, quo populi*. See also frr. 6, 8–11. On Varro's *theologia tripertita*, see Pépin 1956, Lieberg 1973 and 1982, Rüpke 2009, and Volk 2021, 214–218.

Denis Feeney has called "brain-balkanization," without interfering too much with one another or raising embarrassing questions.[3]

In the specific case of Caesar's apotheosis, it is clear that by the time Ovid sat down to write his account, all three ways of looking at the divine Julius' divinity had a certain currency—and indeed all three are referred to explicitly at some point in Ovid's narrative. In the mythological sense, Caesar has joined Jupiter, Venus, and their fellow gods on Olympus, just as earlier deified mortals have become members of the divine patchwork family, which means that Ovid can speak of Caesar's "entering heaven as a god."[4] As for the second, civic approach, there are in the episode a number of references to Caesar's cult: he is a god in his own city and receives worship in his own temple, a shrine that is situated in such a way as to afford the new god a good view of capitol and forum.[5] And third and most prominently, Ovid furnishes an explanation of the apotheosis along the lines of what Varro calls physical theology: what his Caesar turns into is, more than anything else, a natural phenomenon, the heavenly body typically referred to as Caesar's comet.[6]

In using Varro, I do not wish to make any strong claims about Ovid's sources or the nature of Roman religion. As mentioned above, Ovid knew Varro's work and must have been aware of his tripartite theology, but we cannot be sure that he was thinking of it when writing this particular episode.[7] I also do not consider Varro's model a master key to Roman religious mentality in general or the emperor cult in particular. It does seem to me, however, that Varro was well attuned to the ways the Romans were accustomed to think and speak about their gods and that, in the case of Caesar, there certainly co-existed the options of imagining him as a deity dwelling on Mount Olympus; participating in his cult as part of the Roman state religion; and believing that he had undergone a physical status change in connection with the appearance of a heavenly body. Any Roman might entertain one or more of these and similar ideas at any given moment, and be more or less conscious of what he or she was doing. One of

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3   See Feeney 1998, 14–21, who adopts a term of Paul Veyne.

4   Ov. *Met.* 15.818 *deus accedat caelo*.

5   Ov. *Met.* 15.746 *Caesar in urbe sua deus est* ("Caesar is a god in his own city"); 818 *templisque colatur* ("that [Caesar] be worshiped in temples"); 841–842 *ut semper Capitolia nostra forumque / divus ab excelsa prospectet Iulius aede* ("so that divine Julius always watch over our Capitol and forum from his lofty temple").

6   Ov. *Met.* 15.749 *in sidus vertere novum stellamque comantem* ("turned [Caesar] into a new star and a comet"); 840–841 *hanc animam interea caeso de corpore raptam / fac iubar* ("meanwhile tear his soul from his slain body and make it into a thing of radiance").

7   For an interpretation of Ovid's exile poetry through the lens of the *theologia tripertita*, see McGowan 2009, 107–118.

the most fascinating and original aspects of Ovid's treatment of the topic is the thoroughness with which he considers and probes all three theologies, creating a composite image of the *divus Iulius* phenomenon that captures it in all its complexity and ambiguity.

I will thus continue to use the Varronian tripartite theology as a heuristic device and in what follows take a closer look at how Ovid presents the three aspects of Caesar's divinity and their implications. First, the *genus mythicon*. For all that one might find the idea of a man turning into a god bizarre, there were certainly good precedents for Caesar's apotheosis in Greek myth and Roman history, and Ovid himself in the earlier parts of the *Metamorphoses* had developed a kind of set mechanism for the transformation of human into divine bodies. Hercules, Aeneas, and Romulus were Caesar's most prominent precursors, and in Ovid's text, all three undergo similar metamorphoses.[8] The apotheosis of Hercules may serve as an example (*Met.* 9.262–272):

> interea quodcumque fuit populabile flammae
> Mulciber abstulerat, nec cognoscenda remansit
> Herculis effigies, nec quidquam ab imagine ductum
> matris habet, tantumque Iovis vestigia servat.
> utque novus serpens posita cum pelle senecta
> luxuriare solet squamaque nitere recenti,
> sic, ubi mortales Tirynthius exuit artus,
> parte sui meliore viget maiorque videri
> coepit et augusta fieri gravitate verendus.
> quem pater omnipotens inter cava nubila raptum
> quadriiugo curru radiantibus intulit astris.

> Meanwhile Mulciber had destroyed whatever could be ravished by flames, and the shape of Hercules remained, unrecognizable, and retained no features of his mother and only the traces of Jupiter. Just as a new snake frolics, when it has sloughed of its skin together with its old age, shining with new scales, thus the hero of Tiryns took off his mortal limbs, flourishing in his better part, and began to grow taller and venerable in august grandeur. Him the all-powerful father snatched up into the cloudy vault and carried into the shining stars on his chariot of four.

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8   Hercules: Ov. *Met.* 9.262–272; Aeneas: 14.581–608; Romulus: 14.805–828. On apotheosis in the *Metamorphoses*, see Lieberg 1970, Feeney 1991, 205–224, and Salzman 1998. I have not been able to see Martínez Astorino 2017.

Hercules leaves behind his mortal aspects like a snake's old skin, while in his "better part," he turns into an anthropomorphic god of *augusta gravitas*, who is ready to take his seat on Olympus. Something very similar happens to Aeneas and Romulus, except that instead of being partly consumed by fire, they are purified by water and air, respectively. Somewhat differently but still comparably, in Ovid's short account of the Ides of March in *Fasti* 3.701–704, Vesta snatches away the real Caesar from under the assassins' daggers, leaving behind a mere *simulacrum* and *umbra*.

Nothing like this happens in the *Metamorphoses*, where Caesar is transformed not into a divine body, but into a star. This does not mean, however, that mythological theology is underdeveloped in Ovid's account. On the contrary, Ovid takes seriously—one might say: too seriously—what it would mean for the man who already during his lifetime styled himself the descendant of Venus actually to become a member of the Olympian clan. If Caesar really belongs in a divine genealogy, he will necessarily become involved in the all-too-human mythological family dynamics *chez* Jupiter and Venus. Even more important, he will become inescapably entangled in the intertextual web of the epic tradition.[9]

Sure enough, from the moment Ovid's action switches to Mount Olympus, Venus makes it clear that her current anxiety at the impending assassination is just one in a long string of grievances (15.765–778): first she was wounded on the battlefield by Diomedes; then she had the traumatic experience of witnessing the fall of Troy; then her son Aeneas had to wander by sea and land, persecuted by Juno—and now Caesar is about to be murdered: "Will I alone always be exercised by justified cares?"[10] After the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*, the *Metamorphoses* is already the third major epic in which Venus has to worry about her offspring. Will intertextuality never end?

Sure enough, once more Jupiter patiently has to explain to his daughter that while fate is fate and Caesar must die, everything looks splendid in the long run, and the reign of Augustus is just around the corner (807–842). By replaying the famous encounter of divine father and daughter from *Aeneid* 1, Ovid has the chance to create a kind of ring composition between his work and the Roman national epic: the *Metamorphoses* ends where the *Aeneid* began.[11] At the same time, we have a somewhat grating sense of *plus ça change*: haven't we been around this mythological block a number of times already? Clearly, Venus did not get the message about *imperium sine fine* the first time, so instead of asking

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9   See Smith 1994.

10   Ov. *Met*. 15.768 *solane semper ero iustis exercita curis?*

11   On the episode's intertextuality with *Aeneid* 1, see Smith 1994 and Gladhill 2012.

her once more to take his word for it, Jupiter this time refers his daughter to the rather Roman-sounding archive to be found in the house of the Fates (813–815):

> invenies illic incisa adamante perenni
> fata tui generis; legi ipse animoque notavi
> et referam, ne sis etiamnum ignara futuri.

> There you will find the fate of your race, inscribed in eternal adamant; I myself have read and memorized it, and will tell you, so that you are no longer ignorant of the future.

(Inter)textuality looms large: Jupiter himself has read his script. In the divine comedy that is the *genus mythicon*, the gods have to play the roles written for them by the poets.

Looking at Caesar's apotheosis through the lens of Varro's first theology, as it were, Ovid has employed the traditional epic *Götterapparat* in a way that makes perfect sense from a mythological, literary, and even historical point of view. The gods act in keeping with their established characters and poetic precedents, and the historical facts are given a convincing divine aetiology: the reason why Venus does not save Caesar from his killers' daggers is her finally getting the point about Roman fate and her obedience to Jupiter; the reason why there are portents before the murder is because the gods want to show their solidarity with Venus even though they, too, cannot alter fate.

It all makes sense—and it is all pretty funny. Varro himself had not much time for the *genus mythicon*, concentrating in his *Antiquitates* on the other two theologies: we all know that the stories about the gods told by poets are false and frivolous, *mendacia vatum*, as Ovid himself calls them on other occasions (*Am.* 3.6.17; *Fast.* 6.253). By imagining Julius Caesar as joining the all-too-human epic *Götterapparat*, Ovid manages to spin an excellent yarn and to display his intertextual prowess. At the same time, this approach gives rise to a number of possibly subversive questions and images. One might wonder, for example, whether the notorious philanderer Caesar wouldn't feel quite at home in the company of the likes of Ovid's Jupiter. And we need only think of the *Apocolocyntosis* to realize to what bathos and hilarity the introduction of historical figures into the mythological realm can lend itself. Tellingly, when Seneca's Hercules proposes in the assembly of the gods that Claudius be raised to divine status, he suggests that this fact be added to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[12] The *genus mythicon* always makes for a funny story.

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12   Sen. *Apoc.* 9.5 *censeo uti divus Claudius ex hac die deus sit ita uti ante eum qui optimo*

By contrast, viewing religion from the perspective of the *genus civile*—that is, as the totality of a community's religious practices and institutions—does away with the embarrassing silliness of the mythical theology, while also avoiding problematic questions about the nature of the gods or religious belief. It is this civic theology that is Varro's own favorite methodology in the *Antiquitates rerum divinarum* and that has also been the dominant approach of Roman religious studies for the past few decades. "Orthopraxy not orthodoxy" has been the watchword: just as Romans sacrificing to the deified Julius had no immediate need to worry what exactly the ontological status of this new god was, so both Varro and modern scholars need not have an answer to the same question in order to be able to understand how religion functions within Roman society. Religion in this sense is a human creation, something about which Varro himself is quite open, stating that "just as the painter exists before the painting and the builder before the building, thus communities exist before the institutions of those communities."[13] Human beings create religion as a painter creates a painting and, of course, in doing so, human beings have their own agenda.

Ovid, as we have already seen, refers a number of times to such civic aspects of Caesar's divinity as his statue and temple, but he also takes seriously the Varronian insight that religious cult is a human institution responding to human needs and motivations. The poet makes it quite clear who, as far as the civic realm is concerned, turned Caesar into a god and why: the driving force was Augustus, whose aim was to lend himself greater legitimacy and authority by claiming descent from a god. The theme returns three times in the course of the episode. First, Ovid states hyperbolically that of all of Caesar's achievements, none was greater than that of having fathered Augustus (15.746–751):

> quem Marte togaque
> praecipuum non bella magis finita triumphis
> resque domi gestae properataque gloria rerum
> in sidus vertere novum stellamque comantem,
> quam sua progenies; neque enim de Caesaris actis
> ullum maius opus quam quod pater exstitit huius.

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iure factus sit, eamque rem ad Metamorphosis Ouidi adiciendam ("I propose that the divine Claudius be a god from this day on, just as everyone who before him rightfully became [a god], and that this matter be added to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*").

13 Varro, *Antiquitates rerum diuinarum* fr. 5 Cardauns, *sicut prior est … pictor quam tabula picta, prior faber quam aedificium, ita priores sunt civitates quam ea quae a civitatibus instituta sunt.*

> Though [Caesar] was outstanding in war and peace, it was not his wars
> finished in triumph, his achievements at home, or his rapidly won glory
> that turned him into a new star and comet so much as it was his offspring.
> For none of Caesar's achievements is greater than to have been [Augus-
> tus'] father.

Readers have often felt this statement to be not only questionable in itself but
positively ridiculous in light of the fact that Caesar was not Augustus' biologi-
cal father and only adopted him in his will.[14] Still, so Ovid claims, his paternity
more than anything else turned Caesar into a god—or in other words, it was
Augustus himself (*sua progenies*, 750) who was instrumental in making his
"father" divine.

   After belittling for another seven lines (752–758) those of Caesar's achieve-
ments that had nothing to do with his august paternity, the narrator stresses
once more that the man was deified not because of any merits of his own, but
simply to furnish his successor with a divine father (760–761):

> ne foret hic igitur mortali semine cretus,
> ille deus faciendus erat.

> Lest [Augustus] be born from mortal seed, [Caesar] had to be made a god.

While, in this assertion, there is no agent to go with the passive periphrastic
faciendus erat, Jupiter in his speech spells out who will be in charge of Caesar's
anticipated change of status (818–819):

> ut deus accedat caelo templisque colatur
> tu facies natusque suus.

> You [Venus] and his son will bring it about that he enter heaven as a god
> and be worshiped in temples.

Venus and Augustus work in tandem to make Caesar a god, and we might read
line 818 as expressive of the division of labor between the two: Venus, in charge
of the *genus mythicon*, makes Caesar enter heaven as a god (*ut deus accedat
caelo*), while Augustus, the representative of civic theology, creates Caesar's
cult as part of the Roman state religion (*templisque colatur*).

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14   Compare, e.g., Lundström 1980, 90–104, Schmitzer 1990, 278–297, Feeney 1991, 211, Salzman
      1998, 330–336, Fink 2005, and Pandey 2013, 441–442 and 2018, 77–78.

Throughout the episode and immediately following, Augustus receives extravagant praise, both from the narrator himself and from Jupiter. His achievements are extolled, his superiority over Caesar is stressed, and his own apotheosis is both anticipated and piously postponed into the far future. I do not suggest that this praise should not be taken as such or that Ovid is subversively attempting to undermine the emperor. Still, by looking at the apotheosis of Caesar under the aspect of civic theology, among others, Ovid could hardly fail to introduce a note of hardnosed political opportunism. As far as the official deification of Caesar was concerned, it was obvious that this was a political decision, just as the introduction and prohibition of other cults had been and continued to be, and that it undoubtedly benefited Augustus as well as other Caesarians. That it was up to human beings—in particular, the political leadership—to *make* religion like this (just as a painter creates a painting) was an accepted fact of Roman public life. As I have stressed before, this did not necessitate any commitment on the mythological or philosophical level. Putting a cult statue of Caesar in a temple did not as such imply a belief that the deceased now dwelled on Olympus in the company of Jupiter and Venus, nor did placing a star on the statue's head indicate general agreement that the man had turned into a comet. The *genus civile* was realistic and utilitarian; it was neither uplifting nor romantic. Ovid is simply casting an unsentimental glance at the proceedings; whether this endeared him to Augustus is another matter.

At the end of Ovid's tale, however, Caesar's apotheosis transcends, quite literally, the grasps of both his terrestrial son and his celestial great-great-great-etc.-grandmother. It is time to turn to the theology that is the most prominent in the *Metamorphoses*: the philosophical *genus physicon*. But here, too, things are not so straightforward. In presenting Caesar's apotheosis as the literal metamorphosis of the dying man's soul into a celestial phenomenon, Ovid was of course following the official interpretation, according to which the comet that conveniently appeared during Caesar's funeral games in 44 was a manifestation of his new divine status. However, as the ample scholarship on the *sidus Iulium* has shown, the exact interpretation of the comet, both at its first appearance and in in its subsequent career as an icon, remained remarkably fluid, and in finding his own way of telling the story, Ovid had to choose among various possible versions of this Augustan myth.[15]

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15   For the comet itself, see the magisterial account of Ramsey / Licht 1997, as well as Domenicucci 1996, 29–85. For its shifting interpretations, see now Pandey 2013 and 2018, 35–82 (with surveys of earlier scholarship), who argues convincingly for Ovid's central role in shaping what was to become the canonical narrative. The fitting designation "Augustan myth" comes from Gurval 1997.

First, there is the ambiguity over whether the heavenly body into which Caesar had turned was a star or a comet. Ovid himself nicely hedges his bets at the beginning of our episode when he claims that the great man was transformed into both *sidus ... novum* and *stellam comantem* (15.749). While there undoubtedly was a comet in the sky in the summer of 44, people may have perceived this instead as a star, or the idea of a star may have been conceptually and iconographically more palatable and accessible. Comets lacked a satisfactory scientific explanation in antiquity; they were omens and often dire omens at that; and there was no precedent for immortality by cometification. By contrast, stars were familiar and well theorized, and there were established tales of catasterism, both mythological and historical, to serve as a precedent for Caesar's stellification. Still, the star and the comet continued to exist side by side in the Augustan cultural imagination, as is apparent, among other sources, from the emperor's coinage: there, we find both the eight-pointed starburst and the same motif transformed into a comet through the addition of a flaming tail.[16]

Even more controversial than the exact nature of the heavenly apparition was its interpretation. Contrary to what we may have come to think, the belief that the comet had to do with Caesar's apotheosis was by no means the only explanation available, and we can still tell from our sources that interpretations differed considerably. As an unexpected and apparently random heavenly phenomenon, the comet was bound to be deemed significant and to be taken as an omen. The question was simply, an omen for what? Thus, Cassius Dio reports that "some people ... said it portended the usual things," not even spelling out what the usual things are[17]—but I think we can assume that they are nothing good. Even though Pandey has now argued that the baleful nature of comets was at the time of Caesar's death not yet the *topos* it was to become in later literature,[18] it is still the case that most omens, constituting a disruption of the natural order, tend to be interpreted negatively, and I am working on the assumption that this is both what Dio means and what some people thought at the time.

Other sources, by contrast, tell of more positive interpretations. According to Servius Auctus, some people took the comet as heralding the glory of Caesar's heir,[19] a reading shared (thus Pliny the Elder) by Octavian, who thought

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16   On the coinage, see Gurval 1997 and Pandey 2013 and 2018, 35–82. The star is the earlier
      image, with the comet entering numismatic iconography in the late 20s BCE.

17   Cass. Dio 45.7.1 καὶ αὐτὸ κομήτην τέ τινων καλούντων καὶ προσημαίνειν οἶά που εἴωθε λεγόντων
      ("and some called [the star] a comet and said it portended the usual things").

18   See Pandey 2013, 408–411.

19   Serv. Auct. ad *Ecl.* 9.46 *quam quidam ad inlustrandam gloriam Caesaris iuvenis pertinere*

that the celestial apparition was "very favorable" to himself.[20] While he officially promoted the popular perception of the comet as signifying Caesar's new divine status, "in secret he joyfully believed that [the comet] had been born for him and that he was being born in it."[21] As Domenicucci attractively suggests, this interpretation may have to do with a horoscope cast for Octavian on the occasion of Caesar's funeral games, one in which the comet was deemed to play such a positive role that Caesar's heir came to regard the day of its appearance as a kind of new birthday for himself.[22] As it happens, the appearance of the comet in July 44 also more or less (give or take a month) coincided with the conception of Ovid, who was born the following March. Casting horoscopes for a child's conception was a typical practice, with the exact date usually being reconstructed from the time of birth. Given the developing craze for astrology, to which Augustus of course contributed, it is perfectly conceivable that either Ovid's parents or the adult Ovid himself might have entertained the notion, however playful, that the *sidus Iulium* had once shone on the first beginnings of little Publius. If so, the rising of the comet is the event that brings the *Metamorphoses ad mea tempora* in an even more literal sense.

That the celestial apparition signified the end of an era and the beginning of a new one was also the interpretation of one Vulcanius, a haruspex who, drawing on Etruscan lore, claimed that the appearance of the comet "signified the end of the ninth age and the beginning of the tenth."[23] What makes this story especially dramatic is that Vulcanius reportedly proceeded to declare that since he had just divulged a dire divine secret, he was fated to die—and fulfilled his own prophecy by falling dead on the spot.[24]

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existimabant ("some thought that [the star] had to do with showing forth the glory of young Octavian").

20 Pliny, *HN* 2.93 *cometes … admodum faustus diuo Augusto iudicatus ab ipso* ("the comet was judged by the divine Augustus to be very favorable to himself").

21 Pliny, *HN* 2.94 *interiore gaudio sibi illum natum seque in eo nasci interpretatus est*.

22 See Dominicucci 1996, 119–120.

23 Serv. Auct. ad *Ecl.* 9.46 *sed Vulcanius aruspex in contione dixit cometen esse qui significaret exitum noni saeculi et ingressum decimi* ("but the haruspex Vulcanius said in a public meeting that it was a comet that signified the end of the ninth age and the beginning of the tenth").

24 Serv. Auct. ad *Ecl.* 9.46 *sed quod invitis diis secreta rerum pronuntiaret, statim se esse moriturum: et nondum finita oratione in ipsa contione concidit* ("but he said that he was going to die since he was disclosing cosmic secrets against the will of the gods: and before he had finished speaking, he fell dead in the very meeting"). Vulcanius' prophecy is to be understood in the light of the Etruscan doctrine of *saecula* and an increase in pessimistic predictions towards the end of the Republic, which forecast the end of either the Etruscan nation or even the world as a whole. See Sordi 1972, Santangelo 2013, 115–127, and Volk 2021, 276–277.

Even though all our sources postdate the event—unfortunately, we possess no truly contemporary reactions to the *sidus Iulium*—I suggest that they still document the uncertainty surrounding the comet at its first appearance. Of course, the explanation via Caesar's apotheosis ultimately won out, but in doing so, it had to compete with a number of different readings—entirely unsurprisingly, since the occasion and the event were ones that had no parallel and no ready-made aetiology. Even within the ultimately dominant narrative, that of Caesar's stellar immortality, there are important variants of the exact role played by the comet in the process of the dead man's becoming a god— variants that reflect competing contemporary ideas about the nature of the stars. According to Augustus' own autobiography, "the crowd believed that this star was a sign (*eo sidere significari*) that Caesar's soul had been received among the immortal gods."[25] The idea that the heavenly bodies are signs goes back to the beginnings of Greco-Roman literature and presents one major strand of theoretical thinking about the stars. Note that on this reading, the star is not instrumentally involved in Caesar's change of status but is simply a harbinger of his arrival on Olympus. Caesar does not *become* a star.

Reading the *sidus Iulium* thus as a sign of Caesar's apotheosis is one way of many of interpreting the comet as an omen and would seem a reasonably traditional way of making sense of the unusual occurrence. However, some people went further—with a little nudge from Octavian, according to Servius Auctus—and believed that the comet was the *sidus Caesaris*, the star *of* Caesar.[26] This is a wonderfully ambiguous term that once again reflects contemporary uncertainty about the nature of the heavenly bodies. Are they signs from the gods, are they physically and ontologically close to the gods—or are they gods themselves? At just about the time of Caesar's death, for example, the popular designation of the planets starts to shift: what used to be referred to as "the star of Venus" or the "star of Mars" is now more and more often simply called "Venus" and "Mars." How far is it from the comet's being "the star of Caesar" to its being Caesar himself? This, of course, is the final version of the story, that of the full-fledged astral metamorphosis as seen, for example, in Suetonius's account: there, the new heavenly body is popularly believed to be literally "the soul of Caesar having been received into heaven."[27]

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25   *Ap.* Plin. *HN* 2.94 = fr. 6 Malcovati, *F1 *FRH eo sidere significari vulgus credidit Caesaris animam inter deorum immortalium numina receptam*.

26   Serv. Auct. ad *Aen.* 8.681 *quod sidus Caesaris putatum est Augusto persuadente* ("at the instigation of Augustus, this star was believed to be that of Caesar"); cf. also Verg. *Ecl.* 9.47 *Dionaei … Caesaris astrum*.

27   Suet. *Iul.* 88 *creditumque est animam esse Caesaris in caelum recepti*.

While alluding, as he so often does in both *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, to such competing explanations, Ovid settles for the strong reading of the *sidus Iulium*, according to which the vital part of the dead Caesar physically becomes a comet. In describing this metamorphosis, the poet once more had certain models and conceptual paradigms available. At the same time, however, Caesar's apotheosis presented such a novelty—truly *in nova mutatas formas corpora*—that Ovid was challenged to find his own language for depicting a metamorphosis unlike any other.

Among the various ancient scenarios of a stellar afterlife, the least dramatic, as it were, is that of a paradise among the stars. Often influenced by Pythagorean and/or Platonic ideas of a celestial origin of the human soul, various eschatological models envisaged a return after death either to one's own private star or otherwise to some communal celestial dwelling place of the blessed, such as, most famously, the Milky Way in Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* and related texts. Something similar appears to be imagined by Germanicus in his account of the apotheosis of Augustus (*Phaen.* 558–560): there the deceased emperor's astrological sign Capricorn carries him into heaven and specifically to "his mother's stars," that is, perhaps, the planet Venus. On this model, people go to heaven or to specific heavenly bodies, but they do not themselves turn into stars.

Much more widespread in the ancient imagination is the idea of actual catasterism, a concept associated first and foremost with the Aratean tradition. While Aratus' *Phaenomena* itself is a fairly sober poem comparatively devoid of star myths, the flood of subsequent publications, including commentaries—among them the adapted *Catasterisms* of Eratosthenes—and especially the Latin translations and adaptations of the poem, included more and more stories of stellified humans, animals, and objects, ultimately providing aetiologies for the entire night sky. Ovid, the erstwhile translator of the *Phaenomena* (frr. 1 and 2 *FPL*, Courtney) and narrator of numerous star myths in the *Fasti*, was himself closely familiar with the Aratean tradition and well versed in the mechanisms of stellification. An Aratean catasterism explains the origin and shape of a constellation, which exists because some terrestrial entity was "placed into" the sky. There is typically no account of an actual transformation beyond some vague reference to the addition of or—but only sometimes—some undefined "turning into" the appropriate stars. On the contrary: crucially, the new constellation retains the appearance and the characteristics of the catasterized creature.

The *modus operandi* of a typical Aratean catasterism is apparent, for example, from the following passage in the *Fasti*, which provides the *aition* for the constellations Ursa Major and Bootes (2.187–192):

hanc puer ignarus iaculo fixisset acuto
    ni foret in superas raptus uterque domos.
signa propinqua micant: prior est quam dicimus Arcton,
    Arctophylax formam terga sequentis habet.
saevit adhuc canamque rogat Saturnia Tethyn
    Maenaliam tactis ne lavet Arcton aquis.

Her son would have pierced [Callisto] unawares with his sharp spear, if both of them had not been snatched up into the upper realm. They shine as neighboring constellations: what we call the Bear comes first, and the Bear Ward looks as though following her from behind. Juno is still angry and asks grey Tethys not to touch or wash the Maenalian Bear in the waters [of Ocean].

Arcas and his ursine mother Callisto are simply removed into heaven, where they now exist as constellations, without our being told what their new stellar character entails. It is clear, however, that Callisto remains a bear and *persona non grata* with Juno, who prevents her former rival from ever taking a bath in Ocean, a fact that explains the circumpolar nature of Ursa Major. This continuity of mythological identity from earth to heaven is exactly what leads Ovid's contemporary Manilius to his exasperated criticism of the Aratean tradition: "in their songs, the sky is nothing but a story," a *fabula*.[28]

Aratean catasterism is theoretically open to historical characters as well, but the problem, of course, is that most constellations are already well explained. The Lock of Berenice would not have undergone catasterism had the Ptolemaic court astrologer Conon not happened to spot a new constellation,[29] while Vergil's scenario at the beginning of the first *Georgic* for Octavian's becoming a *novum sidus* is ingenious but perhaps overly so (1.32–34):

anne novum tardis sidus te mensibus addas,
qua locus Erigonen inter Chelasque sequentis
panditur.

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28   Manilius, *Astronomica* 2.37–38 *quorum carminibus nihil est nisi fabula caelum / terraque composuit mundum quae pendet ab illo* ("in their [the Aratean poets'] songs, the sky is nothing but a story, and earth has made up heaven, even though it [earth] depends on it [heaven]"). On the interpretation of this passage, which may well be directed against Ovid, among others, see Volk 2009, 190–192.

29   On Callimachus' *Lock of Berenice* as a model for Ovid's treatment of Caesar's apotheosis, see Knox 1986, 75–81.

> Or whether you add yourself to the slow months as a new constellation,
> where a place opens up between Virgo and following Scorpio.

The poet imagines that the deceased will turn into the set of stars we know
as Libra, a constellation that was being individuated only at about the time of
the *Georgics*' composition and that had the further distinction of being the sun
sign of Augustus' natal horoscope. Too complicated: better to have the deified
emperor be carried into an undefined heaven, the way Germanicus did decades
later, when Augustus had passed away for real.

In the absence of a suitable new constellation but the fortunate presence of
a comet, Ovid's Caesar had the unique opportunity of eschewing the Aratean
precedent and undergoing a metamorphosis all of his own (*Met.* 15. 844–850):

> suique
> Caesaris eripuit membris nec in aera solvi
> passa recentem animam caelestibus intulit astris.
> dumque tulit, lumen capere atque ignescere sensit
> emisitque sinu: luna volat altius illa
> flammiferumque trahens spatioso limite crinem
> stella micat.

> [Venus] tore the fresh soul of her Caesar from his limbs and did not allow
> it to dissolve into the air and carried it among the heavenly stars. And
> while she was carrying it, she felt how it started to glow and become fiery,
> and she released it from her bosom: it flies higher than the moon and
> drawing long hair in a broad trail, it shines as a star.

While the agency of worried Venus adds a whimsical touch, the details are strik-
ingly scientific: with surgical precision, the goddess removes the dying man's
soul, which is viewed as a physical object, but one prone to dissolution at
the moment of death. This psychological materialism accords with both Stoic
and Epicurean views, as does the idea of the soul's intrinsically fiery nature,
which enables the metamorphosis: as so often in Ovid's universe, transforma-
tion brings out a characteristic the transformed entity has always already pos-
sessed. Once an actual heavenly body, the transformed Julius flies "higher than
the moon," a remarkable observation since comets—ill-understood in ancient
astronomy—were typically considered meteorological phenomena associated
with the changeable sublunary realm. Once again, there is ambivalence about
the stellified Caesar's exact status: he flies like a comet but he shines like a star
(*stella micat*, 850).

There being no exact precedent for Caesar's cometification, Ovid created a language in which such an unheard-of metamorphosis might be described; as we have seen, there were many related models but no exact parallel. The closest, in fact, is Ovid's own account of the ascent into heaven of Romulus' wife Hersilia at the end of *Metamorphoses* 14 (846–848): there, a meteor or shooting star sets her hair ablaze before serving as a conduit to carry Hersilia into heaven. Ovid apparently made this story up; perhaps he was practicing for the death of Caesar one book later.

To sum up, we have seen how in creating his own account of the death and apotheosis of Julius Caesar, Ovid approached the unparalleled incident from three different perspectives, employing three ways of conceiving of the divine that I suggest are comparable to Varro's three theologies. Ovid's *divus Iulius* is an anthropomorphic god who has made his home on Olympus; he is the recipient of worship within the cult economy of the Roman state religion; and he is a heavenly body, having undergone a physical transformation into a fiery celestial object. All three versions were inherent in the concept of the "deified Julius" that had been part of the Roman cultural imagination for fifty years. What Ovid has done, and what makes the episode so original and, in the opinion of many readers, so funny, is to have taken the propositions of all three theologies absolutely seriously and by the letter.[30] If Caesar is a mythological god, he belongs to the squabbling ménage on Olympus. If he is a deity of the Roman state cult, he is the object of political opportunism and manipulation. And if he is a comet, then a physical part of this historical personage must quite literally have gone up in flames and flown into the sky. According to the *Metamorphoses*, all this is exactly what happened.

In Ovid's treatment, then, the phrase and concept *divus Iulius* are not allowed to remain non-committal, anodyne gestures towards the excellence of a deceased statesman, but are pushed to the limits of their literal meaning. This kind of resemanticization of pale or dead figurative language is a hallmark of Ovidian humor throughout his œuvre and a crucial modus operandi of the *Metamorphoses* in particular. The world of the poem has been described as a realm of metaphors come alive, a place where a grey-haired, bloodthirsty man named Lycaon turns out to be a literal wolf, where stony people become stones, and pretty girls are transformed into pretty trees.[31] When Augustus and his contemporaries referred to Caesar as a god, they may well have thought that this

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30   Compare Pandey's description of Ovid's narrative as a "comically over-enthusiastic reading of Caesar's deification" (2013, 444 = 2018, 80).

31   See esp. Pianezzola 1979 and Schmidt 1991.

was just a manner of speaking. Not so for Ovid: in the universe of the *Metamorphoses*, every metamorphosis is—sadly, shockingly, or hilariously—to be taken as real.

Except one. Famously, the poem ends with neither Caesar nor Augustus, but with the poet himself and his prediction of his own work's immortality. In addition to the important model of Horace, *Odes* 3.30, scholars have pointed out the similarities to Caesar's apotheosis (15.875–879):

> parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis
> astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum.
> quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris,
> ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama
> (siquid habent veri vatum praesagia) vivam.

> Still, in my better part, I will be carried above the lofty stars, and my name will be imperishable. Wherever Roman power extends over conquered lands, I will be read by the lips of the people, and (if the prophecies of poets hold any truth) I will live.

Like Caesar (and like the deified Hercules, Aeneas, and Romulus), Ovid survives in his *pars melior* and is carried on high, even above the stars. However, unlike the case of the deified Julius, it is clear that Ovid does not literally turn into a flying object. His flight remains metaphorical—in fact, within the ancient cosmos, the fixed stars mark the boundary of the universe, so nothing can penetrate beyond them. Ovid will live not as a transformed body but in his work, surviving immaterially in the utterances of human beings.[32] It is Ovid, and only Ovid, who transcends the *Metamorphoses*' iron law of "shapes changed into new bodies." For the likes of Julius Caesar, death is a transformation that calls for an explanation. Only for the poet does it involve a true transfiguration.

Acknowledgements

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32   See Hardie 1997, 190.

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The Books of Fate: The Venus-Jupiter Scene in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 15 and Its Epic Models

Sergio Casali

1 Jupiter and Fate from *Iliad* 16 to *Metamorphoses* 15 (via *Aeneid* 10)

When Venus at same time understands that, in order for the future Augustus not to be born of mortal seed, it is necessary for Caesar to be made a god, and sees that a grim death is being prepared for Caesar by the weapons of the conspirators, she grows pale and starts lamenting with every god she meets, asking them to thwart that murderous attempt. But the gods, though moved by her words, "cannot break the iron decrees of the ancient sisters (the Parcae)" (*rumpere …/ferrea non possunt veterum decreta sororum*, 15.780–781), and limit themselves to manifesting their grief with a series of horrendous omens. Then, at 803–806 Venus meditates on hiding Caesar in a cloud and snatching him from death, as once she had done with Paris (at *Il.* 3.374–382) and with Aeneas (at *Il.* 5.311–317):

> tum vero Cytherea manu percussit utraque
> pectus et Aeneaden molitur condere nube,
> qua prius infesto Paris est ereptus Atridae,
> et Diomedeos Aeneas fugerat enses.[1]
> > *Met.* 15.803–806

> Then in truth Venus struck her breast with both hands, and tries to hide the descendant of Aeneas in that same cloud in which she once had snatched away Paris from the attack of the son of Atreus, and Aeneas had escaped Diomedes' sword.[2]

Jupiter intervenes and asks her if she alone intends to move unconquerable Fate: Caesar's destiny is written in the *tabularia* of the Parcae, and can be read

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[1] The text of the *Metamorphoses* is that of Tarrant 2004; that of the *Aeneid* of Conte 2019.

[2] On how Ovid, with this passage, "casts Caesar's historical situation in terms of the epic tradition, thus bringing to bear the weight of that tradition going back to Homer on recent history," see Smith 1994, 47 = 1997, 123.

by Venus herself, if she goes there; he has read and memorized it,[3] and now he will recount it to her (15.807–815):

> talibus hanc genitor: "sola insuperabile fatum,
> nata, movere paras? intres licet ipsa sororum
> tecta trium; cernes illic molimine vasto
> ex aere et solido rerum tabularia ferro,
> quae neque concursum caeli neque fulminis iram
> nec metuunt ullas tuta atque aeterna ruinas.
> invenies illic incisa adamante perenni
> fata tui generis; legi ipse animoque notavi
> et referam, ne sis etiamnum ignara futuri."

> Thus the father spoke: "Alone, daughter, do you prepare to move unconquerable Fate? You yourself are allowed to enter the dwelling of the three sisters: there you will see, with their massive structure, the archives of the world, made of bronze and solid iron, which fear neither the crashing of the sky nor the anger of the lightning bolt or any destruction, being safe and eternal; there you will find the fates of your descendants engraved on everlasting adamant. I read them myself and noted them in my mind and will relate them, lest you be even now unknowing of the future."

The primary model for this scene is clearly the dialogue between Jupiter and Venus in *Aen.* 1, as we shall see; but this sequence, not by chance introduced by two Homeric references,[4] also alludes to the sequence at *Il.* 16.431–457, the dialogue between Zeus and Hera about the impending death of Sarpedon.[5] There,

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3   Jupiter's words (*legi ipse animoque notavi / et referam*, 814–815) self-reflexively echo Mars' words at 14.813 (*nam memoro memorique animo pia uerba notavi*, "for I remember and noted in my retentive mind your loving words"), where they introduced a direct quotation of Ennius (14.814 = *Ann.* 54 Sk.); here the reader might have expected to follow some direct quotation of the *Aeneid*, but any expectation raised by 814–815 this time goes frustrated. The verbal reminiscences of *Aen.* 1.286–291 at *Met.* 15.818–821 (found by Smith 1994, 49–50 = 1997, 126–127) are in fact very fleeting.

4   Venus has already referred to a Homeric passage at 769 (her wounding by Diomedes in *Il.* 5), and "[w]ith this allusion to Homer, Ovid sets an 'epic' stage that informs the way Venus is to be viewed in this passage of the *Metamorphoses*" (Smith 1994, 46 = 1997, 122).

5   See Hardie 2015, 602, on 15.807–842: "Il discorso di Giove comincia con un ammonimento a Venere per il suo tentativo di sovvertire il fato, come Era aveva ammonito Zeus in *Il.* 16.441–442 sul destino di morte di Sarpedonte (episodio imitato in *Aen.* 10.464–473 dove Giove avverte Ercole che Pallante non può sfuggire al suo fato di morte)."

it is Zeus himself who sees that death is approaching his son Sarpedon, and it is he who meditates upon snatching him from death (*Il.* 16.433–438):

> ὤ μοι ἐγών, ὅ τέ μοι Σαρπηδόνα φίλτατον ἀνδρῶν
> μοῖρ᾽ ὑπὸ Πατρόκλοιο Μενοιτιάδαο δαμῆναι.
> διχθὰ δέ μοι κραδίη μέμονε φρεσὶν ὁρμαίνοντι,
> ἤ μιν ζωὸν ἐόντα μάχης ἄπο δακρυοέσσης
> θείω ἀναρπάξας Λυκίης ἐν πίονι δήμῳ,
> ἦ ἤδη ὑπὸ χερσὶ Μενοιτιάδαο δαμάσσω.

> Alas, that it is fated that Sarpedon, whom I love more than any man, be killed by Patroclus, son of Menoetius! And my heart is divided in two as I meditate in my thought whether I shall snatch him up while he is still alive and set him down in the rich land of Lycia, far from the tear-filled war, or whether I shall slay him now under the hands of the son of Menoetius.

The first word Jupiter addresses to Venus, *sola* ("on your own," "all by yourself," but also "you alone"), has multiple ironic resonances. It is, in fact, a witty reminder of the long series of precedents for the scene to follow: first, Venus is surely not "alone" in wanting to "move unconquerable Fate," for Juno has repeatedly attempted to do the same in the *Aeneid* (as Venus has just recalled in her previous speech to the gods, 768–774). Secondly, she is also definitely not "alone" specifically in wanting to snatch a divine son from fated death; Jupiter/Zeus himself had had the same thought in *Il.* 16, and there too he was prevented from acting in favor of his son by the intervention of another divinity, Hera, who reminded him of the inevitability of Fate for mortals (*Il.* 16.440–449). What the Homeric Hera suggested that Zeus do, was to leave Sarpedon to die, and then, as soon as breath and life had abandoned him, to send Thanatos and Hypnos to seize his body and bring it to Lycia, where it would be honored with funeral rites by his brothers and comrades (450–457). This is the model for Jupiter's instructions to Venus: she should let Caesar die, and then seize his soul and change it into a star (15.840–842):

> hanc animam interea caeso de corpore raptam
> fac iubar, ut semper Capitolia nostra forumque
> Divus ab excelsa prospectet Iulius aede!

> Meanwhile snatch his soul from his murdered body and make a star out of it, so that the deified Julius may always look down from his lofty dwelling on our Capitol and Forum.

True, Venus' intervention as suggested by Jupiter is much more invasive and radical than that suggested by Hera to Zeus in *Il.* 16: Venus is ordered to create a new star, while Zeus was simply allowed to transport a dead body to its fatherland. But the sequence (a) a divine parent is tempted to snatch his/her son from death; (b) is reminded by another god/dess of the inevitability of Fate; (c) is allowed to do at least something to alleviate his/her grief after the death of the son, is clearly the same in Homer as in Ovid.[6]

The Homeric Zeus evidently has, at least in this passage, the power of subverting Fate, since Hera considers as a possibility that he may in fact choose to save Sarpedon; the only problem would be the angry reaction of all the other gods—even if that very reaction, as foreseen by Hera, means that Zeus at least is not expected to do things contrary to Fate.[7] Anyway, the god learns his lesson. In the adaptation of the Zeus-Hera scene of *Il.* 16 at *Aen.* 10.464–473, it is Jupiter who plays the role of the Homeric Hera, reminding Hercules of the inevitability of Fate (even by self-reflexively using the very example of Sarpedon's death).[8] While Jupiter's words do not explicitly clarify anything about the relationship between Jupiter's will and Fate, the context clearly suggests that Vergil is hinting here at a notion of Jupiter's will as subordinated to Fate: here, there is not even a question of subverting Pallas' destined death; Hercules, unlike Zeus in *Il.* 16, is not thinking about saving Pallas, but is just mourning his impending death, and the possibility that Jupiter might save Pallas is not contemplated, while the god concludes his speech by saying that "Turnus too is called by his fates, and has come to the end of the lifetime that has been given to him" (*etiam sua Turnum fata vocant metasque dati pervenit ad aevi*, 471–472). It is difficult not to feel that here Jupiter attributes the inevitability of death for mortals to something different from his own will.[9] However, this contrasts with other passages of the *Aeneid* which clearly imply, as we shall see, an identification of Fate with Jupiter's will, and, after all, in this very passage of *Aen.* 10, Vergil is ambiguous: could Jupiter have saved Pallas? The fact that this possibility is not hinted at in his speech does not necessarily mean that it would be impossible for Jupiter to prevent Pallas' death. Perhaps what is understood is that he can prevent Pallas'

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6 At *Il.* 22.166–187 there is a similar scene between Zeus and Athena regarding Hector's impending death, but there, of course, there is no question of anybody removing the corpse of Hector.

7 See Janko 1994, 375: "His protest against fate does not prove that he can reverse it, although Here implies this; the question of relative power, though posed, is left unanswered."

8 See Barchiesi 1984, esp. 18–19 = 2015, 6–7.

9 Explicitly so, e.g. MacInnes 1910, 172 and n. 2; *contra*, e.g. Bailey 1935, 230–231.

death but chooses not to do so, for the same reasons expounded by the Homeric Hera; or perhaps what is understood is that he really cannot subvert the "will" of Fate.[10]

The incoherencies of Vergil's theology reflect and reproduce the incoherencies of Homer's theology.[11] It is not a coincidence if the critics of Homer and those of Vergil often share the same vocabulary and the same expressions when speaking of the difficult problem of the relationship of Zeus/Jupiter with Fate: is Zeus subject to Fate? Is mortals' *moira* identical with Zeus's will? Vergil decides to reproduce Homer's incoherence; Ovid simplifies and brings order to Vergil's confusion: it is crystal clear that his Jupiter is subordinate to the decisions of Fate, and it is equally clear that this position of Ovid's is meant to be read as a comment on Vergil's bewildering confusion of this matter.[12]

1   Jupiter and the Book of Fate in *Aeneid* 1, *Metamorphoses* 15, and Vergil's Ancient Exegesis

Let's approach the issue this time starting from the influence of the dialogue between Venus and Jupiter in *Aen.* 1 on the Venus-Jupiter scene in *Met.* 15. Ovid reworks at the same time the Zeus-Hera scene in *Il.* 16 (and through it Vergil's adaptation in *Aen.* 10) and the Venus-Jupiter scene in *Aen.* 1. From the first context come both Venus' project of Homerically snatching away Caesar from impending death and Jupiter's concession to her of at least *something*, that is, the possibility of making a star out of his soul; from the second comes the bulk

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10   The bibliography on Fate in the *Aeneid* is understandably huge, and this is not the place to examine the question thoroughly; see especially MacInnes 1910; Heinze 1915, 193–198 = 1993, 236–239; Matthaei 1917; Bailey 1935, 204–240; Boyancé 1963, 39–57; Tracy 1964; La Penna 1966, lxxv–vii; Camps 1969, 41–50; Pötscher 1977, 7–95 (with a review of the bibliography at 7–16); Bianchi 1985; Lyne 1987, 71–75; Binder 2019, 165–170.

11   Some scholars prefer to contrast Homer's complexity with Vergil's supposed "clarity": see e.g. Heinze 1915, 293–294 = 1993, 236: "The Homeric Μοῖρα is an intangible power standing alongside the gods, in no actual relationship to Zeus. Virgil leaves us in no doubt that Fate is really nothing else but the will of the highest god." In general, I am much more sympathetic to those who underline Vergil's theological *lack* of clarity: see e.g. Matthaei 1917, 14: "The system of the Olympian gods intrudes hopelessly on the mystic Vergilian Stoico-Epicurean philosophy, and makes—there is no denying it—one glorious muddle"; Tracy 1964, 192: "there is a *non sequitur* in the relations of Fate, Jupiter, Juno, and Venus"; La Penna 1966, lxvii: "Probabilmente è impossibile conciliare in una concezione chiara e logica le varie rappresentazioni del fato."

12   Note that the "systematic Ovidian expression of the subordination of Jupiter to Fatum is unprecedented in the Greco-Roman epic tradition" (Criado 2013, 212).

of Jupiter's speech, with the prophecy about Augustus' future greatness, which corresponds to the Roman and Augustan prophecy of Vergil's Jupiter.[13]

Jupiter's words at the beginning of his speech to Venus (*sola insuperabile fatum, / nata, movere paras*, 807–808) obviously echo those addressed by the god to Venus at the beginning of his prophetic speech in *Aeneid* 1: *parce metu, Cytherea, manent **immota** tuorum / **fata** tibi* ("spare yourself these fears, Cytherea: the destinies of your descendants remain unchanged," *Aen.* 1.257–258).[14] In both contexts the point revolves around the inevitability of Fate, but in *Aen.* 1 the problem is that Venus *fears* that the destinies of her descendants might have changed, and Jupiter reassures her that everything will go according to his old promises (whereas in fact Vergil is indeed introducing here major changes to the destinies of Venus' descendants from the versions of Naevius and Ennius, to which Venus herself seems to allude by recalling, at 1.234–237, Jupiter's old promises: see below).[15] In Ovid, instead, Venus *wants* to change the fate of her descendant, Caesar, by saving him from being killed, while Jupiter admonishes her that his fate is immutable. Also, a major irony here is that, in this very moment, and with these very words, Ovid too is "changing" the fate of Caesar, by inventing the notion of the fated inevitability of his death, and by creating this kind of divine charade around the events surrounding it.[16]

Another marker of Ovid's repetition of the scene in *Aeneid* 1 is found in *Met.* 15.809: ***cernes** illic molimine vasto / ex aere et solido rerum tabularia ferro*. The verb *cernes* is a clear signal that Jupiter is reworking his prophecy of *Aeneid* 1: the verb occurs in the same metrical position at *Aen.* 1.258–259 ***cernes** urbem et promissa Lauini / moenia* ("you will see the city and the promised

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13   "[Jupiter's] speech at 15.807–842 owes its very existence to another text, the Speech of Jupiter in *Aeneid* 1" (Hardie 1997, 192).

14   *insuperabile fatum* is in itself highly Vergilian, varying the line-ending at *Aen.* 8.334 *in-eluctabile fatum* (cf. also *Geo.* 2.491 *inexorabile fatum*) with an adjective from the line ending at *Aen.* 4.40 *genus **insuperabile** bello*—already clearly echoed at *Met.* 12.613 *caput insuperabile bello*; these are the first occurrences in Latin poetry both of the iunctura *in(...)abile fatum* and of the adjective *insuperabilis*.

15   For the metapoetic ironies here, see Casali 2007a, 123–124.

16   In *Fasti* 3.701–704, all is changed again: we find there a completely different version of the events surrounding Caesar's murder and apotheosis. According to Vesta herself, at the moment of the killing, *she* snatched away Caesar's body (and soul), left in its place "a bare phantom" (*simulacra ... nuda*), a "shadow" (*umbra*), and placed Caesar in the sky as an Olympian god; no reference is made to any stellar destiny for him. It is obvious that these two versions of Caesar's death and apotheosis are mutually exclusive: not a good move on Ovid's part if he ever had wanted to be taken seriously on this sensitive matter. On Caesar's apotheosis and catasterism or "cometification" in *Met.* 15, see the chapter by Volk in this volume.

walls of Lavinium"), and these are the only occurrences of this word in this metrical position in both the *Aeneid* and the *Metamorphoses*. In the *Aeneid*, *cernes* is a direct part of Jupiter's own prophecy: he predicts that Venus "will see" Lavinium, as promised; in the *Metamorphoses*, *cernes* is no longer part of Jupiter's prophecy: the god only says that, if Venus enters the house of the Parcae, she "will see" the tablets containing the fates of her descendants.[17] This highlights the fact that Ovid's Jupiter, while "quoting" his own Vergilian prophecy, is no longer actually prophesying: rather, he has memorized the prophecy contained in the tablets he has read in the house of the Parcae, and now he limits himself to repeating it for Venus' benefit.

This brings us back to Ovid's "clarification" of the relationship between Jupiter and Fate. In the *Aeneid* there are two conflicting views: sometimes Jupiter appears to be only a mouthpiece of Fate; most of the time, however, Fate seems to be identified with Jupiter's will itself. It is not by chance that many distinguished Vergilianists wish to propose the second view as the "official" view of Jupiter within the *Aeneid*.[18] As a matter of fact, the Venus-Jupiter scene in *Aen.* 1 is one of the passages which modern critics tend to use to support the idea of an identification of Fate with Jupiter's will. Already Venus in her complaint refers to Jupiter's previous promises and opinion, thus highlighting the importance of his will in deciding the destiny of the Trojans and of their descendants (*pollicitus: quae te, genitor, sententia vertit?* "you promised: what opinion, father, has turned you?" 235), though it is not altogether clear how this reference to Jupiter's will is to be combined with her "weighting fates against opposed fates" (*fatis contraria fata rependens*, 239); it seems impossible to understand here exactly which idea of the relationship Jupiter-Fate(s) Venus has in mind. In his speech, however, Jupiter is apparently explicit in equating Fate with his own will, as the etymological wordplay *fabor ... fatorum* would also seem to suggest (*fabor enim, quando haec te cura remordet, / longius et volvens fatorum arcana*

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17   See also Gladhill 2012, 8.

18   See esp. Heinze 1915, 293–297 = 1993, 236–238 (see above n. 11); Bailey 1935, 228–232; Lyne 1987, 73–74. Camps 1969, 42–43 first says that the will of Jupiter "is always identified with the ordinances of Fate," and immediately after goes on to say that "Whether [Jupiter] is author as well as executor of these ordinances is not always clear, and no doubt depends more on the poet's feeling in a given context than on any doctrinal theory." Most recently, Binder 2019, 165–170 also seemingly identifies Fate with Jupiter's will, though his very formulation betrays the difficulties inherent in such an approach: "Iuppiter ist nicht das Fatum, aber er identifiziert sich mit dem Fatum, das somit wesentlich als sein Wille erscheint und dessen Inhalt als der Plan, den er mit der Welt verfolgt [...]. Selbst Iuppiter kann den Inhalt des Fatums nicht verändern" (167). Decidedly against the identification of Fate with the will of Jupiter is MacInnes 1910, 171–172.

movebo, "for, since this worry torments you, I will speak, and, further unrolling the secrets of fate, I will 'move' them," 261–262).[19] The future destiny of Aeneas and his descendants is presented as determined by what he thinks and does: *neque me sententia vertit* ("no thought has changed me," 260); *his ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono: / imperium sine fine dedi* ("to them I set no limits of fortune or time: I gave them a power without end," 278–279); *sic placitum* ("so it is decided," 283, where, in the light of the previous first person verbs, it is easiest to understand *mihi*, though the absence of an explicit dative is in itself suggestive).[20] However, the very line containing the word *fata* (*longius et volvens fatorum arcana movebo*), notwithstanding the above mentioned cluster *fabor ... fatorum*, creates a problem: does *movebo* here mean "I will stir up," implying that the course of future events is actually set in motion by Jupiter's words, or does it mean "I will reveal, relate," so *potentially* suggesting that Jupiter is here but a mere mouthpiece of the will of Fate (even if, of course, *movebo* could still mean "I will relate *my* decisions")? Are *fata* here just "the things Jupiter has said," or are they some power distinct from the god?

The issue is even more interesting if we reflect on the implications of *volvens*, which suggests the unrolling of a scroll, and hence the reading of a book.[21] Jupiter's words are ambiguous: is he referring to a "book of Fate" independent from his will (so DServ. *Aen.* 10.8, quoted above), or, as the etymological word-play *fabor ... fatorum* would seem to suggest, the "book of Fate" contains his own very words?[22] That ancient exegetes of the *Aeneid*—as we are about to see—read this line as implying the first alternative is very suggestive in view of Ovid's decision to develop the hint of writing in Jupiter's speech into an elaborate description of the *tabularia* written (evidently; at least preserved) by the Parcae, which he himself has read and memorized, and which he will now reveal to his daughter.[23]

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19   But see below for complications here.

20   *sic placitum* is even defined as "a colourless impersonal expression" by Wilson 1979, 361.

21   See e.g. Austin 1971 and Williams 1972 ad loc.

22   Modern critics favor the second alternative: see Heinze 1915, 293 n. 3 = 1993, 276 n. 36; O'Hara 1990, 137; Feeney 1991, 139–140. Boyancé 1963, 48 is particularly lucid here: "Cependant ce livre des destins, suggéré par ce texte, Jupiter l'a-t-il écrit? Se contente-t-il de le réciter? D'en être le solennel interprète? Virgile peut sembler laisser la place ouverte à l'une et à l'autre hypothèse." For the two alternatives see also e.g. Bailey 1935, 206; Lowrie 2009, 5.

23   See e.g. Wheeler 1999, 56: "[Ovid's] Jupiter transforms Vergil's metaphorical book into the fantasy of an indestructible, monumental office of public records in which the documents of Fate are stored in imperishable adamant." See also Gladhill 2012, 8: "Vergil seems to suggest that the *fata* Jupiter unfolds are written on the papyrus of a book roll. Ovid responds with *fata* inscribed in bronze and iron and stored in an Olympian *tabularium*."

The ancient exegesis of the *Aeneid* was interestingly well aware of the problems presented by 1.262, for the line is cited as an example of the *distinction* between Fate and divine will in Servius Danielis' note on 10.8:[24]

ABNVERAM BELLO ITALIAM CONCVRRERE TEVCRIS quo modo "abnueram," cum ipse in primo dixerit *bellum ingens geret Italia*? [1.263] sed secundum sapientes quosdam alia est necessitas fati, alia voluntas deorum, ⟨etsi contra fatum deorum⟩ [*suppl. Timpanaro 1270*] vis nulla est:[25] quod ipse manifestius in quinto ostendit his versibus *vel quae portenderet ira / magna deum uel quae fatorum posceret ordo* [5.706–707]: nam et in primo de ira Iunonis ait *acti fatis maria omnia circum* [1.32], et iterum in primo fatorum arcana se dixit moturum [1.262], non suam voluntatem ostensurum. sed ibi secreto filiae dicit, hic aliter [*Daniel, Timpanaro 1278, Murgia*: alter *F, Thilo*] idem invidiose diis omnibus praesentibus videtur loqui propter removendam eorum dissensionem.

I HAD PROHIBITED ITALY FROM CLASHING IN WAR WITH THE TEUCRIANS: how can he say "I had prohibited," when he himself in book 1 has said "Aeneas will wage a great war in Italy" (1.263)? But according to some wise men the necessity of Fate is one thing and the will of the gods another, even if the gods are powerless against Fate. This is shown even more clearly by Virgil himself in these lines from book 5: [Pallas giving Nautes answers] "telling either what the mighty wrath of the gods portended, or what the course of Fate demanded" (5.706–707); after all, in book 1, Virgil said of the wrath of Juno, "driven by the fates all over the seas" (1.32), and again, in book 1, Jupiter said that he would have revealed the secrets of the fates (1.262), and not shown his own will. But there [i.e. at 1.263] he speaks in secret to his daughter, whereas here [i.e. at 10.8], differently, the same Jupiter appears to speak manipulatively[26] to the assembly of all the gods, in order to remove their disagreement.

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24   On Servius' and Servius Danielis' treatment of the problem of the relationship between Fate and Jupiter's will in the *Aeneid*, see Timpanaro 1989.

25   Murgia 2018, 115, ignoring Timpanaro's suggestion, prints *alia voluntas deorum* (*vis enim alia est*), where *enim alia* is his own conjecture for *nulla* of F. In his view, the parenthesis would contain words added by the compiler to his source. I do not understand, however, what exactly Murgia thinks the meaning of *vis enim alia est* should be.

26   Timpanaro 1989, 1278 translates the adverb *invidiose* as "con subdola polemica," defining it as a technical term of rhetorical language having a rather negative connotation; see G.N. Knauer, *TLL* 7.2.209.34–68.

Servius Danielis addresses here a notorious difficulty: in the council of the gods at the beginning of Book 10, Jupiter says that at some point in the past he had *prohibited* a war in Italy, also implying that the gods had given their assent to his order (10.6–7 *quianam sententia vobis / versa retro ...?* "Why have you changed your mind?"), whereas in his dialogue with Venus in Book 1, he had *predicted* the war to come (*bellum ingens geret Italia* etc., 1.263).[27] Servius Danielis cites the view of "some wise men," according to whom Vergil would posit a difference between the necessity of Fate and the will of the gods, and hence, of Jupiter himself. Three passages would sustain this view: 5.706–707, where the narrator, apparently, makes a distinction (*vel ... vel*) between the anger (and hence the will) of the gods and the course of the fates; 1.32, where the narrator speaks of the fates which drive the Trojans all over the seas, so implying, evidently, that there are two different causes for the Trojan wanderings, Fate and the wrath of Juno;[28] and, most importantly because it involves Jupiter himself, 1.262, Jupiter's reference to his "revealing" (since this is clearly what DServ. takes *movebo* to mean) of the *fatorum arcana* in his dialogue with Venus.

In Servius Danielis' note there follows a rather difficult transition, again introduced by *sed*.[29] The "solution" eventually given to the problem of 10.6–10 is that *ibi* (that is, at 1.263 *bellum ingens geret Italia* etc., and not at 1.262 *longius et volvens*, etc.) Jupiter speaks in secret to his daughter—and so presumably speaks sincerely, telling her truthfully that a war in Latium is foreseen by Fate—whereas *hic* (that is, at 10.6–9) the god speaks to the assembly of the gods—and so presumably dissimulates that truth, presenting the war in Latium as something that could have been avoided.

It is not clear if this solution to the problem of 10.6–9 is to be connected with the view of the *sapientes* that Jupiter's will is something potentially distinct from Fate, or if instead Servius Danielis is leaving unexplained the relevance of this view to the problem of 10.6–10. If we were to accept the second possibility, we could think that the relevance of the thesis according to which in the *Aeneid* (at least sometimes) there is a distinction between Fate and the will of Jupiter,

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27   Even Heinze (1915, 297 n. 1 = 1993, 278 n. 43) admits the presence of a contradiction here.

28   In Servius' and Servius Danielis' note on 1.32, the difficulty envisaged in the passage (*si "fatis" nulla Iunonis invidia; si odio Iunonis, quo modo "acti fatis"?* if "by fate," there is no question of Juno's hatred; if by Juno's hatred, how "driven by fate"? DServ. and similarly, Servius) is solved either by positing that Juno's hatred is itself fated, or by taking *fatis* as "by the will of Juno" (Serv.); DServ. adds that *fatis* might be = *malis*; see Timpanaro 1989, 1271 n. 10.

29   As noticed by Timpanaro 1989, 1278, when DServ. says *sed ibi secreto filiae dicit*, etc., there is implied something like *sed, ⟨ut alii dicunt⟩, ibi* etc. or *sed ⟨ fortasse notandum quod⟩ ibi* etc., even if there is probably no need to supply those thoughts in the text itself.

to the problem of 10.6–10—left unexplained by Servius Danielis—could be that at a certain point in the past Jupiter had expressed his will, prohibiting a war in Italy; then, however, Juno's will interfered with that of Jupiter's, provoking the war all the same. Accordingly, in Book 10 he reminds the gods of his previous prohibition, while in Book 1 he had rhetorically represented to Venus that the war in Italy, the future result of Juno's intervention (which he was evidently able to foresee), was something positively fated to happen. This solution would be almost the opposite of Servius Danielis' ultimate one (*sed ibi secreto filiae dicit* etc.), because in this solution the war in Latium is to be seen as *not* fated to happen, but only provoked by Juno's intervention, notwithstanding Jupiter's original prohibition, and, in Book 1, Jupiter would have *falsely* presented the war in Latium as something decided by Fate in order to reassure his daughter.[30]

Otherwise, if we instead think that Servius Danielis' "ultimate" solution to the problem of 10.6–10 *is* to be connected with the view of the *sapientes* that Jupiter's will is something potentially distinct from Fate, we should probably imagine that the commentator thinks that Jupiter, at some point in the past, would have forbidden a war in Italy, notwithstanding his knowledge of the fact that it was fated to happen; at 1.293 he would have revealed to Venus, in a private conversation, that he knew the truth—that is, the fated nature of the future war in Latium, while in Book 10 he would have referred to his previous prohibition, and to the gods' acceptance of it, in order to appease the riotous assembly of the gods. This would imply the distinction of the *sapientes* between Jupiter's will (contrary to the war) and the decrees of Fate (which instead schedules a war), and above all would cohere with Servius Danielis' final explanation. Harrison approvingly summarizes Servius' Danielis view with these words: "the politic Jupiter adapts his words to the situation, saying one thing to Venus alone in book 1 and another to pacify the assembled and at least partly rebellious gods in book 10" (Harrison 1991, 60). From Harrison's note, however, it is not possible to understand clearly what he thinks about the details of this solution. In fact, this cannot simply mean that Jupiter is lying to the assembled gods in Book 10, since it must be true that he had once expressed his opposition to the war (for at 10.6–7 the gods themselves are said to have accepted that prohibition), and so we should confront here two issues: (i) a clear distinction between Jupiter's will and the decrees of Fate, as was said above; and (ii) the strange idea that Jupiter would have once tried to forbid something which he knew was fated to happen.[31]

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30   Similarly Lyne 1987, 79–81.
31   Considering that both in Naevius and in Ennius there was no war in Latium, we might

   At any rate, that this is what (the source of) Servius Danielis has in his mind is confirmed by the fact that his "ultimate" solution to the problem of 10.6–10 had already been advanced by Servius on 1.261: *TIBI FABOR ENIM*] *hoc loco excusat quaestionem futuram, quasi Veneri dolenti quae vera sunt dicat, sed aliter loquatur cunctis praesentibus dis: dicet enim in decimo [8] "abnueram bello Italiam concurrere Teucris"* (FOR I WILL TELL YOU] in this place [i.e. by emphatically saying *tibi*] he prevents a future problem, as if he were saying the truth to Venus in her grief, when he speaks differently to all the gods in assembly; for in Book 10 [line 8] he will say "I had prohibited Italy to move war against the Teucrians"). Here, *quae vera sunt* must mean "the war in Latium as decreed by Fate," whereas when Jupiter speaks to the assembled gods in *Aen.* 10 he refers evidently to something which is not true, and which cannot but be the fact that the war in Latium was *not* decreed by Fate, but instead has been provoked by the gods' intervention, in violation of his previous prohibition. Also in this formulation, this explanation presupposes both a distinction between Jupiter's will and Fate, and the awkward situation of a Jupiter attempting to prohibit the fulfillment of the decrees of Fate.

   The contradiction in *Aen.* 10 is an intriguing problem, but what interests us now is the Servian thesis in itself; that is, the idea that in the *Aeneid* there is no coincidence between Jupiter's will and the decrees of Fate. The ancient exegetes tend to underline the difference between Fate and Jupiter's will, and this obviously means that they were well aware of the *contradictoriness* of Vergil's position about Jupiter and Fate (cf., explicitly, DServ. *Aen.* 8.398 *nec pater omnipotens Troiam nec fata vetabant: notandum quod hic Iovem a fatis separat, cum alibi iungat, ut "sic fata deum rex / sortitur"* (3.375–376), "we must notice that here he separates Jupiter from the fates, while elsewhere he unites them, as at 'thus does the king of the gods cast the lots of fate'"). There is no way of overlooking those passages which clearly do imply an identification of the two powers, and elsewhere Servius himself sustains this identification: see e.g. on 10.628, *QUAE VOCE GRAVARIS*] *quae negas fato; vox enim Iovis fatum est: Statius [Theb. 1.213] "et vocem [sc. Iovis] fata secuntur" etc.* ("WHAT YOU REFUSE WITH YOUR VOICE] what you refuse by fate: for fate is the voice of Jupiter:

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even think that the peaceful settlement of the Trojans in Latium in the archaic poems was portrayed as motivated by an explicit intervention of Jupiter; so it is conceivable that at *Aen.* 10.8 (*abnueram bello Italiam concurrere Teucris*) the god refers to "what he had said" in Naevius or Ennius, rather than just "irrationally" echoing Zeus's prohibition at *Il.* 8.5–27.

Statius 'and fates follow Jupiter's voice' ");[32] and on 12.808, *sed Iuno, sciens fatum esse quicquid Iuppiter dixerit* (but Juno, knowing that anything Jupiter might say is fate).[33] Ovid, faced with this *quaestio* (what is exactly the relationship between Jupiter and Fate in the *Aeneid?*), chooses to embrace the same view of the *sapientes* cited by Servius Danielis on 10.8, that of a complete separation between Jupiter and Fate. He does so in a typically exaggerated way, very clearly showing that he is developing a parody of a critical discourse on the *Aeneid* and its contradictions—and specifically on the self-contradictory prophecy of Jupiter in *Aeneid* 1. On the eve of the killing of Caesar, Ovid drastically and parodically *simplifies* Vergil's complexity and contradictoriness. If I have insisted on the reaction of the ancient exegetes to the problems posited by Jupiter and Fate in the *Aeneid*, it is because I think that we should be prepared to consider the possibility that Ovid himself is already reading an "annotated" *Aeneid*, so to speak, in which such *quaestiones* as the contradiction between different views on the Jupiter/Fate relationship in the *Aeneid* are already part of the critical debate.[34]

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32 Cf. Serv. on *Aen.* 2.54 *"fata" modo participium est, hoc est "quae dii loquuntur"*; 2.777, *fata sunt quae dii fantur* (in both cases with the same reference to Statius' passage).

33 Cf. also Serv. on *Aen.* 1.382 *"data fata secutus" scilicet a Iove*. For an explicit remark about Vergil's oscillations regarding the concept of Fate, cf. Serv. on *Aen.* 4.697 SED MISERA ANTE DIEM] *non est contrarium quod dicit in decimo* (467) *"stat sua cuique dies,"* nam, ut saepe diximus, secundum sectas loquitur; et hoc secundum alios, illud secundum alios dictum est ("this does not contradict what he says at 10.467, 'each man's day is fixed,' for, as we have often said, he speaks according to the various philosophical schools, and now things are said according to one school, now according to another"); cf. Serv. on *Aen.* 1.257 MANENT IMMOTA TUORUM / FATA TIBI] *et simul per transitum dogma Stoicorum ostendit, nulla ratione posse fata mutari* ("and here, *en passant*, he refers to the Stoic dogma that fates cannot be changed for any reason"); a long disquisition on the Stoic concept of Fate at DServ. on *Aen.* 4.696; see Setaioli 2004, 13–18. Wilson 1979, 361 n. 2 associates Heinze's view of Fate as coincident with Jupiter's will with DServ. on *Aen.* 4.614 *"fata" dicta, id est Iovis voluntas*, but the case there is quite specific (*fata **Iovis** poscunt*), and the Servian note goes on to say: *hic ergo participium est, non nomen*. For traces of debates on the meaning of *fata* see also DServ. on *Aen.* 1.204 SEDES UBI FATA QUIETAS / OSTENDUNT] *"fata" autem quidam hic deorum responsa accipiunt* ("some take *fata* here to mean 'responses of the gods' ").

34 On Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as "reflect[ing] some evidently very early criticisms otherwise known from later commentators," see Cameron 2011, 591–592, with reference to Casali 2007b.

2   Jupiter and Fate in the Rest of the *Metamorphoses*

Ovid provides clarity where Vergil had been obscure and complicated. In Ovid's view, the Parcae, not Jupiter, are responsible for the destiny of the world. The Parcae are present also in the *Aeneid*,[35] but their role there is wholly mysterious, and there is no way of locating them in a triangulation with Jupiter and Fate. In the *Metamorphoses*, instead, the role of the Parcae as a power superior to that of Jupiter is maintained through the whole poem. At *Met.* 5.532 the first and only occurrence of the name of the Parcae in the poem appears in Jupiter's mouth. Ceres asks Jupiter about allowing Proserpina to come back to the world of the living. The god, after saying that, after all, Pluto is really in love with her daughter, and that in any case he would not be an unworthy husband for her, assures her that, if Ceres really wants to part them, Proserpina will reach the sky again—but only if in the Underworld she has touched no food: *nam sic Parcarum foedere cautum est* ("for such is the rule decreed by the Parcae," 5.532). Ceres is determined to win her daughter back, but "Fate does not allow that" (*non ita fata sinunt*, 534), because she has eaten seven seeds from a pomegranate.[36] Already in this passage, then, the subordination of Jupiter's will to the decrees of the Parcae is clear. Ovid is explicit and coherent on this matter.

Ovid's vision of the relationship between Jupiter and Fate is confirmed by the passage in Book 1 where Jupiter is about to blast mankind with thunderbolts, but suddenly remembers that it was fated that some day the universe would collapse, devoured by a cosmic conflagration (1.253–258):

> Iamque erat in totas sparsurus fulmina terras,
> sed timuit, ne forte sacer tot ab ignibus aether
> conciperet flammas longusque ardesceret axis.
> esse quoque in fatis reminiscitur, adfore tempus,
> quo mare, quo tellus correptaque regia caeli
> ardeat et mundi moles operosa laboret.[37]

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35   Seven times: 1.22, 3.379–380, 5.798, 9.107, 10.419, 814–816, 12.147.

36   The only direct appearance of the Parcae in the *Metamorphoses* is at 8.451–456, in the story of Althaea and Meleager: right after Meleager's birth, the three sisters had placed in the fire a log, *staminaque impresso fatalia police nentes, / "tempora" dixerunt "eadem lignoque tibique, / o modo nate, damus." quo postquam carmine dicto / excessere deae …* ("and as they spun, with firm-pressed thumbs, the threads of fate, they said: 'We give to you, newly born child, and to this log, the same-life span.' After speaking this prophecy, the goddesses vanished," 8.453–456).

37   At 1.258 *moles operosa* (printed, among others, by Tarrant) is probably correct against the

And he was already ready to scatter lightning bolts all over the earth, but he feared that the sacred aether might be ignited by so many fires and that the distant axis of the world might burn. He also remembers that Fate had decreed that there would come a time when sea, land, and the royal palace of the sky would be seized by fire and burn, and the elaborate structure of the universe would be in distress.

There is a witty irony here: in a passage where Ovid most clearly affirms Jupiter's independence from Fate, what the god suddenly remembers is the *Stoic* doctrine of the final ἐκπύρωσις.[38] Also according to mainstream Stoic doctrine, however, Jupiter is of course to be *identified* with Fate: see e.g. Cic. *ND* 1.40 *idemque* (sc. Chrysippus) *etiam legis perpetuae et aeternae vim, quae quasi dux vitae et magistra officiorum sit, Iovem dicit esse eandemque* [*eundemque* Roby] *fatalem necessitatem appellat, sempiternam rerum futurarum veritatem* ("He also states that the power of the enduring and eternal law, which he calls the guide of life and mentor in our duties, is Jupiter, and he calls that law (or, with Roby, calls him) the necessity of Fate, the enduring truth of future events," trans. Walsh).[39] What Ovid presents here is a contradiction in terms: it is a profoundly un-Stoic Jupiter who remembers a doctrine about a fated, final, and Stoic, ἐκπύρωσις.[40] The philosophical paradox here highlights the fact that, already in this passage, Ovid shows us a Jupiter entirely subordinated to Fate.

Finally, there is a third passage in the *Metamorphoses* where Ovid theorizes about the relationship between Jupiter and Fate, the speech Jupiter gives to the assembled gods about the rejuvenation of Iolaus and the sudden growth of Cal-

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variant *proles obsessa* (also attested are *moles obsessa* and *m. onerosa*); at the very least, *mundi moles* is guaranteed by the echo (see e.g. Bömer 1969 and Barchiesi 2005 ad loc.) of Lucr. 5.94–96 *tris species tam dissimilis, tria talia texta / una dies dabit exitio, multosque per annos / sustentata ruet* **moles** *et machina* **mundi** ("three aspects so dissimilar, three such fabrics a single day will cause to die, and the massive structure of the world, sustained for many years, will collapse"). As Wheeler 2000, 27 notices, *reminiscitur* is the signal that Jupiter is remembering a specific text. Vanhaegendoren 2005 defends *proles obsessa*, but his arguments are inconclusive.

38   See e.g. Bömer 1969 and Barchiesi 2005 ad loc.

39   For a list of "passages in which the identity of the Stoic εἱμαρμένη and Zeus is declared," see Pease 1955, 269.

40   Vanhaegendoren 2005, 203 sees the humor of the passage in the fact that the god is apparently unaware that at the moment of the ekpyrosis "everything and everyone in the universe will burn *except Jupiter*" (my emphasis); but Jupiter can all the same be legitimately worried of the premature destruction of the universe, including the *regia caeli*, that his thunderbolts might provoke; Ovid does not say that Jupiter is concerned about *his own* survival.

lirhoe's sons at *Met.* 9.426–438. This passage has been studied by Luigi Galasso in an excellent article, and I will limit myself here to highlighting some of its Vergilian connections.[41]

As Barchiesi (2001, 131) says, Jupiter's description of the *tabularia* of Fate arrives "just in time, since the poem has had little to say about Fate." It is true that the *Metamorphoses* had little to say about Fate, but that little is always associated with the role of Jupiter vis-à-vis Fate, is always developed in relationship with the *Aeneid*, especially with Jupiter's prophecy in Book 1 and his intervention in the council of Book 10, and is also pointedly coherent—pointedly, that is, in constant and polemical contrast with Vergil's incoherence on this matter. However, especially in the council scene of Book 9, some of Vergil's more problematic approaches to the relationship of Jupiter with Fate might also be reproduced, or at least hinted at, by Ovid.

After the miraculous rejuvenation of Iolaus through Hercules and Hebe's intercession, the goddess Themis makes a prophetic speech in which she announces, among other things, that the children of Callirhoe are also about to be miraculously transformed into grown-up men, courtesy of Jupiter himself. The other gods are outraged by this news, and each of them would like to be able to rejuvenate their sons. Jupiter intervenes to rebuke the riotous gods, and to explain that those miracles can happen only because they are required by Fate, which is a power stronger than all the other gods, including Jupiter himself (9.426–438):

> cui studeat, deus omnis habet, crescitque favore
> turbida seditio, donec sua Iuppiter ora
> solvit, et "o! nostri siqua est reverentia" dixit
> "quo ruitis? tantumne aliquis sibi posse videtur,
> fata quoque ut superet? fatis Iolaus in annos,   430
> quos egit, rediit; fatis iuvenescere debent
> Calliroe geniti, non ambitione nec armis.
> vos etiam, quoque hoc animo meliore feratis,
> me quoque fata regunt. quae si mutare valerem,

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41   Galasso 2002 not only discusses well the passage of Book 9 in its literary and ideological context, but also notices how Ovid intends to contrast his view of the relationship Jupiter/Fate to that of Vergil, and to correct it (130–131): "La struttura diversa dell'epos virgiliana gli è naturalmente ben presente: c'è una chiara volontà di opposizione-correzione quando inserisce la profezia consolatoria di Giove a Venere nell'ultimo libro (vv. 807–842) dopo aver qui ben chiarito la questione del rapporto tra gli dèi e il fato, eliminando così ogni possibilità di fraintendimento o confusione."

nec nostrum seri curvarent Aeacon anni,   435
perpetuumque aevi florem Rhadamanthus haberet
cum Minoe meo, qui propter amara senectae
pondera despicitur, nec quo prius ordine regnat."

Each god has someone whose cause they support, and because of their partiality the turbulent mutiny grows, until Jupiter opens his mouth and says: "Oh, if you have any reverence for me, where are you rushing to? Does anyone think he is so powerful as to overcome Fate as well? By Fate Iolaus was restored to the years which he had passed. By Fate the children of Callirhoe must become men before their time, not by ambition or arms. Fate rules even you, and, yes, even me, so that you can tolerate this with a better mind. If I had power to alter it, old age would not bend low my Aeacus, and Rhadamanthus would enjoy a perpetual youth with my Minos, who is now despised because of the bitter weight of old age, and no longer reigns in his former majesty."

Let us see how Ovid develops here his critical discourse about Jupiter and Fate in the *Aeneid*.[42] Jupiter's address to the seditious gods at *Met.* 9.428–438 clearly recalls Jupiter's addresses to the less literally seditious but still riotous gods at *Aen.* 10.6–15 and 104–112.[43] On the other hand, the more general context rather recalls the other "fateful" passage in *Aen.* 10, that is the Hercules-Jupiter scene at 10.464–473; in both cases the issue revolves around the possibility of subverting Fate as far as regards the destiny of a son of a divinity, to be saved from death in the *Aeneid*, from old age in the *Metamorphoses*; and in both cases Jupiter reminds his interlocutor(s) that he himself has suffered similar tragedies (respectively, the death of Sarpedon, and the old age of Rhadamanthus and Minos).[44]

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42 The gods' "rebellion" as described at *Met.* 9.418–427 also recalls the rebellion of the *ignobile vulgus* in the first simile of the *Aeneid* at 1.148–150; in the *Aeneid* the word *seditio* occurs only there (1.149) and at 9.340 (*Drances seditione potens*); in the *Met.* (in the nominative as at *Aen.* 1.49) only at 9.427; see Galasso 2000, 1244, "Ovidio usa per il concilio divino le espressioni che Virgilio adopera per l'*ignobile uulgus*" (cf. Galasso 2002, 129). The scandalized reaction of the gods to the "miracles" of *Met.* 9, and their desire to rejuvenate their own sons, also "realize" what Hera feared would have happened if Jupiter had saved Sarpedon at *Il.* 16.443–449.

43 See Galasso 2002, 130: "Questo invito alla concordia può ricordarci quello che si ha in Virgilio, nel concilio degli dei del libro X (v. 9)."

44 Kenney 1986, 429 (on 9.430 *fata quoque ut superet*) prefers to refer the reader to the Homeric scene which is the model of the Vergilian one: "'To conquer fate': this recalls the scene

Ovid once again interprets and corrects Vergil and his view of the relation-ship Jupiter-Fate. In this case, he makes explicit what in the Hercules-Jupiter passage was, as we have seen above, ambiguously expressed. While Homer's Zeus in *Iliad* 16 was clearly presented as more powerful than Fate, which was then possibly to be identified with his own will (for Hera says that he could have saved Sarpedon from his fated death), Vergil's Jupiter, though directly echoing the words of Zeus, was ambiguously presented as acquiescing to a Fate about which it was unclear whether he could have subverted it or not. Why is Zeus let-ting Sarpedon die? We cannot know: no explanation is given for his behavior. Ovid's Jupiter, on the contrary, is very clear, and removes all doubts: *me quoque fata regunt. quae si mutare valerem* etc. (434).

Additionally, the intertextuality of the scene in *Metamorphoses* 9 with the council of the gods that opens *Aen.* 10 can be seen as an interpretative and corrective move. In this case, Vergil's Jupiter was also unclear and contradic-tory regarding his relationship with Fate. In his first, opening speech he refers to a past prohibition on his part, a move which might seem to suggest that his power is stronger than that of Fate (even if the other gods evidently have in their turn the power of contesting it); furthermore, the prophecy of the Punic Wars (*adveniet iustum pugnae* (*ne arcessite*) *tempus* etc., "there shall come the right time for war, do not hasten it," 11–14) which he delivers immediately afterwards contains no reference to Fate as having any role in its historical necessity. His second and final speech, however, closes with a declaration which since antiq-uity has been seen as hinting at a different conception: *rex Iuppiter omnibus idem. / fata viam invenient* ("Jupiter is an equal king for everybody. The Fates will find their way," 112–113). Servius Danielis observes: *et videtur hic ostendisse, aliud esse fata, aliud Iovem* ("and here he seems to show that Fate is one thing, Jupiter another"). What is more, Servius' comment here implies a further dis-tinction between Jupiter and Fate: *scit enim hoc esse fatale, ut Aeneas imperet in Italia* ("for Jupiter knows that it is fated that Aeneas rule over Italy"): once again, Jupiter is not identified with Fate; he is the one who *knows* Fate (Tim-

in the *Iliad* in which Zeus debates whether to save Sarpedon from death at the hands of Patroclus and is rebuked by Hera, who remarks that if Sarpedon is spared all the other gods will claim exemption for their own favourites (*Iliad* xvi. 440 ff.)." But this Homeric reference cannot but recall also the Hercules-Jupiter scene in *Aen.* 10. Both passages are appropriately cited by Galasso 2002, 130: "Il concilio degli dèi si chiude quindi con una confessione di impotenza. Tuttavia forse potremmo individuare l'effetto di una sugges-tione del colloquio tra Ercole e Giove nel x libro dell'*Eneide*, in cui Giove, per far accettare ad Ercole la morte di Pallante, ricorda come egli (e lo stesso è toccato ad altri dèi) abbia dovuto sopportare l'uccisione di Sarpedone, suo figlio, davanti alle mura di Troia (470 s. *Quin occidit una / Sarpedon, mea progenies*; cf. anche *Il.* 16.433 …)."

panaro 1989, 1272). Harrison himself in his note here refers to Jupiter's "apparent separation of his own powers from those of destiny" (Harrison 1991, 90).[45] Ovid removes the contradiction inherent in Vergil's depiction of Jupiter in the council of the gods, again resolutely "following" the "Servian" approach to the problem—so that once again we might wonder if discussions of the kind presupposed by the Servian commentary were perhaps already current at the time of the composition of the *Metamorphoses*.

But let us come back to the other major contradiction aroused by Jupiter's speeches in the council of *Aeneid* 10, that between his reference to the war in Latium as something he had previously forbidden (6–10) and what he has said to Venus in Book 1 (293 *bellum ingens geret Italia* etc.). According to the most popular critical approach to this issue, which is ultimately inspired by Servius Danielis' note on 10.8, which we have discussed above, Jupiter is here mendacious in his information to the other gods: his words to Venus in Book 1 would demonstrate that he fully knows that the war in Latium was fated to happen, or even that he *wanted* the war to happen.[46] Though the problem is very complicated, and probably insoluble, the inconsistency here between *Aeneid* 1 and 10 is unmistakable. Now, if there are no inconsistencies in Ovid's depiction of the relationship Jupiter-Fate *inside* the episode of Book 9 we are considering— Jupiter's speech to the rebellious gods about the rejuvenation of Iolaus and the sudden growth of the sons of Callirhoe—and between this depiction and that which Ovid will give in Book 15, there are perhaps at least some degrees of inconsistency between this episode and what *preceded* it in Book 9 itself.

In his speech to the rebellious gods, Jupiter insists most clearly and most resolutely that the miracles that have outraged them had been decreed by Fate. As Galasso says, "Non c'è nessun passo nella poesia ovidiana in cui la parola *fatum* venga ripetuta con un pathos anche lontanamente simile. Giove ha qualche difficoltà a spiegare che si tratta di una forza al di sopra degli dèi, dovendo al contempo giustificare il ringiovanimento di Iolao e la crescita dei figli di Calliroe" (2002, 129–130). The emphasis Jupiter places on the superiority of Fate over all other powers, himself included, betrays the difficulty he encounters in explaining to the other gods that the rejuvenation of Iolaus and the growth of the sons of Callirhoe have happened because of the decrees of Fate, since nothing in the previous narrative had even remotely suggested that such was the case. Both the cases which have provoked the indignation of the gods in *Meta-*

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45   The close of Jupiter's second speech, of course, prepares the way for an interpretation of the Hercules-Jupiter scene later in the book as implying a Jupiter powerless before Fate.

46   Harrison 1991, 59–60; Hardie 1998, 95–96; Thomas 2004–2005, 145–146; O'Hara 2007, 103 ("deceptive rhetoric").

morphoses 9 have been described as gifts conceded by some god or goddess as a response to someone else's prayers: Iolaus has been rejuvenated by Hebe, conquered by the prayers of his husband Hercules (*hoc illi dederat Iunonia muneris Hebe, / victa viri precibus*, 400–401); no reason is given for Hebe's request for the rejuvenation of Iolaus, but we know from Euripides' *Heraclidae* (849–858) that it had been Iolaus himself who had asked Hebe and Zeus about being made young again (for one day only) in order to seek revenge on his enemy Eurystheus: a very human and, apparently, scarcely a "fateful" reason. And of course, Iolaus invokes Hebe because she is the wife of his dear friend Hercules. As for the sons of Callirhoe, in Themis' prophecy, it is Jupiter himself who will concede to the suppliant Callirhoe "the gifts of his stepdaughter and daughter-in-law" (i.e. of Hebe), that is, will transform her sons into men while they are still in their childhood years (*tum demum magno petet hos Acheloia supplex / ab Iove Calliroe natis infantibus annos; / ... / Iuppiter his motus privignae dona nurusque / praecipiet, facietque viros inpubibus annis*, 413–417). If the troublesome line 415 (*neve necem sinat esse diu victoris inultam*, "and he will not allow the death of the winner be unavenged") were to be parenthesized, as in Tarrant's text, Themis would not even explain the reason for Callirhoe's rather peculiar request—in any case, we know from other sources that she wanted her sons to avenge the killing of her husband Alcmaeon: vengeance, again. And while Themis does not say anything either about why Jupiter did accede to Callirhoe's request, we know from Ps.-Apollodorus (3.91) that the two were lovers.[47]

There is no hint of Fate in these divine actions, either in what Ovid says or in what he left implicit and to be reconstructed by the astute reader.[48] This applies also to Jupiter's speech to the rebellious gods in *Metamorphoses* 9, in which, just as in his words to the equally rebellious gods in *Aeneid* 10, there is a

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47   See Galasso 2002, 125–126.

48   It might be relevant to notice that Book 9 had already seen another "miracle" determined by Jupiter's will without any reference to Fate: the apotheosis of Hercules at *Met.* 9.239–258 is decided by a personal initiative of Jupiter's, and the god's speech to the assembled gods is replete with verbs in the first person, exactly as is the speech of the "powerful" Jupiter of *Aen.* 1; there is even a precise verbal echo (noticed by Bömer 1977 ad loc.) of Jupiter's prophecy at *Met.* 9.254–255, *idque **ego** defunctum terra caelestibus oris / **accipiam***; this clearly alludes to Jupiter's words to Venus at *Aen.* 1.289–290 *hunc **tu** olim caelo spoliis Orientis onustum / **accipies** secura*. And note also Kenney 2011, 422: "il suo atteggiamento pacato [at *Met.* 9.242–243 *quos ita, sensit enim, laeto Saturnius ore / Iuppiter adloquitur*] richiama la scena dell'*Eneide* in cui rassicura Venere sul fatto che Enea, dopo tutti i suoi guai, fonderà una nuova città e sarà da lei accolto in cielo (*Aen.* 1.254–256)." Hercules' apotheosis is discussed in connection with Jupiter's speech at *Met.* 9.426–438, with a slightly different emphasis, by Galasso 2002, esp. 119–121.

strong suspicion that he may be not wholly honest in his insistence on the key role of Fate in human affairs.

Perhaps, then, Ovid not only interprets Vergil's inconsistencies in matters of Fate in order to "correct" them (his Jupiter is most clearly and explicitly dominated by Fate); he also hints at them in order to reproduce them, but more subtly.

3   Venus and Jupiter from Naevius to Ovid

We have seen above the metanarrative significance of *sola*, the word with which Jupiter addresses Venus at the beginning of his speech at *Met*. 15.807: the goddess is not "alone" in wanting to save her son from fated death; Jupiter himself had wished to save his son Sarpedon from fated death in *Iliad* 16. Similar metanarrative implications are also present in the last words of this first, introductory section of Jupiter's speech to his daughter: *invenies illic incisa adamante perenni / fata tui generis: legi ipse animoque notavi / et referam, ne sis **etiamnum** ignara futuri* (813–815): the importance of *etiamnum* has been remarked upon by both Barchiesi and Hardie: "What follows clearly shows that Jupiter can speak thus because he has read the *Aeneid*, and he is going to replay for Venus' behalf—who must be a little absent minded, cf. 815: *ne sis etiamnum ignara futuri*—the prophecy concerning the fate of the Julian line that he had already expounded for her in *Aeneid* 1" (Barchiesi 2001, 131); *"Etiamnum* potrebbe esprimere sorpresa che Venere debba ancora sentirsi ricordare il futuro: dopo tutto, proprio lei aveva portato il profetico scudo a Enea" (Hardie 2015, 604, with reference to Barchiesi). The reference to Jupiter's prophecy in *Aeneid* 1 is of course especially appropriate, since here Ovid is reworking that very scene. This cross-reference to a previous meeting of Jupiter and Venus in the epic tradition is not just a typically Ovidian move, but fits into an already Vergilian pattern of cross-referencing between epic divine dialogues which Ovid, once again, both exaggerates and "clarifies."

A problematic aspect of the passages of the *Aeneid* dealing with divine assemblies or dialogues is that they constantly refer to an epic tradition of divine communications which is difficult or impossible to reconstruct, and not only because of the loss of Naevius' and Ennius' poems. For example: (i) in Book 1 Venus refers to promises that Jupiter had made to her in the past; when and where this happened we do not know, even if the reader acquainted with Ennius and Naevius was certainly in a better position than we are in today to recognize this reference; (ii) at 4.227–228 Jupiter refers to some unknown episode in which Venus vouched for her son to him: *non illum nobis genetrix*

pulcherrima talem / promisit ("It was not such a man as this that his beautiful mother promised us"); (iii) as we have seen, in the divine assembly of Book 10, Jupiter refers to some unknown meeting in which he had prohibited the war in Latium. Vagueness and confusion also characterize the possibility of foreseeing future divine communications: at 1.279–282 Jupiter predicts a reconciliation of Juno, but it is not immediately clear when this will happen, and it took Feeney's 1984 article to clarify once and for all that this reconciliation is not to be identified with the scene between Jupiter and Juno in Book 12.

The references of Vergil's Venus to Jupiter's past promises about the glorious future of the Trojans/Romans at *Aen.* 1.234–237 are particularly interesting from the perspective of the Venus-Jupiter scene in *Met.* 15. As was said above, in all probability there is here cross-referencing between the *Aeneid* and the epic poems of Naevius and Ennius. In the surviving fragments of Ennius' *Annals* there are of course (scanty) traces of the council of the gods in which the destiny of Romulus was discussed (*Ann.* 51–55 Sk.), but we have no knowledge of any "private" meeting between Jupiter and Venus in that poem. However, as is well known, such a meeting was featured in Naevius' *Bellum Poenicum*, and the Venus-Jupiter scene of *Aen.* 1 is allegedly modeled on it: *hic locus* [i.e. the storm and the Venus-Jupiter meeting in *Aen.* 1] *totus sumptus a Naeuio est ex primo libro Belli Punici. illic enim aeque Venus Troianis tempestate laborantibus cum Iove queritur et sequuntur verba Iouis filiam consolantis spe futurorum* ("all of this passage is derived from the first book of Naevius' *Bellum Poenicum*, for there too Venus complains to Jupiter while the Trojans are tossed by a tempest, and there follow Jupiter's words consoling his daughter with the hope of future things," Macrob. *Sat.* 6.2.30 = Naev. *BP* fr. 14 Strz.). It is probable that, while consoling Venus "with the hope of future things," Jupiter gave her those "books of the future" that (as we know from another source), the goddess gave in her turn to Anchises: *Naevius enim dicit Venerem libros futura continentes Anchisae dedisse* ("for Naevius says that Venus had given to Anchises books containing the future," Schol. cod. Par. lat. 7930 (11th century) on *Aen.* 7.123 = fr. 9 Strz.). This is a further reason to see a reference to the unrolling of a scroll of *fata* at *Aen.* 1.262 *longius et voluens fatorum arcana movebo* (see above),[49] and it raises

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49 Notice that the phrase *fatorum arcana* recurs both at 1.262 and at 7.123, where there is another allusion to the Naevian "books of the future." The scholium which preserves *B.P.* fr. 9 Strz. explains *reliquit* at *Aen.* 7.122–123 *genitor mihi talia* [i.e. the eating of the tables] *namque / (nunc repeto) Anchises fatorum arcana reliquit* ("for my father Anchises (now I remember it) left me the secrets of fate") as meaning either *mandavit* (i.e., evidently, "left me *verbal* record of the secrets of Fate") or *"libros reliquit" qui haec responsa continebant* ("'left me the books' which contained those responses"). The scholiast is clearly right, even

further complications in Ovid's depiction of Jupiter consulting the *tabularia* of the Parcae: is Ovid "returning" to Naevius' version of the dialogue between Venus and Jupiter? That is, was Naevius' Jupiter already just a simple reader of books of Fate written by other powers, or were those books his own work? We cannot know, but what is certain is that there is a "book of Fate"-related thread which connects the three Venus-Jupiter scenes in Naevius, Vergil, and Ovid.

In the *Metamorphoses* Ovid repeatedly plays upon the Vergilian difficulties concerning the cross-references between past and present divine meetings, both exaggerating and clarifying them. Mars' famous quotation of the words of Ennius' Jupiter at *Met.* 14.814 (= Enn. *Ann.* 54 Sk.) is to be seen in such terms, as an exaggeration of a Vergilian tendency to refer to past divine promises and past assemblies about which it is not very clear where and when they happened; Ovid, instead, is, once again, very clear. Furthermore, on the occasion of the apotheosis of Aeneas, Ovid ironically multiplies the reconciliations of Juno (14.581–582, 592–593), as a comment on the plurality of Juno's reconciliations in the *Aeneid* and the epic tradition.[50] On the other hand, in contrast with the remarkable memory of Mars in the later scene of the apotheosis of Romulus, and in striking contrast with the Vergilian tendency to refer to past promises and previous encounters, both Venus and Juno are presented as completely forgetful of Jupiter's promises of immortality for Aeneas in the *Aeneid*.[51]

Venus' forgetfulness resurfaces here in *Metamorphoses* 15 on the occasion of her dialogue with Jupiter. After all, Venus' forgetfulness has been literally evoked by the goddess herself in the speech she gives to every god she encounters at 765–778: *quid nunc antiqua recordor / damna mei generis? timor hic meminisse priorum / non sinit* ("Why do I remember now the ancient sufferings of my descendants? This present fear does not allow me to remember the past," 774–776). At the same time, we must bear in mind two further complications: (i) in his prophecy in *Aen.* 1, Jupiter has said nothing about the circumstances of the death of Julius Caesar, so Venus has at least some justification in her worrying about the homicidal conspiracy she is looking at; above all, (ii) in that prophecy it is also famously unclear whether Jupiter is referring to Caesar or to Augustus when he speaks of the *Troianus ... Caesar*, a *Iulius* descended

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if this is not an either/or situation: obviously, Anchises did not leave any books to Aeneas in the *Aeneid* (nor did he make any prophecy at all about the eaten tables, for that matter), but, using the verb *reliquit*, Vergil does allude to the Naevian version he has discarded (*pace* Horsfall 2000, 122: "nothing here suggests that Aen.'s inheritance was other than verbal *fatorum arcana*").

50   See Tissol 2002, 329–330, Casali 2018, 362–365.
51   See Casali 2018, 365–367.

from Iulus, whose power will end with the Ocean, and fame with the stars, and whom Venus will one day welcome in the sky as a god (*Aen.* 1.286–290). It is not easy to discern what exactly Ovid is doing with this Vergilian ambiguity. Surely, he once again clarifies: in the prophecy of Ovid's Jupiter, where both rulers are mentioned, it is very clear what refers to whom—what to Caesar, and what to Augustus—and already this might be clarification enough. Hardie, however, is probably right when he says that Ovid is primarily interested in supporting an identification of the *Troianus ... Caesar* with Julius Caesar rather than with Augustus: "Quando Giove conclude il suo discorso con un'istruzione a Venere di trasformare Giulio in un dio, ci può essere implicita una lettura del *Caesar* di *Aen.* 1.286–290 come Giulio piuttosto che come Augusto (289–290 *hunc tu olim caelo ... / accipies secura*, 'un giorno lo accoglierai sicura in cielo,'" Hardie 2015, 602). Where Vergil is obscure and ambiguous, Ovid corrects him.

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Apotheoses of the Poet

Philip Hardie

Ovid repeatedly looks forward to the posthumous immortality that he will enjoy through his fame as a poet. In the pre-exilic *corpus*, ring composition links the last poem in the first book of *Amores*, 1.15, and the Epilogue to the last book, perhaps not coincidentally the fifteenth, of the *Metamorphoses*, by the repeated boast of the continued life of a great, or a better, part of the poet after the funeral of his body.[1] There are further repetitions of this already repeated boast in the exilic poetry, where the thought of the poet's own fame, or of the fame that he bestows on others, is a consolation for the sadness and disempowerment brought on by exile.[2] These repetitions already perform the posthumous survival of Ovid's *fama*, in the form of the poet's statements about his *fama*, after the figurative "death" of the author.

It is the contention of this paper that Ovid's aspirations to the immortality of fame repeatedly intersect with a bolder aspiration, to achieve divine immortality. That intersection might be found already in the person of *Fama*, who, as Hesiod and Vergil tell us, is a god (Hes. *Op.* 764; *Aen.* 4.195 *dea foeda*).[3] It has been pointed out that coming at the end of the penultimate line of the Epilogue of the *Metamorphoses* the final syllable of *fama* is anceps, allowing for the possibility of taking it as nominative: Ovid will then say, not "I shall live through, in fame," but "I shall live as fame." And if Ovid **is** *Fama*, then he will occupy the position of power held by the personification of *Fama* at the beginning of *Metamorphoses* 12, a celestial *summa arx* which is a place very like the panopticon occupied by the epic Jupiter.[4] That would be in line with Ovid's defiant assertion at the beginning of the Epilogue of the *Metamorphoses* that he has finished a work immune to the destructive anger of Jupiter, a claim that, post-exile, becomes a statement about Ovid's relationship to the "god" who sent him into exile, Augustus, whether or not one believes that the Epilogue was written before or after Ovid was exiled.

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1 Korenjak 2004.
2 E.g. *Tr.* 1.6.35–36; 3.7.47–52; 4.10.121–132; 5.14.5–6; *Pont.* 4.16.1–4.
3 Cf. also Stat. *Theb.* 2.208, *Fama* a *dea turbida*.
4 Hardie 2012, 159–161.

Ovid hints therefore at equations both with the traditional Olympian gods and with the new-fangled kind of god that is a deified Caesar. I shall consider the latter kind of apotheosis for a while, and draw out some of the further, well-known intratextualities of the *Metamorphoses* Epilogue. Ovid's "better part" will soar *super alta … astra* (*Met.* 15.875–876, "above the lofty stars"), higher than the deified soul of Julius Caesar, which has been metamorphosed into a star, and higher than the *caelum* for which Augustus is destined in due course (15.449, 870). The survival of Ovid's *melior pars* ("better part") is a repetition of the experience of Hercules on the pyre, the vestments of his mortal flesh burned off to allow his *melior pars* to assume the august greatness and weight of a god, *Met.* 9.268–270, *sic, ubi mortales Tirynthius exuit artus, / parte sui meliore viget maiorque videri / coepit et augusta fieri gravitate verendus* ("Thus, when Hercules put off his mortal limbs, with his better part he grew strong, and began to appear larger, and to become awesome with an august weightiness"). The passage looks both back to Ovid's prediction of his continuing life in fame in *Amores* 1.15 (41–42, *ergo etiam cum supremus adederit ignis, / vivam, parsque mei multa superstes erit*, "So even when the final fire has consumed me, I shall live, and a great part of me will survive") and forward to the Epilogue of the *Metamorphoses*.

The use of *augusta* at *Met.* 9.270 alerts us to the Herculean model for the future apotheosis of the *princeps*. After his own death, Ovid will continue to follow the career of Augustus, the earlier stages of whose parallel tracks he will document in the autobiographical *Tristia* 4.10, as Janet Fairweather has demonstrated.[5] But Ovid's Herculean achievements are of a different kind from those of the *princeps*. If he will be a deified Hercules after his death, then he will rather be a Hercules Musarum, having created a monument of poetry. This would be another point of coincidence between the endings of the *Metamorphoses* and of the six books of the *Fasti*, which end with reference to the *templum Herculis Musarum*, built by Ennius' patron M. Fulvius Nobilior, and restored by L. Marcius Philippus. Alessandro Barchiesi has drawn attention to the closural force of an allusion to the description of the *templum Herculis Musarum* with which the first edition of Ennius' *Annals* may have concluded.[6]

One might detect another link with the apotheosis of the ruler in the figure of the phoenix, whose unique way of self-propagation and self-immortalization is recounted by Pythagoras earlier in *Metamorphoses* 15 (391–407). Unique, but paralleled in other phenomena of rebirth and regeneration: the serial reincarnations of the Pythagorean soul, itself a figure for the reception of Ovid's poetry

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5   Fairweather 1987, 193–196.
6   Barchiesi 1997, 270–271.

by generation after generation of readers; the rebirth of Troy from its ashes in the shape of Rome (the plot of the *Aeneid*); the rebirth of the dead emperor through apotheosis on the funeral pyre, even if the connection between imperial *consecratio* and the phoenix is explicitly attested only much later in imperial history. Ovid, too, will live on after his funeral pyre.[7]

It is not only the *princeps* whose divinity Ovid tries on for size. Through Ovid's characteristic practice of self-supplementation and self-revision,[8] divine pretensions are retrospectively written into the *Amores*. In *Fasti* 3 Ovid concludes his sequel to the Catullan account of Theseus, Ariadne and Bacchus with the catasterism to which Catullus makes no allusion (509–516): *occupat amplexu lacrimasque per oscula siccat, / et "pariter caeli summa petamus" ait: / "tu mihi iuncta toro mihi iuncta vocabula sumes: / nam tibi mutatae Libera nomen erit, / sintque tuae tecum faciam monimenta coronae, / Volcanus Veneri quam dedit, illa tibi"* ("[Bacchus] put his arms about [Ariadne], dried her tears with kisses, and said, 'Let us together make for the heights of heaven. As you shared my bed, so shall you share my name; for in your changed shape your name will be Libera, and I will see to it that with you will be the memorial of your crown, which Vulcan gave to Venus, and she to you'"). The promise that Bacchus makes to his girlfriend echoes the promise with which Ovid hopes to secure the favors of his as yet unnamed *puella* in *Amores* 1.3.25–26 *nos quoque per totum pariter cantabimur orbem / iunctaque semper erunt nomina nostra tuis* ("We too will be coupled as the subject of song through all the world, and your name will always be joined with mine"). This is a union within the immortality of fame, but the later echo of this couplet in the words of Bacchus prompts a comparison with the divine couple of *Fasti* 3.[9] Stephen Heyworth, in his commentary on *Fasti* 3, notes that "In the ascent to divinity, combined with a change of name to one like her husband's [i.e. from 'Ariadne' to 'Libera'], Libera bears an obvious similarity to Livia, whose godhead is predicted by Carmentis at *Fasti* 1.536, *sic Augusta novum Iulia numen erit*" ("So shall Julia Augusta be a new divinity").[10] The change of name is something shared by Livia-Augusta with the woman to whom Ovid promises immortal fame—assuming that the unnamed *puella* of *Amores* 1.3 is Corinna, and assuming that Corinna is an elegiac pseudonym. The passage in *Fasti* 3 thus has the further retrospective effect of forging a connection between the love lives of Ovid and Augustus, another feature in the parallel lives of poet and *princeps*.

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7   See Vial 2008.

8   On which see illuminatingly Martelli 2013.

9   Hardie 2002, 39–40.

10   Heyworth 2019 on *Fasti* 3.511–512.

Ovid's comparison of the fame that he will bestow on his *puella* with the fame of Io, Leda and Europa (*Am.* 1.3.21–24) puts the poet in the role of Jupiter. McKeown notes that "A liaison with a god was normally considered sufficient in itself to ensure a mortal woman … immortal fame," but that here "Ovid suggests that such immortal fame is assured only if the liaison is celebrated in poetry." McKeown compares *Amores* 3.12.33–34, where the fame of Jupiter's love-affairs (transformation into bird, gold, bull) is said to be dependent on poetry, and refers to the statement at *Ex Ponto* 4.8.55, *di quoque carminibus, si fas est dicere, fiunt* ("Gods too are made by songs, if it is right to say that"). This line of thought will draw even tighter the comparison between the shared fame of Ovid and his *puella*, and the shared fame of Bacchus and the deified Ariadne. Finally, it might be noted that of the three rape victims of Jupiter referred to at the end of *Amores* 1.3 (Io, Leda, Europa) only Io is named directly. She is also set apart from the other two women by the fact that she becomes a god, and that as a god she changes her name, from Io to Isis.

Another retrospective, allusive divinization of the poet is effected if we read back from *Metamorphoses* 1 to the *Amores*. The encounter between Apollo and Cupid that leads to Apollo's erotic pursuit of Daphne, the *primus amor* of the *Metamorphoses*, is, as is generally accepted, a translation into the world of myth of Ovid's encounter with Cupid in *Amores* 1.[11] The allusion to the *Amores* contributes to the play of genres in the *Metamorphoses*, as the *perpetuum carmen* is sent off its epic course into the world of elegy. But the allusion to the *Metamorphoses* that is consequently built retrospectively into the *Amores* has the effect of investing Ovid with the divine glamour of Apollo. The Apollo of *Metamorphoses* 1 looks back to *Amores* 1, but he also looks forward to Ovid's closing assertion of his undying fame in the Epilogue of the *Metamorphoses*. In founding the Pythian games to celebrate his killing of the Python, Apollo shares the goal and vocabulary of Ovid's bid for immortality: with 1.445, *neve operis famam posset delere vetustas* ("so that lapse of time should not obliterate the fame of the deed"), compare *Met.* 15.871–879 *iamque opus exegi … nomenque erit indelebile nostrum … fama … vivam* ("Now I have completed a work … my name will be unerasable … in fame … I shall live"). In his closing words addressed to the tree that is now Daphne, Apollo makes the laurel the emblem of undying fame, declaring *tu quoque perpetuos semper gere frondis honores* (1.565, "You too bear always the honour of everlasting leaves"): the laurel wreath that is the aspiration of the poet of the *perpetuum carmen*, "everlasting" as well as "con-

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11   Nicoll 1980.

tinuous."[12] In looking back to *Amores* 1 and forward to the Epilogue, the Apollo of *Met.* 1 replicates the same Janus-headed glance as Hercules on his pyre in *Metamorphoses* 9 (see above).

Bacchus and Apollo are disguises with which Ovid can feel comfortable: they are after all the gods of poetry. Aspiring to the role of Jupiter is more problematic. To compare oneself to the serial rapist king of the gods in *Amores* 1.3 contradicts the poet's protestation of undying fidelity to one woman. But it is in *Amores* 2.1 that Ovid's Jovian pretensions seem to fall apart totally. In his version of the epic *recusatio*, Ovid says that he was setting out to sing a Gigantomachy: *in manibus nimbos et cum Iove fulmen habebam, / quod bene pro caelo mitteret ille suo. / clausit amica fores: ego cum Iove fulmen omisi; / excidit ingenio Iuppiter ipse meo* (15–18, "In my hands I had the storm-clouds and Jupiter with a thunderbolt such as he might successfully hurl in defence of his heaven: my girlfriend closed the door. I dropped Jupiter and his thunderbolt; Jupiter himself fell out of my mind").[13] In this version of the poet's saying that he is doing what he is describing as being done, Ovid has the thunder clouds and thunderbolt "in his hands," like Jupiter preparing to blast the Giants.[14] But his girlfriend's use of the more powerful weapon of the doorbolt disables Ovid's attempt to handle the thunderbolt.[15] Nevertheles, Ovid may have the last laugh: *excidit ingenio Iuppiter ipse meo*, "Jupiter fell out of my poetic abilities," but perhaps simultaneously suggesting the image of a Jupiter being born from the head of Ovid, as Athena was born from the head of Jupiter:[16] *di quoque carminibus fiunt* (*Ex Ponto* 4.8.55).

Ovid has another go at sharing a role with Jupiter in *Metamorphoses* 1. The first tale of what might be called the regular pattern of metamorphosis in the poem, a narrative about the actions of a human or humans which results in the metamorphosis of the body of that person or persons into a new, non-human, shape, is the story of Lycaon, which is told by Jupiter to the council of gods (1.209–243). Thus the first of the *Metamorphoses*' many internal narrators, who all in one way or another function as doubles of the primary narrator, is the supreme god Jupiter. As the first such narrator, Jupiter may be thought of as the originary model. But the ways in which Jupiter's angry and moralistic narration

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12   Hardie 2002, 49–50.
13   See McKeown 1998 ad loc. for the equivocations in *in manibus*, "have in hand a poem" / "I had in my hands thunder clouds and lightning bolts along with Jupiter," and *excidit*, "forgot about" / "fell out of."
14   He also has Jupiter "in his hands"—how to get a handle on that?
15   On the pun in *fulmen* on door- and thunderbolt see McKeown 1998 on lines 19–20.
16   For another figurative application of the birth of Athena see Lucr. 3.14–15 with Kenney 2014 ad loc.

of his version of the Justice of Zeus is at odds with many of the narratives that follow have been extensively discussed. The epic narrator shares in the omniscience of the supreme god, the plot of the *Iliad* is coextensive with *Dios boule*, and Jupiter's word directs the Fate-driven plot of the *Aeneid*. Ovid's Jupiter is the very opposite of an objective epic narrator. But then the same might be said of Ovid as narrator.

Jupiter of course is not the god who presides over the beginning of the story told in Ovid's epic *ab origine mundi*. That honor goes to the *deus et melior ... natura* (1.21, "god and better nature") who presides over the creation of the ordered universe out of the primal chaos. This god is unnamed: one name might be Ovid, if we follow Stephen Wheeler's seductive reading of the Ovidian cosmogony as a version of the Homeric Shield of Achilles. Cosmogony as ecphrasis reverses the sequence of art imitating nature, and sets artistic creation, a poet's verbal conjuring up of the work of a visual artist, at the beginning of the world. "The *deus et melior natura* may therefore be read as a figure for the poet, and the ordering of the universe as a metaphor for creation of the poem; thus the 'real' subject of Ovid's cosmogony may be the literary creation of *Metamorphoses*, just as the shield of Achilles is emblematic of the creation of the *Iliad*."[17]

This opening bid for the status of a poetic demiurge, a kind of super-god, is at the same time a bid for joint divinity with Vergil. As I have argued elsewhere,[18] the making and ecphrasis of the Shield of Aeneas are also figures for the demiurgic pretentions of the epic poet, and, furthermore, a bid on the part of Vergil to equal the universal powers of Homer, the poetic god whose divinity is given spectacular expression on the Relief of Archelaus (Figure 18.1), not least through the mirroring of the person of Zeus, at the top of the panel, *in summa arce*, in the figure of Homer in the bottom register, receiving homage from assorted personifications of literary genres and Virtues.[19]

Vergil betrays no anxiety of influence with regard to Homer, and neither does Ovid with regard to Vergil in the opening sequence of the *Metamorphoses*. This is in contrast to the modesty expressed by Statius, addressing his own poem in the *envoi* to the *Thebaid*, and warning it against aspirations to divinity: *vive, precor, nec tu divinam Aeneida tempta, / sed longe sequere et vestigia semper adora* (12.816–817, "Live on, I pray, but do not try to rival the divine *Aeneid*, but follow at a distance and always worship her footsteps"). But there are moments when Statius' predecessors also have their doubts about celestial aspirations.

17   Wheeler 1995, 117.
18   Hardie 1986a, ch. 8; Hardie 1986b.
19   See recently Hunter 2018, 2–3.

FIGURE 18.1   Archelaus of Priene, *Apotheosis of Homer*. Marble relief, British Museum, 3rd
                 c. BCE.

For Vergil this is most obviously the case when, at the end of the second *Georgic*, he draws back from his Aratean-Lucretian ambition to scale the heights of natural philosophy, and rests content with the low-lying valleys and rivers of the countryside (*Geo.* 2.483–489). Vergil wishes that the Muses would show him the paths of the sky and the stars (*Geo.* 2.477, *caelique vias et sidera monstrent*), which could mean either teach him about astronomy, or show him the paths that lead to heaven.[20]

The way to the heavens is what Ovid's Phaethon asks of his father the Sun, and what Daedalus makes possible for himself and Icarus through his craftsman-artist's skill.[21] The metapoetic content of Ovid's narratives of Phaethon and Daedalus has been expertly analyzed by, among others, Alison Sharrock and Llewelyn Morgan.[22] Recently, Alessandro Schiesaro has brilliantly shown that the Phaethon episode is both a critique of the sublime pretensions of the philosophical poetry of Lucretius, who aspires to follow in the footsteps of one whom he praises for his *divina mens* (Lucr. 3.15), and whom he hails as a god (5.8), and also an expression of Ovid's anxieties about his own sublime longings and his desire to approach divinity.[23] Phaethon attempts to play the part of a god, driving the chariot of his father the Sun god. He takes in his hands the reins of the chariot of the sun ("*corripe lora manu*," 2.145; *manibusque datas contingere habenas / gaudet*, 151–152), just as Ovid has in his hands the storm clouds and thunderbolt of Jupiter in *Amores* 2.1. Ovid drops the thunderbolt, and Phaethon lets go of the reins (*mentis inops gelida formidine lora remisit*, 2.200, "powerless to think and frozen by panic he let go of the reins"). The Ovid of *Amores* 2.1 is unable to write lofty epic poetry about the gods; Phaethon proves unable to sustain a divine sublimity. The Daedalus of *Ars* 2 asks for pardon from Jupiter for attempting to journey to the sky, and asserts that he is not trying to reach for the stars (*restat iter caeli: caelo temptabimus ire. / da veniam coepto, Iuppiter alte, meo. / non ego sidereas adfecto tangere sedes*, *Ars* 2.37–39, "A path through the sky is all that remains: we will attempt a path through the sky. Lofty Jupiter, pardon my venture. I am not striving to reach the starry abodes"). He is not trying to supplant the gods, like the Giants; but the venture is still open to misunderstanding. In the version of *Metamorphoses* 8, those who watch Daedalus and Icarus flying through the sky are amazed, and take them for gods (*vidit et obstipuit, quique aethera carpere possent / credidit*

20   Hardie 1986a, 37.
21   With *caeli vias* cf. in particular *Ars* 2.37–40 "*restat iter caeli: caelo temptabimus ire .... qua fugiam dominum nulla nisi ista via est.*"
22   Sharrock 1994; Morgan 2003.
23   Schiesaro 2014.

esse deos, 219–220, "he saw and was amazed, and believed that those who could travel through the sky were gods").[24] Icarus is undone by his *audacia*, expressed in a phrase that could mean either simply the desire to reach the sky, or the desire for the heavenly existence of the gods (*caelique cupidine tractus*, 224).

In the exilic poetry Ovid is very quick to identify his own fall as a replication of the experiences of Icarus and Phaethon, and advises his new book not to court the wrath of Jupiter-Augustus: *vitaret caelum Phaethon, si viveret, et quos / optarat stulte, tangere nollet equos. / me quoque, quae sensi, fateor Iovis arma timere: / me reor infesto, cum tonat, igne peti* (*Tr.* 1.1.79–82, "Were he alive, Phaethon would avoid the sky, and would not wish to touch the horses for which he had made his foolish wish. I confess that I too fear the weapons of Jupiter, which I have already experienced; when it thunders, I think that the hostile fire is aimed at myself"); *dum petit infirmis nimium sublimia pinnis / Icarus, Icariis nomina fecit aquis* (89–90, "While Icarus aimed at heights too lofty on his feeble wings, he gave his name to the Icarian Sea"). In *Tristia* 3.4, Icarus is an example, with the Odyssean Elpenor, of one who fell through seeking the heights, *dum tecum vixi, dum me levis aura ferebat, / haec mea per placidas cumba cucurrit aquas* (15–16, "While I lived with you, while I was borne by a gentle breeze, this skiff of mine ran over calm waters"); *quid fuit, ut tutas agitaret Daedalus alas, / Icarus inmensas nomine signet aquas? / nempe quod hic alte, demissius ille volabat: / nam pennas ambo non habuere suas* (21–24, "Why was it that Daedalus flapped his wings safely, while Icarus gave his name to the boundless waters of a sea? Of course, because he flew high, while Daedalus flew lower. For both had wings that were not their own").

I shall not expatiate on Ovid's use of Phaethon and Daedalus to express anxiety about his own celestial aspirations, since Alessandro Schiesaro has covered the topic in such depth and with such insight. I conclude this chapter with a backward and a forward glance, backward to the handling of the poet's *caeli cupido* by Horace and Vergil, and forwards to one or two instances of reception. One of Schiesaro's sharp observations is that Phaethon's demand to his father, *ede notam tanti generis meque adsere caelo* (*Met.* 1.761, "offer proof of such an illustrious parentage and show that I belong to heaven") echoes, in vain, Horace's similar request for poetic recognition at the end of *Odes* 1.1, *quodsi me lyricis vatibus inseres, / sublimi feriam sidera vertice* (35–36, "but if you rank me among lyric poets I will touch the stars with my head lifted up high"). These last lines provide a further gloss on the poet's claim at 29–30 that "my ivy-wreaths

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24   As Lucretius' unenlightened humans vainly believe that celestial phenomena are evidence for the existence of gods: see Hoefmans 1994.

introduce me to the company of the gods above" (*me … dis miscent superis*). The verb *insero* is used by Horace at *Odes* 3.25.3–6, *quibus / antris egregii Caesaris audiar / aeternum meditans decus / stellis inserere et concilio Iovis?* ("In what caverns shall I be heard practicing how to place the eternal glory of Caesar in the stars and the council of Jupiter?"). The parallel points to an equation of the ambitions of poet and *princeps*, not the only occasion on which Horace as poet makes the bold poetic claim which receives perhaps its boldest formulation in the Epilogue to the poet Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. It is an equation that is also made in the proem to the third *Georgic*, where poet shares with *princeps* the role of *triumphator*. The celestial aspiration which Vergil shares with Caesar also emerges in the ring that links beginning and end of the second half of the *Georgics*: Vergil's aspiration to an Ennian celestial launch in a flying chariot at 3.8–9 *temptanda via est, qua me quoque possim / tollere humo victorque virum volitare per ora* ("I must attempt a path on which I too may raise myself from the ground and fly victorious over the lips of men") is picked up in Caesar's triumphal chariot journey to the heavens at 4.562 *viamque adfectat Olympo* ("and he is making his way to Olympus").[25] That connection ironizes Vergil's following self-deprecation as a poet *studiis florentem ignobilis oti* (*Geo*. 4.564, "flourishing in the pursuits of a peace unknown to fame"), and also sets in perspective the poet's lack of confidence in aspiring to *caeli viae* at the end of *Georgics* 2.

Horace's lyric ambitions in *Odes* 1.1 are realized in *Odes* 3.30, which itself projects an equivalence between poet and *princeps*: Horace calls himself *princeps* (13–14, *princeps Aeolium carmen ad Italos / deduxisse modos*, "to have been the first to have brought Aeolian song to Italian measures").[26] But the theme of heavenly aspirations runs through the first three odes in Book 1. *Odes* 1.1 first airs the theme in relation to the temporary "deification" of victors in the games, *palmaque nobilis / terrarum dominos evehit ad deos* (5–6, "the palm of victory carries the famous lords of the earth up to the gods"), and concludes with the poet's ambition for the skies. The second ode works towards the equation of *princeps* and god, in the fantasy that Mercury has come down to earth in the form of Augustus, who is himself on the path to celestial apotheosis (45, *serum in caelum redeas*). The third ode, the propempticon for the poet Vergil, works from reflections on the brazenness of the first man to launch a ship, to a general reflection on mankind's audacious and criminal breaking of boundaries, including as an example Daedalus' unnatural flight through the air, and reaching a climax in the last stanza, *nil mortalibus ardui est: / caelum ipsum petimus*

25　On the chariot image in these passages see Nelis 2008.

26　That Horace here uses *princeps* as an adjective (= *primus*) does not rule out allusion to **the** *princeps*.

stultitia neque / per nostrum patimur scelus / iracunda Iovem ponere fulmina (37–40, "Nothing is too lofty for mortals; in our folly we aim for the sky itself, and through our crimes do not let Jupiter lay down his angry thunderbolts").[27] Addressed to Vergil, the ode comments on the celestial and divine aspirations of poets, Horace included, as well as his closest friend. Ovid might have read the last two lines as an apposite comment on his own exilic experience. Horace's last word, probably, on the subject comes at the end of the *Ars poetica*, where Empedocles is the mad poet who desires divinity, *deus immortalis haberi / dum cupit* (464–465, "while longing to be considered an immortal god").[28] The desire for divinity is prompted by the same urge that a few lines later is described as *famosae mortis amorem* (469, "desire for a famous death"). For a certain kind of poet, *fama* and divinity are two sides of the same coin.

Ovid's confidence and Ovid's anxiety may have an "Ovidian" ring about them, but the interplay between the two attitudes also places him in a tradition, a tradition of poets with celestial aspirations. To insert himself into that tradition is at once a bold assertion of Ovid's sense of his own worth—"I am up there with Vergil and Horace"—and also the source of anxiety—"am I as good as Vergil and Horace?"

For a much later example of a representation of artistic apotheosis which situates aspiration to such within a tradition of great artists, inclusion among whom is the object of the aspiration, see Ingres' *Apotheosis of Homer* of 1827 (Figure 18.2), a visual depiction of the apotheosis of poetry, commissioned as a ceiling painting in the Louvre. Homer is crowned by the winged and levitating figure of Victory bearing a palm, in front of an Ionic temple façade, with ΟΜΗΡΟΣ ΘΕΟΣ inscribed on the frieze. In the pediment a figure *capite velato* is borne upwards by the eagle of Jupiter. In a painting that is almost the apotheosis of 19th-century neoclassicism, Ingres imitates and emulates a famous earlier painting of the elevation of the arts, Raphael's *Parnassus* (Figure 18.3) and also looks to Raphael's *School of Athens*. In Raphael's *Parnassus* the setting is the top of a mountain, not the skies, but the skyward ambition, registered in the Ingres painting by the winged Victory and the eagle, is conveyed by Raphael through the upward gazes of Apollo, in the center, and of the blind Homer, looking to spiritual realms beyond the reach of human senses. Raphael is one of the figures in Ingres' painting, led by the hand by Apelles, so extending the Classical tradition back, beyond the Roman Renaissance, to antiquity. That sense of

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27   The allusion to this line at *Fasti* 1.307, *sic petitur caelum,* raises the question of how we should take Ovid's apparently unconcerned assertion of the legality of the astronomer's ascent to the heavens.

28   See Hardie, 2018, 276–277.

FIGURE 18.2   Ingres, *Apotheosis of Homer*, 1827. Musée du Louvre.

tradition is also expressed in the figures, behind Raphael, of Vergil and Dante (both also present on Raphael's *Parnassus*, flanking Homer). Vergil is higher than Dante, and appears to be leading him upwards; while Vergil's gaze in turn is fixed on Homer, higher in the pictorial field than all the flesh and blood figures other than the goddess Victory. This is the Neoclassical judgement on the comparison of Homer and Vergil. Ingres' imitation of Raphael acknowledges Raphael's position at the summit of Classical art, and also asserts Ingres' own claim to be a successor to Raphael, so claiming his own position in the pantheon of great Classical artists.

Ingres also knew the "Apotheosis of Homer" relief by Archelaus of Priene (found in Italy, probably in 1658), with its Zeus-like figure of the divine Homer being crowned by *Chronos* and *Oikoumene*, reflecting the seated figure of Zeus, accompanied by his eagle, in the pediment-shaped upper register.[29] With the

29   Rosenblum 1967, 130 refers to "a Hellenistic bas-relief that Ingres knew," presumably the Archelaus relief. In Ingres' painting Herodotus burns incense; in the Archelaus relief *Mythos* as a boy stands in attendance with a sacrificial jug, while the female figure of *Historia* sprinkles incense on the altar.

FIGURE 18.3   Raphael, *Parnassus*, 1509. Stanze di Raffaello, Palace of the Vatican, Vatican City.

1827 *Apotheosis of Homer* compare the much later (1853) *Apotheosis of Napoleon I*, painted for a ceiling in the Hôtel de Ville of Paris, which showed a nude Napoleon borne up on a *quadriga*, accompanied by Fame crowning him; the eagle of Jupiter flies above.[30] The visual parallels show how naturally for Ingres, as for the Augustan poets, celebration of *poeta* mirrors celebration of *princeps*. The *Apotheosis of Napoleon I* was propaganda for Napoleon III, nephew of Napoleon I: on the steps of the throne beneath the ascendant Napoleon is the inscription *In nepote redivivus* ("Brought back to life in his nephew"), expressing the same renewal through succession that is represented in the *Apotheosis of Homer* through the paired figures of Vergil and Dante, and Apelles and Raphael, and which is exemplified in the painting itself, which asserts Ingres' claim to be the successor to Raphael.

Finally I turn to an English Renaissance text that is all about poetic fame, poetic gods, and poetic tradition, Ben Jonson's play *Poetaster*, in which Ovid, Virgil and Horace (and other Augustan poets) are all characters on stage.[31] In

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30   The painting itself was destroyed in 1871; a watercolor is preserved in the Louvre, a *modello* in the Musée Carnavalet, Paris (Figure 18.3), and a drawing in the British Museum. See Shelton 2005, 203–204, citing the descriptive text in the artist's notes.

31   See the discussion of Buckley in chapter 13 of this volume.

FIGURE 18.4   Ingres, modello of *Apotheosis of Napoleon I*, 1859. Musée Carnavalet, Paris.

this work, Jonson tests his own ambition to be recognized as the leading figure of an English literary Augustanism. Jonson identifies particularly with Horace, but the supreme poetic "god" is Virgil, whom Horace describes as "Bearing the nature and similitude / of a right heavenly body; most severe / In fashion and collection of himself, / And then as clear and confident as Jove" (v. i. 104–107). In the course of the play, Ovid is sent into exile following a "heavenly banquet" (IV. v.) in which the banqueters impersonate the Olympian gods (a scene based on Suetonius' report, *Aug.* 70, of the banquet of gods organized by Octavian). Ovid plays the part of Jupiter *Altitonans*, and his mistress Julia, Augustus' daughter, the part of Juno Saturnia. The banquet is rudely interrupted by the arrival of Caesar Augustus himself, to berate what we might see as a very Ovidian attitude towards the gods: "If you think gods but feigned and virtue painted,

/ Know we sustain an actual residence, / And with the title of an emperor / Retain his spirit and imperial power" (IV. vi. 47–50). The discomfiture of Ovid in the play has been taken as Jonson's comment on the Ovidianism of the 1580s and 1590s, including works such as Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. *Poetaster* opens with a scene in which Ovid appears reciting *Amores* 1.15, ending with the lines, "Envy the living, not the dead, doth bite: / For after death all men receive their right. / Then, when this body falls in funeral fire, / My name shall live, and my best part aspire" (81–84). "[M]y best part aspire" is an adaptation of the Latin *parsque mei multa superstes erit* (*Am.* 1.15.42), perhaps drawing out the vertical sense of *super* in *super-stes*. English "aspire," from *adspiro*, means "to breath desire towards, have a fixed desire for" (*OLD* 3), but influenced by various meanings of "spire" it also develops the meaning "to rise up, as an exhalation, or as smoke or fire" (*OLD* 5), a sense that combines with the meaning "desire."[32] Ovid's prophecy in *Amores* 1.15 has of course proved true, and Jonson's *Poetaster* is a part of the evidence. The power of Ovid's poetry to survive is further mirrored in the fact that the translation that Jonson puts in the mouth of Ovid is that of Christopher Marlowe, which had been banned at the time of its publication, but survives, as Ovid's poetry survived his exile. In terms of Ovid's own aspirations and anxieties, the Roman poet cannot sustain the role of Jupiter, but his skywards ambition for fame has been realized.

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32   See the following citations in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. *aspire*, v.: "Sense 5: 1591 Spenser *Ruines of Time* in *Complaints* 408, Pyramides, to heauen aspired. *a*1616 Shakespeare *Merry Wives of Windsor* (1623) v. v. 96, Whose flames aspire, As thoughts do blow them higher and higher; 1697 Dryden tr. Virgil *Georgics* iii, in tr. Virgil *Wks*. 120 Tisiphone, … every moment rises to the sight: Aspiring to the Skies [translating *Geo.* 3.553 *inque dies avidum surgens caput altius effert*]. Sense 6 (*figurative*, 5 "with some sense of 3 combined") 1610 P. Holland tr. W. Camden *Brit.* i. 299, It aspireth to the very top of ostentation. 1832 Wordsworth *Poems of Imag.* xli, Mount from the earth; aspire! aspire!"

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Death, the ultimate change, is an unexpected Leitmotiv of Ovid's career and reception. The eighteen contributions collected in this volume explore the theme of death and transfiguration in Ovid's own career and his posthumous reception, revealing a unity in diversity that has not been appreciated in these terms before now.

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