Muto Nititur Ore Loqui: Interactions of the Female Voice and Body in Roman Elegy

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the interaction of the female voice and body in Roman elegy. Specifically, I look at female speech that is quoted by male narrators and the written female voice, which is not filtered through the frame of the male perspective. I consider the female body not only as the object of the male gaze, but also as a tool that the women can use for their own benefit when communicating with men. Starting with the traditional Roman love elegy of Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid, I explore the use of female speech and body language in these poems as paradigmatic. Building upon this foundation, I then track variations on these established standards of elegy in Propertius' fourth book of elegies, Ovid's *Heroides,* and Ovid's *Fasti*. By investigating the interaction between the female voice and body, this thesis aims to elucidate the different ways that the elegiac woman, from the *puella* of love elegy to the mythological women of Ovid's *Fasti,* was fashioned as an embodied speaker and writer by Rome's male elegists.

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I

Introduction

In the elegiac poetry of Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid, many of the poems track the highs and lows of a love affair between the poem's narrator and his beloved, a *meretrix* (courtesan).[1] The narrator of the poems shares the poet's name, making it tempting to read the poems as accounts of the author's actual romantic relationship(s). However, closer analysis of the poems reveals that these stories and the women they are addressed to are fictional. Maria Wyke describes Propertius' *puella,* Cynthia, as a *scripta puella* (a written girl) who serves as a representation of the poetry itself:

> "…the Elegiac woman is not portrayed as a beloved receiving or inspiring poetry but as a narrative subject to be continued or abandoned. The role assigned to elegy's *puella* in 2.10 is that of a fiction which must be finished…the *puella* is to be read here not as a living girlfriend to whom the author has dedicated his life, but as a female fiction which can be discarded. "[2]

Wyke established that these women are not only fictional creations but stand-ins for the author's feelings about his own poetry. In this thesis, I am not interested in showing that the women are simply embodiments of the poets' poetry. I instead consider the women as fictional characters to explore what we can learn from their speech and their writing in elegiac poetry (i.e., their "voice"). Erika Zimmermann Damer points out that while these works do not offer an account of

[1] James, *Learned Girls.*
[2] Wyke, "Written Women."

a real Roman woman, their study does allow for a better understanding of the relationship between speech and Roman ideologies of gender and identity.[3] I investigate how the female voice and body intertwine when elegiac women are communicating. This study includes the use of body language as an alternative to spoken communication and verbal descriptions of the body as a persuasive tool.

In this thesis, I consider a variety of elegiac works, from Tibullus' poetry to Ovid's *Fasti.* I group the works of Tibullus, Ovid's *Amores,* and Propertius' elegies (particularly the first three books) together in a category I will refer to as "traditional Roman elegy." In these prototypical poems, the female voice is almost always mediated by the frame of a male narrator; female speech may be quoted but always in the context of the male lover's experience of the story.

My first chapter investigates the female voice and female body as modes of communication in traditional Roman elegy. It begins with an overview of typical speech in Roman elegy – that is, the speech seen in Ovid's *Amores,* Tibullus' elegies, and Propertius' first three books. This overview relies heavily on Sharon James' argument that female speech in elegy is generic; the women are not expressing individual personalities through their speech but are producing speech that would be expected of a *meretrix.*[4] We see this type of speech again and again in these poems, defining the prototype for female speech in elegy.

Erika Zimmermann Damer has pointed out that the body is another key tool for identity creation in elegy.[5] She argues that, for example, elegists use

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[3] Erika Zimmermann Damer, *In the Flesh,* 179.
[4] James, "*Ipsa Dixerat.*"
[5] Zimmermann Damer, *In the Flesh.*

descriptions of their own body to describe their relationship to the state. Similarly, Zimmermann Damer asserts that corporeality offers a level of identity to the fringe characters of elegy; although characters such as slaves generally do not have their own voice, their physical bodies' place in the poem grants them a greater level of presence than merely being mentioned. She discusses how the physical bodies of the speaker-poet and the *puella* are intertwined with their status in the poem. The poet's embodied experience of being assaulted by *Amor* is a key component of his identity; The *puella*'s existence, however, is restrained by the confines of elegy, and her embodiments are always controlled by the male poet.

I argue that the body is not only intertwined with identity in Roman elegy but is also an alternative mode of communication for the elegiac woman. While the female characters of elegy are still created and written about by men, they nevertheless demonstrate a degree of control in their relationships by using their body language to manipulate their lovers. When considering the works of Tibullus, Ovid's *Amores,* and the first three books of Propertius, I apply James' analysis of female speech to argue that the women's body language is usually enacting the advice of the *lena*.

Once these standard roles of the female voice and body in elegy have been outlined, I turn to variations of these patterns. In Propertius' final book, the female voice is dominant in a way that it is unique among the rest of traditional Roman elegy. I finish the first chapter by considering three poems from Propertius' final book: poem 4.7, where Cynthia's ghost is the primary speaker of the poem; poem 4.3, which is purported to be a letter written by a Roman woman,

Arethusa, to her lover; and poem 4.4, which tells the story of Tarpeia, a figure from Rome's foundation myths, and features a monologue from her.

The second chapter turns to Ovid's *Heroides*, a series of fictional letters written in elegiac verse from heroines from Greek and Roman mythology to their absent lovers. In this chapter, I investigate the voice as it is used by a female letter writer to create a visual image of the body. Inspired by the work of Jaś Elsner on ekphrasis, I write about the way that the female voice is used to describe the female body in highly visual terms in *Heroides* X.[6] I focus on this poem as a case study for this chapter, investigating the relationship between ekphrasis, which I define as the textual description of a work of visual art, and Ariadne's request that Theseus "look [at me] with your mind" (*adspice mente,* 135). Ariadne is demanding that Theseus imagine her in her moments of grief, when she abuses her own body. This bodily abuse is articulated as a fantasy by the male narrators of traditional elegy, and I argue that Ariadne co-opts this fantasy for her own benefit in her letter to Theseus. In this way, Ovid is playing with the paradigms of traditional Roman elegy by filtering them through the female-authored letter.

The *Heroides* offer a different type of voice than traditional elegy in that rather than containing quoted speech, the *Heroides* offer the written female voice. While these poems are, of course, still authored by a man, the frame of the male narrator is no longer present. Thus, we do not actually get the unfiltered speech of a real Roman woman; nevertheless, in these poems the female characters are

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[6] Elsner, "Viewing Ariadne."

presented as using their voices and bodies to communicate in a way that differs from most other elegy.

The final chapter centers on the absence of a female voice and the role of the female body in this absence. I look at the cluster of rape episodes ranging from the end of book 2 to the beginning of book 3 of the *Fasti,* arguing that female suffering and silence are intertwined with men's power. Female suffering, such as the rapes of Lucretia, Lara, and Rhea Silvia are necessary for the founding of the Roman republic. The republic is then run by male political powers, meaning that these women suffered so that the patriarchal state could be created. Additionally, their silence is often a necessary component of men maintaining their power. Lara is the most obvious example of this. Jupiter removes her tongue in response to her insubordination, and Mercury then takes advantage of her muteness to rape her without consequence. This pattern is explored further in the chapter. Carole Newlands' work on the silence of Lucretia in the *Fasti* has been influential because she asserts that Ovid's telling of her story features silence as a prominent theme.[7] Considering the stories of Lara and Rhea Silvia in conjunction with that of Lucretia, I analyze the way that the myth of Philomela lurks behind and imbues all of these stories. Given that Lucretia's rape led to the expulsion of the monarchy, Lara's rape led to the birth of the Lares, and Rhea Silvia's rape produced Romulus and Remus, all of these stories are closely connected to Rome's founding.

[7] Newlands, *Playing with Time.*

It must be noted that the women I discuss in this thesis are the creations of male authors. Although I sometimes refer to their liberation, autonomy, or power, this is not to suggest that the women of the stories have any power outside of their fictional realms. Rather, the women are displaying characteristics or behavior that are atypical when compared to the female characters of traditional Roman elegy. The male authors script these women to fulfill their poetic purpose: the women create opportunity for innovation and variation and can also be vehicles for important themes (such as the relationship between female suffering and Rome's foundation myths). I do not argue that any of these male authors should be considered proto-feminists offering commentary on the female voice in Roman society – that question is not one I choose to investigate in this thesis. Rather, I track the depiction of female subjectivity through various poems, even though this subjectivity is part of the poet's literary creation.

Additionally, while I track the poetic development of the ideas of the female voice and body, I do not do so chronologically. Several of the poems I discuss are not dated with enough certainty to analyze them in terms of their chronology. Instead, I consider the typical female speech in Roman elegy and then different variations on that standard. I approach the poems as one large body of Augustan elegiac poetry that has overarching trends and reflects a collaborative development of ideas rather than arguing for a certain direction of influence.

II

The Female Voice and Body as Modes of Communication in Roman Elegy

Introduction

Female speech is sparse in Roman elegy. Additionally, as Erika Zimmermann Damer notes in her recent investigation of the relationship between the body and identity in Roman Elegy:

> "attempts to study women's voices in Propertius' Roman love poetry begin from an unresolvable impasse. Propertius, the Roman author, is behind every word of these speeches. Still, as critics like Amy Richlin, Mary Beard, Sharon James, Alison Keith, and Maria Wyke argue, we have to take what we can get. Reading women's speeches created by male authors allows scholars richer understandings of Roman ideologies of gender and identity and how speech constitutes both, even though we are not reading a representation of a biographical woman living in Rome in the 20s BCE."[8]

Just as poetry of the Roman elegists can illuminate understanding of gender, identity, and speech in the Roman world, studies of speech and the body can also be illuminating for understanding the characterization of the *puella* in these works. The female characters of elegy are only occasionally quoted directly; more often, the reader must infer what was said based on the narrator's reaction or reference to the conversation. Thus, the voice of these female characters is generally rare in elegy, particularly the poems of Tibullus, Ovid's *Amores,* and Propertius books 1-3.

Descriptions of the body, however, are abundant; while the body often serves as the object of violence or the male gaze, as we will see, the body is also often referenced in elegy as a means of female communication. That is to say, the characters of elegy seem to believe that the body offers physical signs that can communicate, in particular, the beloved's devotion, jealousy,

[8] Erika Zimmermann Damer, *In the Flesh,* 179.

and fidelity. In earlier works of Roman elegy, the women communicate primarily with their bodies, with occasional short snippets of speech. However, in Propertius book four, female speech plays a significantly larger role in the poems. This shift offers just one source of variation from what is typical in Roman elegy, sharing certain characteristics with Ovid's *Heroides* and *Fasti,* works that are written in elegiac meter but are quite different from traditional Roman elegy.

Poem 4.7 is particularly unique in that the featured woman is the ghost of Cynthia, the woman who features in the rest of Propertius' elegy as the speaker's beloved. Cynthia's directly quoted speech makes up the majority of this poem. Her monologue serves as a model for the *Heroides,* where the speaker takes control of the narrative about her body and forces the reader and lover to see her as she is. In this poem, Cynthia's ghost appears to the Propertian speaker in a dream to upbraid him for his behavior since her death. Cynthia feels that he has not appropriately mourned her. She then goes on to request that he perform certain actions for her, from caring for her elderly maid to planting ivy on her grave. She even dictates her own epitaph and requests that he carve it into a column near the Anio. The poem is still framed by the male narrator's perspective; the first and last few lines are in his voice. The bulk of the poem, though, is Cynthia's monologue, meaning that her voice dominates this poem in a way that it does not elsewhere in the Propertian corpus.

Of course, the women discussed in this chapter are fictional. Propertius is the author of all of these elegies, and most of the female speech is further filtered through the frame of the male narrator. Nevertheless, the way that he writes Cynthia in poem 4.7 offers a female character taking male fantasies and turning them into macabre images. While we do not see an actual woman appropriating these male fantasies, it is still a female speaker, and this understanding of

her speech is illuminating even if it is ultimately crafted by a male author. Before investigating peom 4.7, I will investigate the standard elegiac mode of female speech and body language.

Defining the Prototype for the Female Body and Speech in Elegy

The female body in elegy appears in a number of different contexts. It often serves as the object of the male gaze and even physical abuse.[9] Tibullus describes violence against a wife (*uxorem,* 1.10.52) in his poem against war:

sed veneris tunc bella calent, scissosque capillos
femina, perfractas conqueriturque fores;
flet teneras subtusa genas: sed victor et ipse
flet sibi dementes tam valuisse manus.
at lascivus Amor rixae mala verba ministrat,
inter et iratum lentus utrumque sedet.
Tibullus 1.10.53-60[10]

But then the war of love grows hot, and women
lament that their hair has been torn, and doors broken through;
she weeps, bruised on her tender cheeks; but the conqueror himself
also weeps at how strong his mindless hands were,
and impudent love furnishes the battle with wicked words,
and sits between them, unconcerned, with an angry one on each side. [11]

Propertius also describes domestic violence against a lover:

quod si pertendens animo vestita cubaris,
scissa veste meas experiere manus:
quin etiam, si me ulterius provexerit ira,
ostendes matri bracchia laesa tuae.
Propertius 2.15.17-20[12]

But if you lie down, insisting on being clothed,
you will experience my hands with your clothes torn;
in fact, also, if anger will carry me further,
your arms will be bruised for you to show your mother.

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[9]For discussion of elegiac domestic violence, see Zimmermann Damer, *In the Flesh,* 160-169. For violence enacted against the speaker by the *puella,* see Propertius 3.8 and 4.8 and Zimmermann Damer *In the Flesh,* 151-160.
[10] I have followed the Loeb Classical Text; F. W. Cornish, J.P. Postgate, and J.W. Mackail, transl.; rev. G. P. Goold, 1913 for the Latin of Tibullus' *Elegies.*
[11] All translations are my own, unless otherwise noted.
[12] I have followed the Loeb Classical Text; G. P. Goold, transl. and ed., 1990 for the Latin of Propertius' *Elegies.*

Ovid's speaker laments his own violence against Corinna in *Amores* 1.7:

> *nam furor in dominam temeraria bracchia movit;*
> *flet mea vaesana laesa puella manu*
> …
> *et minus ille nocens. mihi, quam profitebar amare*
> *laesa est; Tydides saevus in hoste fuit.*
> …
> *at nunc sustinui raptis a fronte capillis*
> *ferreus ingenuas ungue notare genas.*
> *Amores* 1.7.3-4, 33-34, and 49-50[13]

> For anger moved my thoughtless arms against my mistress;
> my injured girl wept from my furious hand
> …
> He [Diomedes] was less guilty than me; she, whom I professed to love,
> was injured by me; the son of Tydeus was harsh among the enemy.
> …
> But now I bore to tear the hairs from the front of her head
> and to harshly mark her tender cheeks with my nails.

These three poems give a glimpse into a disturbing side of these relationships. When anger is at play (*furor* in Ovid, *iratum* in Tibullus, and *ira* in Propertius), the speakers use violence against their beloved. The passage from Propertius emphasizes the sexual nature that this abuse can take on; Propertius fantasizes about how he will physically harm his mistress if she tries to go to bed clothed.[14]

Ovid's *Amores* 1.5 is "a *locus classicus* for the representation of the human body in Roman love elegy."[15] In this poem, Corinna's body is described in detail, serving as the object of the male gaze:

> *ut stetit ante oculos posito velamine nostros,*
> *in toto nusquam corpore menda fuit.*
> *quos umeros, quales vidi tetigique lacertos!*
> *forma papillarum quam fuit apta premi!*

---

[13] I have followed the Loeb Classical Text; G. Showerman, transl., rev. G. P. Goold, 1914 for the Latin of Ovid's *Amores.*

[14] Chapter 2 elaborates on other ways that the male speakers of elegy fantasize about the abused female body.

[15] Zimmermann Damer, *In the Flesh,* 123.

quam castigato planus sub pectore venter!
quantum et quale latus! Quam iuvenale femur!
singula quid referam? Nil non laudabile vidi
et nudam pressi corpus ad usque meum.
Amores, 1.5.17

When she stood before my eyes with her covering set aside,
in her whole body there wasn't any flaw.
What shoulders, what arms I saw and touched!
The form of her breasts how fit to be pressed!
How flat her belly below her well-checked chest!
And what a flank! How youthful her thigh!
Why shall I detail every part one by one? Nothing I saw wasn't praiseworthy
and I pressed her nude body to my own continuously.
(Transl. Zimmermann Damer)

Although Corinna's body is the star of this poem, it is serving a very different function in this poem from in the others featured in the rest of this chapter. The focus of the chapter is how body language serves to communicate information to another person on analogy with how words are used for communication. In this sense, Corinna's body in this poem communicates nothing. It is solely an object of sexual desire. Her head is never so much as mentioned, and the body could serve its same function in the poem even if it had no head and was not sentient. The body does not even move, and Ovid does not place any value on the body as a conveyor of information as I will show he does elsewhere.

The female body does not always appear as an object of male abuse or even control, though. The women of elegy, as I will show, often use their bodies for their own advantage. The *puellae* intentionally use non-verbal communication to lead the male characters to perceive the women in a desirable way. In this way, the female body becomes important for studies of the female voice because it can serve as an alternative way of communicating. Where the poet limits female speech, female body language emerges as an alternative mode of communication, giving us further insight into what place female communication held in Roman elegy. The female body

and voice both hold their own place in elegiac poetry, eventually intertwining powerfully in Propertius 4.7.

Sharon James' argument about typical female speech can also be applied to body language in elegy. In her article "*Ipsa Dixerat:* Women's Words in Roman Love Elegy," James offers one way to look at female speech in these poems. Excluding Propertius book four from her study, James argues that all of the speech from the *puellae* in elegy is generic. Both Ovid and Propertius write poems in which *lenae,* older prostitutes that seem to be serving as mentors for the *puellae,* offer advice to the younger women. [16] They offer all kinds of advice on the trade, mostly focused on the importance of gaining material wealth. James argues that the *puellae* are enacting the advice of Dipsas and Acanthis, the *lenae,* and speaking in a way that would be expected of their profession rather than in a way that is unique to them. This way of speaking involves "manipulat[ing] the lover's emotions and thereby keep[ing] his pocketbook open."[17] The *puellae* of elegy use their voices not as a way to express themselves, but as a way to manipulate the authorial character so the women can continue to support themselves. The poems of book four offer a dramatically different type of female speech in which the women have more agency and liberty. James' ideas about speech in the first three books of Propertius' elegies offer a helpful starting point for understanding the ways that book four diverges from preceding erotic poetry.

James details the ways that Tibullus' *puellae,* Delia and Nemesis, communicate with their bodies since he features no directly quoted female speech. James does not interpret these instances beyond saying they make Delia and Nemesis seem "shadowy."[18] However, James' observations

[16] Dipsas in *Amores* 1.8 and Acanthis in Prop. 4.5.
[17] James, "*ipsa dixerat"* 315.
[18] James, "*ipsa dixerat,"* 331.

about the advice of the *lenae* from Ovid and Propertius can also be applied to non-verbal communications. In her advice, Dipsas pays particular attention to ways of using the body to manipulate the *amator.* While blushing is becoming, a feigned blush is ideal (*Erubuit. 'decet alba quidem pudor ora, sed iste, / si simules, prodest; verus obesse solet, Amores* 1.8.35-6). This effect is partially achieved by casting one's eyes down (*cum bene deiectis gremium spectabis ocellis, / quantum quisque ferat, respiciendus erit, Amores* 1.8.37-8). The eyes can also shed tears to help the *puella* affect the *amator'*s emotions:

> *quin etiam discant oculi lacrimare coacti,*
> *et faciant udas illa vel ille genas;*
> *nec, siquem falles, tu periurare timeto—*
> *commodat in lusus numina surda Venus.*
> *Amores* 1.8.83-86
>
> Even let your eyes learn to cry on command,
> and let that woman or that man make your cheeks wet;
> if you will be deceiving someone, do not fear swearing falsely –
> Venus makes herself a deaf divinity in games of love.

In this passage, forced tears are lumped in with swearing false oaths; this is a high level of deception. The fact that false oaths are openly encouraged also reinforces the poet's view of the *puella* as highly deceitful. Similarly, in the quote earlier in this paragraph, a false blush is preferred to a genuine one; again, deceit is very much encouraged. The body is used to produce a particular effect on the woman's interlocutor, and so it is communicating. This deceit ties together the verbal and physical modes of communication that are taught by the *lenae* and enacted by the *puellae.* The goal is not to communicate the truth but to manipulate the narrator.

This bodily communication offers a substitute for the generic female speech outlined by James. It also often follows the advice of the *lenae* and is used to control the speaker's emotions or beliefs about the *puella.* Dipsas is teaching the *puellae* how to use their bodies to communicate false messages. Particularly given the rarity of female speech in elegy and the prominent role of the

female body, the body as an alternative method of communication is a notable concept. The techniques taught by Dipsas and Acanthis give the *puellae* a certain degree of power in a relationship where they are disadvantaged; not only are they women in a highly patriarchal society, but they are non-citizen women, making them doubly marginalized.[19] The *lenae* teach the women how to manipulate the male lovers.[20] When female speech gains a more prominent role in Propertius' final book, women continue to employ the body in their strategic communication. In poems 4.3, 4.4, and 4.7, Cynthia, Arethusa, and Tarpeia have significant lengths of uninterrupted speech. In these poems, their craftiness shines and they shift from using the body to communicate non-verbally to using verbal descriptions of the body to affect their lovers emotions.

Propertius' Cynthia has by far the most speech out of any of the beloveds, peaking with her 82-line monologue in poem 4.7. In her speech throughout the corpus, Cynthia identifies the ways that her body can function as a means of communication. I begin with an investigation of these earlier snippets of her speech before discussing 4.7. When the speaker goes to see if Cynthia has spent the night in her bed alone, she points to her body as proof of her fidelity: *adspice ut in toto nullus mihi corpore surgat / spiritus, admisso motus adulterio* ("look how there is not a breath rising through my whole body, stirred up by admitted adultery," Propertius 2.29b.37-8).[21] Cynthia asserts that if she had been unfaithful, her body would reveal that to the speaker – her breath would be ragged from the act of cheating.

Propertius also portrays Cynthia's body as the primary means of communication, often blurring the line between verbal and bodily communication. When her words (*verba*) hold back

[19] James, *Learned Girls,* 36-41 and *passim.*

[20] While manipulation has negative connotations, particularly in an intimate relationship, it is one of the few ways for these women to hold power in their relationships.

[21] Other scholars understand *spiritus* as referring to an odor, not being out of breath. For a brief discussion of the two interpretations, see Zimmermann Damer, 186, who cites Sullivan (1961, 1-2), Richardson (1977, 299), and Fedeli (2005, 838-39). For further discussion of Cynthia's speech in this passage, cf. Drinkwater, "The Woman's Part," 334.

the speaker from leaving Rome, Propertius still emphasizes her body. It is not simply the words of his Cynthia, but the words of his **embracing** girl that hold him back: *sed me **complexae** remorantur verba puellae* (1.6.5). There is no reason for Propertius to include the detail of his girlfriend's embrace unless it is an important act of the communication he is describing. Further, he is also held back by her "often changing color" (*mutatoque…saepe colore…,* 1.6.6) – another detail of her body that apparently enhances her persuasive words.[22] While Propertius includes these details about her physical actions and appearance, he never actually quotes her speech so readers know exactly what these *verba* were.

Propertius similarly conflates actions with speech in poem 1.15. The speaker is upset with Cynthia for fixing herself up:[23]

> *et potes hesternos manibus componere crines*
> *et longa faciem quaerere desidia,*
> *nec minus Eois pectus cariare lapillis,*
> *ut formosa novo quae parat ire viro,*
> Propertius 1.15.5-9
>
> And you are able to fix yesterday's hairstyle with your hands,
> And to seek beauty, enjoying leisure for long spans of time,
> You adorn your chest with exotic stones not less
> Than a girl who prepares to go to her new man, looking beautiful.

Again, Cynthia's appearance and physical actions are described in detail, with no reference to any actual speech by Cynthia. Nevertheless, the speaker-poet later tells her to stop reminding him of her infidelity with her words (*desine iam revocare tuis periuria verbis, / Cynthia…,* 1.15.26-7). While readers could infer that Cynthia has in fact been speaking in a way that the poet is bothered by, this speech was apparently not significant enough to for him to include it all

[22] Richardson suggests that her *mutato colore* are varying shades of pallor, referencing 1.15.39, *multos pallere colores,* discussed below. Richardson, 161 n.6 & 188 n. 39.

[23] Richardson points out that it is difficult to pin down exactly what this poem is about; he suggests that Cynthia has "broken faith" with the poet and he is upset that she is so collected in contrast to his frantic distress, showcased in this poem. Richardson, 186.

verbatim. Her physical features and actions, onto which the speaker projects his suspicions, are portrayed in detail, suggesting that these features convey more meaning for the speaker than her words.

The speaker puts a great deal of value in these visual cues. Later in the same poem, he complains about how physical signs tricked him into trusting Cynthia:[24]

> *tam tibi ne viles isti videantur ocelli,*
> *per quos saepe mihi credita perfidiast!*
> *hos tu iurabas, si quid mentita fuisses,*
> *ut tibi suppositis exciderent manibus:*
> *et contra magnum potes hos attollere solem,*
> *nec tremis admissae conscia nequitiae?*
> *quis te cogebat multos pallere colores*
> *et fletum invitis ducere luminibus?*
> *quis ego nunc pereo, similis moniturus amantes*
> *non ullis tutum credere blanditiis.*
> Propertius 1.15.33-42

> Let your eyes not seem so cheap,
> on account of which your lies were often believed by me!
> Eyes which *you* swore that, if you were ever lying,
> they would fall into your hands, waiting below:
> and you are able to lift them to face the great sun,
> you do not tremble, conscious of the committed crimes?
> Who compelled you to pale in multiple shades
> and to lead tears from your unwilling eyes?
> I now perish on account of these things, let me be a warning to similar lovers
> that it is not safe to believe any flatteries.

Richardson points out that this poem is "one of the hardest in all P. to understand at first reading, nor have editors generally done much to help with its elucidation."[25] His understanding of the poem is that Cynthia has tried to break up with the poet, and while the poet is "ill with fear and worry," she is "cool and self-posessed." The advice of the *lenae* can also elucidate what is happening in this scene. Propertius complains that Cynthia is breaking her oath (which has to be

[24] While the act of swearing is a verbal action, Propertius looks for *physical* signs that this oath has been broken.
[25] Richardson, Commentary on *Propertius: Elegies I-IV,* 186, Introductory Note to I.15.

inferred by readers - possibly that she would never leave him, would always love him, etc). Cynthia makes this oath on her eyes, the eyes that convinced him to fall in love (*Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis,* 1.1.1). Propertius suggests that she is making her eyes seem "cheap" (*viles)* by risking them, but the advice of Ovid's Dipsas perhaps offers an explanation of why she would take this risk:

> *nec, siquem falles, tu periurare timeto—*
> *commodat in lusus numina surda Venus.*
> *Amores* 1.8.85-6
>
> If you will be deceiving someone, do not fear swearing falsely –
> Venus makes herself a deaf divinity in games of love.

Cynthia did not need to fear her eyes actually falling out because Venus would excuse it as part of the "game of love." When Propertius asks *et contra magnum potes hos attollere solem, nec tremis admissae conscia nequitiae?,* it can be interpreted different ways: it could be a question anticipating the answer no (can you lift your eyes to face the great sun, and not tremble with the knowledge of your admitted wickedness?), or it could be expressing indignation that there is no consequence for her oath – her eyes did not fall out into her hands, "and you are able to lift your eyes to the great sun…" If the question was anticipating the answer "no," this could have been made clear by the inclusion of *num* in the line, but Propertius did not make that choice. Additionally, the contrast between the subjunctive verb (*exciderent*) and the indicative verb (*potes*) emphasizes the divide between what she *said* would happen (expressing potentiality) and what is actually happening – that she can lift her eyes to the sun.

The fact that the oaths were sworn on her own body parts further enmeshes the deceit of false oaths with that of the body. Her physical reactions of growing pale and crying can also be used to manipulate the lover, as confirmed by Dipsas. Propertius is not only upset that Cynthia has broken her oath, but that her past physical reactions tricked him. While these physical signs suggested her strong feelings for him, her present composure in the light of their break-up (in

Richardson's view) undercut her previous performance. Propertius is reading Cynthia's body and does not like the information he is gaining from it.[26]

When discussing *Amores* 3.3, in which Ovid is similarly upset that Corinna swore on her eyes and then broak the oath with no consequence, Zimmermann Damer asserts that "corporeal inscriptions in this poem point to the body's agency, an ability to perjure itself and conceal action and intent."[27] This idea of the body's ability to lie and conceal is not isolated to this poem but is common throughout elegy, as shown in this chapter.

<u>Female Speech and the Body in Propertius 4.7</u>

In poem 4.7, the elegiac Cynthia demonstrates a new type of power over the speaker and uses her voice and body in a novel way. She challenges his narratorial authority and dictates her own legacy. While descriptions of the wounded female body feature throughout elegy, they are generally presented in a somewhat eroticized way for the speaker and reader's enjoyment.[28] Cynthia, though, uses descriptions of her wounded body for her own gain. Although this poem offers a uniquely powerful instance of female speech, it is excluded from James' and Drinkwater's studies, with all of book four being excluded from James 2010.[29] This book is crucial for a thorough understanding of female speech in elegy, though. The surviving elegiac corpus is already limited, and an omission of a quarter of Propertius' work is significant. Additionally, the examples of female speech in the book are out of the ordinary. The fact that these instances are exceptional makes them not ideal for studies of generic female speech, like James 2010, but they are a rich part of the corpus where unprecedented lengths of female speech

[26] In *Amores* 3.3, Ovid's narrator expresses similar distress that an oath sworn on the eyes was broken with no consequence. In this poem, however, as Zimmermann Damer points out, Ovid expects Corinna's whole body to reveal her perjury, not just the eyes. For more on *Amores* 3.3, see Zimmermann Damer *In the Flesh* 119-120.
[27] Zimmermann Damer, *In the Flesh,* 119.
[28] "The desideratum, then, in the case of anger and resentment is to make the puella weep in one's presence. There is no greater aphrodisiac for the lover-poet than her tears; there is also, as we will see, a powerful urge toward violence against her, which is constantly submerged but subconsciously felt.", James, *Learned Girls,* 188.
[29] James, *'Ipsa Dixerat"* and Drinkwater "The Woman's Part."

are introduced. These poems are a different kind of elegy in which Propertius breaks away from the typical tropes and begins incorporating aetiological poems and other unique features; because the rules of the genre are so different in this book, the poems are not bound by the generic types that James explores.

In Propertius' final book, the female voice is dominant in a way that is not seen elsewhere in typical Roman elegy. Poem 4.7 is no exception. Additionally, Cynthia references her own body several times, and she forces the speaker and readers to look at her body in the way that she describes it. The view of her body that has been disfigured and injured since her death is different from the descriptions of the female body abused by the male speaker, as we shall see.

In poem 4.7, Cynthia returns to Propertius as a shade, so she is free from the expectations of a living and working *meretrix* and speaks in a way that is not reflected elsewhere in elegy. Cynthia still keeps up appearances with the speaker in some ways, though, suggesting that the freedom of her voice is not completely unbridled. She claims to have been faithful (*me servasse fidem*, line 53), which cannot be true given that she is a *meretrix*: she would have had to have multiple partners supporting her in order to survive and save for when she was older.[30] The poetry itself tells readers of this necessity just two poems earlier in 4.5. In this poem, the *lena* instructs the *puella* to spurn fidelity in order to gather goods (4.5.20-28). The *lena* also reminds the *puella* that she gets nothing except words from listening to poems (4.5.54). If the *puella* were to be faithful to one man, he certainly could not be a poet who offers nothing with which she may support herself.

[30] James, *Learned Girls,* 64ff.

Cynthia may be presenting herself as faithful because she still wants to persuade the speaker-poet to help her. Cynthia complains about Propertius' failure to take certain actions after her death: there is not a watchman for her grave, and a tile gashed her head (*nec crepuit fissa me propter harundine custos, / laesit et obiectum tegula curta caput,* 4.7.25-6). He didn't call the winds to fan her pyre, he didn't perfume the fire, and he didn't offer so much as hyacinths or wine from a broken jar at her grave:

> *cur ventos non ipse rogis, ingrate, petisti?*
> *cur nardo flammae non oluere meae?*
> *hoc etiam grave erat, nulla mercede hyacinthos*
> *inicere et fracto busta piare cado?*
> Propertius 4.7.31-34
>
> Why did you yourself not seek winds for the pyre, thankless one?
> Why did you not perfume my flames with nard-oil?
> Was it too burdensome to throw hyacinths, at no price,
> And to honor my tomb with a broken jar?

This "meager funeral…demonstrates her economic dependence on the Propertian poet-speaker."[31] She also makes other requests such as caring for her old nurse and planting ivy on her grave, showing other forms of reliance on the narrator.

The end of Cynthia's speech offers a unique reference to her body; she describes the bones of the Propertian lover being mixed with her own once he dies. This is literally a reference to their remains being mixed in the same grave or urn. However, the passage also has sexual connotations which create a much more macabre version of the sexualized female body. She says:

> *…mox sola tenebo: /*
> *mecum eris, et mixtis ossibus ossa teram.*
> Propertius, 4.7.93-4
>
> Soon I alone will hold you:

[31] Zimmermann Damer, *In the Flesh,* 195. For more discussion on Cynthia's reliance on Propertius even after death, see this passage.

you will be with me, and I will rub your bones with my mixed in
bones.

This ending couplet of Cynthia's dialogue has an overt macabre tone to it. She suggests that she will possess him in death, when their bones will be joined together in a cinerary urn. The vagueness of the verb *tero* allows it to be used to describe a number of sexual acts, from kissing to intercourse (and others).[32] This passage could be understood as Cynthia promising future sexual acts to the Propertian speaker, giving him incentive to fulfill her requests in the meantime. Her language is also that of dominance and exclusivity; the *mecum* and *sola* emphasize how he will belong to her and her alone. The verb, *tenebo,* establishes that she will hold him in her grasp, emphasizing her agency with its first-person active form. While Cynthia suggests that her body will have power over the male narrator's body in death, this couplet also plays into the male fantasy because Cynthia still desires to be with him, even in death.

While Propertius enjoys power struggles between himself and Cynthia elsewhere in his elegies, there is no evidence that Cynthia is describing an erotic *rixa* here.[33] She does not describe a power struggle, involving wrestling or fighting, but simply asserts that she alone will hold him and they will grind their bones together. This control over the relationship stands apart from what is seen elsewhere in elegy and what would presumably have been the case between *meretrices* and their clients*;* in such an arrangement, the sexual desires of the client rule the interactions given that the woman is "performing a service for her lover."[34] After death, though, she will no longer be performing a service. Rather, she will have him to herself, meaning she does not have to worry about pleasing him to keep him coming back. Additionally, he will no longer be able to fulfill her

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[32] For more on *tero* and other verbs for "to rub" as sexual metaphors, see Adams, *Latin Sexual Vocabulary* pg. 183.
[33] cf. Propertius 3.8 and 4.8 and Zimmermann Damer, *In the Flesh,* 151-160 on the erotic *rixa*.
[34] James, *Learned Girls,* 96: "…the puella is in fact performing a service for her lover…their sexual relationship originates in his desire, not in mutual desire;" For more on the role of the male and female desires in the sex described in elegiac poetry, see James' discussion of *Amores* 1.10, *Learned Girls,* 95-96.

wishes on earth, financial or otherwise, so she will have less of an impetus to please him. She fantasizes about this new phase of their relationship where she will hold the power that she could not while alive.

Although Cynthia has an unprecedented level of speech in this poem, the role of her body is not to be discounted. In introducing Cynthia's speech, Propertius pays particular attention to the physical form of Cynthia's ghost:

> *eosdem habuit secum quibus est elata capillos,*
> *eosdem oculos: lateri vestis adusta fuit,*
> *et solitum digito beryllon adederat ignis,*
> *summaque Lethaeus triverat ora liquor.*
> *spirantisque animos et vocem misit at illi*
> *pollicibus fragiles increpuere manus:*
> Propertius 4.7.7-12
>
> She had the same hair as she had when she was buried,
> and the same eyes: her dress was burned to her side,
> and fire had eaten away at the familiar beryl on her finger,
> and Lethe's water had rubbed away the edges of her mouth.
> But she sent out a living spirit and voice,
> and her fragile hands snapped their fingers.

In her analysis of this poem, Zimmermann Damer argues that "the framing of Cynthia's appearance prepares readers for the novelty and uncanny sameness of her revisions," pointing out that while this description "anchors itself in the repetition of sameness, *eosdem capillos, eosdem oculos* (7-8)," her "mouth and lips…bear witness to her ghoulish physique."[35] This combination of sameness and novelty reflects the larger theme of my analysis: she still has some restrictions on her speech, but also shows a novel level of liberty and control. In the above description, Cynthia's clothes and ring are damaged by the fire, and her mouth has literally begun to wear away. This disappearing of her mouth is contrasted with the assertiveness of her voice and the snapping of her fingers, further developed by the 82-line monologue that follows.

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[35] Zimmermann Damer, *In the Flesh,* 189-190.

It is as if the decline of her physical body, and therefore her profession as a *meretrix,* creates space for a more powerful voice for Cynthia.

Cynthia also references her own body in her speech. Consider how she describes her late-night meetings with Propertius. She climbed onto his **neck** with alternating **hands** (*alterna veniens in tua* ***colla manu,*** 18) before they pressed their **chests** together (***pectore*** *mixto*) in *Venus* (i.e., sex, 19). While the Propertian speaker has portrayed a great love affair consisting of nights together on the couch or bed, here Cynthia portrays a relationship where she repeatedly had to climb out of her window and down a rope so that they could have sex under their cloaks in the road (4.7.15-20). This correction gives Cynthia the opportunity to offer an alternative version of the poet's account of the affair in the earlier poems; what he has been claiming to have been an affair where Cynthia was a *domina* withholding affection by locking him out at her whim, this poem suggests that Cynthia's experience was remarkably less glamorous. In issuing this correction to the speaker's accounts of their time together, Cynthia usurps the narrator's usual control over how her story is told. The women of the *Heroides* act similarly when they take control over the telling of their stories.

Cynthia also complains that no one cried upon her **eyes** as she was passing (*at mihi non* ***oculos*** *quisquam inclamavit eunti,* 23). While her eyes were exactly what captured Propertius (1.1.1-2), the eyes of her corpse did not hold the same power over him. Similarly, while she formerly swore upon her eyes (cf. poem 1.15), she now swears upon her **bones** lying in the grave (*si fallo, vipera nostris / sibilet in tumulis et super* ***ossa*** *cubet.* 53-54). While the image of her eyes falling into her hands if she breaks her oath from poem 1.15 was gory, it was not reality; when she swore the oath, she was swearing upon her alluring eyes, and even when it was broken she still looked up to the sun, her appearance as enticing as ever. In 4.7, though, her oath

references her bones that are currently lying in a grave, offering a much more macabre image. She describes a similar image again at 79-80: *pone hederam tumulo, mihi quae praegnante corymbo/ mollia contortis alliget* ***ossa*** *comis* ("put ivy on my tomb, so it will bind my delicate **bones** with its pregnant berries and twisted leaves"). Finally, she describes their bones grinding together once he dies and their remains are combined.

The Propertian speaker prefers Cynthia *au naturel,* like what exists in untilled soil or when ivy grows of its own accord (*aspice quos summittat humus non fossa colores / ut veniant hederae sponte sua Melius,* Propertius 1.2.9-10). Although Cynthia is describing herself in a remarkably natural state, surrounded by soil and ivy, it is certainly not what the speaker had in mind in this earlier poem. Cynthia's descriptions of herself turn his prior requests into a nightmarish image of her bones rotting in the ground, waiting for him to die so their bones can rub together. Similarly, while Propertius' speaker fantasizes about Cynthia marking her cheeks in his absence (*Cynthia et insanis ora notet manibus,* 1.1.16), the tile gashing her corpse's head would not fulfill the same fantasy (*laesit et obiectum tegula curta caput,* 4.7.26). In the former, he understands her self-inflicted injuries as evidence of her passionate love for him. The latter is, again, a rather gruesome image of a corpse. The descriptions of Cynthia's battered corpse contrast with the descriptions of male abuse of the female body (cf. pages 3-5), offering an appropriation of these violent male fantasies by Cynthia. Cynthia uses her newly (somewhat) unbridled voice to describe her body, and not in a way that would appeal to the poet; instead, she describes grim images of her dead body, punishing him for his neglect of her grave and describing her own fantasies.

Another element of Cynthia's speech in 4.7 is the revision of her own legacy. Earlier in his work, in poem 2.11, the speaker tells Cynthia that her legacy relies heavily on his writing. He

says that unless others write about her, she will be unknown (*scribant de te alii vel sis ignota licebit*, 2.11.1) and warns that the day of her funeral will consume all her wealth along with her *(omnia, crede mihi, tecum uno munera lecto auferet extremi funeris atra dies,* 2.11.3-4). He then threatens that the passerby will not realize her bones were once a *docta puella*, meaning that Cynthia will no longer have the glory that she has through the speaker's poetry.

In 4.7, Cynthia overcomes these threats. She "conquers and escapes the pyre" (*evictos effugit…rogos,* 4.7.2) that she was threatened with, and she dictates her own legacy. The poem tells her account of their affair, as discussed above, and allows her own version of her story to be recorded. Additionally, while the speaker threatened that her bones would not be recognized by passers-by, she writes her own epitaph to ensure her bones will be recognized. The epitaph asserts that Cynthia's ashes do not lack glory as suggested in 2.11: they add glory to Anio's shores.

> *pomosis Anio qua spumifer incubat arvis,*
> *et numquam Herculeo numine pallet ebur,*
> *hic carmen media dignum me scribe columna,*
> *sed breve, quod currens vector ab urbe legat:*
> *hic tiburtina iacet aurea cynthia terra:*
> *accessit ripae laus, aniene, tuae.*
> Propertius 4.7.81-86
>
> Where foaming Anio broods over the fruitful fields,
> and the ivory never fades by the power of Hercules,
> there write a song, worthy of me but brief, in the middle of a column,
> so the traveler hurrying from the city may read:
> Here lies golden Cynthia in the soil of the Tiber:
> Glory is added to your bank, Anio.

Not only is Cynthia composing her own epitaph so that passers-by will recognize her bones, but she goes so far as to instruct him to burn the poems he wrote about her: *et quoscumque meo fecisti nomine versus,/ ure mihi: laudes desine habere meas* ("and whatever verses you wrote in my name, / burn them, please: stop holding my praise," 4.7.77-78). Cynthia

is responding to his threat, saying that she doesn't want her legacy as recorded by him but instead commands that he leave an inscription composed by her. The connection between Cynthia's composition of her own epitaph and poem 2.11 is further supported by the fact that the earlier poem is "in effect, an epitaph, in form and brevity suitable for inscription on a tombstone, but omits her name."[36] Of course, as an epitaph, this earlier poem is rather rude and inadequate, and the failure to record her name is also not ideal for preserving her legacy; a new epitaph was needed, and Cynthia provides it for herself. After composing this epitaph, she warns him not to deny her wishes by ignoring "dreams coming from devout gates" such as the ones through which she exited the underworld (*nec tu sperne piis venientia somnia portis: / cum pia venerunt somnia, pondus habent,* 4.7.87-88). Of course, the poems are not burned, and Cynthia's very request only exists within one of the poems; nevertheless, Cynthia writes her own epitaph here, offering a significant variation from the role of the *puella* in much of typical Roman elegy.

Poem 4.7 preserves elements of typical elegy: the Propertian speaker and Cynthia are the same characters and are engaged in the same relationship as always. New truths have been revealed about their relationship, though, and the power dynamic is shifting. Even more than this poem reflects a complete shift in Cynthia's freedom, Propertius' final book represents a pivotal shift in the way that the elegiac genre is conceptualized. The extended female speech and the increased focus on Roman history and myth in book 4 of Propertius' elegies set the stage for my coming analysis of Ovid's works.

Other Roles of the Female Voice and Body in Propertius Book 4

I have focused on Cynthia thus far because she is the subject of Propertius' elegies, but book four features other out-of-the-ordinary instances of female speech. Poems 4.3 and 4.4 in

[36] Richardson, p. 245 II.11 Introductory Note.

particular include the same prominence of the female voice, although in different forms, and present the body in different ways. Poem 4.3 is a letter purported to be written by a Roman woman in which she uses for her own purposes the male elegists' fantasies of their beloved's reactions to the lover's absence. The next poem tells the story of Tarpeia, featuring a monologue in her voice, and ends with her body being disposed of as part of the war between the Romans and Sabines. Book four is unique from the rest of traditional Roman elegy in general; as Richardson points out, "this book stands apart from the others as more formal and sustained poetry. In some of the pieces the poet is experimenting with new material in a new sort of composition and somewhat different voice from what he had heard before."[37] Propertius is pushing the boundaries of elegy, combining typical elegiac poems with very atypical ones, all written in elegiac meter and all combined into one collection.

In poem 4.3, Arethusa, a Roman matron, writes a letter to her husband, Lycotas, who is on campaign. The whole poem is in Arethusa's voice. An elegiac poem in the form of a letter is previously unseen in traditional Roman elegy. Of course, this form is quite similar to Ovid's *Heroides*.[38] The poem is not actually female speech, but it is (feigned) female writing. Her scripted voice is unmediated by the male narrator's frame, or any frame for that matter. In her letter, Arethusa takes on the role of the elegiac speaker-poet in many ways. She worries about her beloved's loyalty (*haecne marita fides,* 4.3.11) and the effect of his campaign on his body:

> *dic mihi, num teneros urit lorica lacertos?*
> *num gravis imbellis atterit hasta manus?*
> *haec noceant potius, quam dentibus ulla puella*
> *det mihi plorandas per tua colla notas!*
>
> Propertius 4.3.23-26

Tell me, doesn't the breastplate hurt your tender shoulders?

[37] Richardson, 414-15; IV.1 Introductory Note.
[38] For further discussion of the influence of Propertius and Ovid on each other, see Richardson, 428-9 IV.3 Introductory Note.

> Doesn't the heavy spear chafe your hands that are not used to war?
> It is preferable that these things harm you, than another girl with her teeth
> give marks all over your neck which I would lament!

This passage can be compared to Propertius 1.8 when Cynthia is considering accompanying someone on campaign to Illyria;

> *tune audire potes vesani murmura ponti*
> *fortis, et in dura nave iacere potes?*
> *tu pedibus teneris positas fulcire pruinas,*
> *tu potes insolitas, Cynthia, ferre nives?*
> Propertius 1.8.5-8

> Are you able to be steadfast when you hear the
> roar of the frenzied sea, and are you able to sleep on the hard ship?
> Can you support [yourself] with your tender feet on the deposited hoar-frost,
> can you bear the unaccustomed snow, Cynthia?

Just as Arethusa worries about the effect of the military campaign on her husband's tender (*teneros)* shoulders and hands, Propertius worries about the effect of the campaign on Cynthia's tender (*teneris)* feet. Also, as Arethusa's concern is partially fueled by worry that he will be unfaithful, part of Propertius' complaint is that Cynthia is leaving him for another man: *et tibi iam tanti, quicumquest, iste videtur,ut sine me vento quolibet ire velis?* ("and does that man, whoever he is, seem to be worth so much to you that you are willing to sail wherever without me?" 1.8.3-4).

Like the male speakers and *puellae* of elegy, Arethusa also participates in manipulative speech.[39] James argues that she "deploys pathos of the type sought by the absent lover in Propertius 3.6 and Tibullus 1.3 to play on Lycotas' feelings."[40] This crafty use of language is learned in an interesting way: Arethusa seems to be familiar specifically with the elegiac poetry in which she exists. James argues in her book, *Learned Girls and Male Persuasion,* that the

[39] For more on the male speaker as manipulative, see Ellen Greene *The Erotics of Domination,* pg. 63 and *passim.*
[40] James, "Re-Reading Propertius' Arethusa," 442.

elegiac *puellae* must be learned. After all, the speaker-poets are trying to persuade the *puellae* to engage in a relationship with them in exchange for poetry instead of money; this trade would necessitate an appreciation of poetry.[41] As an elegiac *puella,* Arethusa demonstrates a similar familiarity with poetry; she has taken note of the male speakers' desires and enacts them in hopes that it will lure her lover back to her. Poem 4.3 not only uses the model of the elegiac epistle that is used throughout the *Heroides,* but also features a woman playing on the desires of the male speaker-poets of elegy.

Poem 4.3 also shares with 4.7 a number of themes and linguistic repetitions that are also present in the *Heroides.* The key issue in all of these poems is a desire for control from a position of abandonment; Arethusa has been abandoned by her lover, Cynthia has been abandoned by Propertius (in that he is not caring for her after her death and has moved on to another woman), and the women of the *Heroides* are all writing to lovers who have abandoned them. Arethusa attempts to lure Lycotas back home, Cynthia attempts to order Propertius to take certain actions and dreams about how she alone will hold him once he dies, and the women of the *Heroides* generally seek to make their lovers return, or at least seek to make their lovers feel guilty.

Along with the fact that the women have been abandoned comes a fixation on the idea of absence and presence. Arethusa, in her address to Lycotas, says she writes the letter to her Lycotas, if he is able to be hers although he is so often absent (*Haec Arethusa suo mittit mandata Lycotae, / cum totiens absis, si potes esse meus,* 4.3.1-2). Cynthia complains that the Propertian speaker was nowhere to be seen at her funeral or procession:

> *denique quis nostro curvum te funere vidit,*
> *atram quis lacrimis incaluisse togam?*
> *si piguit portas ultra procedere, at illuc*
> *iussisses lectum lentius ire meum.*
>
> Propertius 4.7.27-30.

[41] James, *Learned Girls.*

Anyway, who saw you bent over at my funeral,
who saw your dark robe grow warm from tears?
If it annoyed you to proceed beyond the gates,
you could have ordered my funeral bed to move there more slowly.

In the *Heroides,* Penelope calls Odysseus "shamefully absent" (*turpiter absens, Heroides* 1.96) and Cydippe remarks on Ancontius' ability to harm her even though he is far away (*es procul a nobis, et tamen inde noces, Heroides* 21.208). When describing her waking up to an empty bed, Ariadne emphasizes Theseus' absence by repeating *nullus erat!* ("there was no one!", *Heroides* 10.11-12).

The final theme shared among these poems is an obsession with fidelity. Arethusa worries about her lover cheating on her (cf. page 24). With the first word Cynthia speaks, she addresses Propertius as *perfide* ("faithless," 4.7.13). Women also address their lovers as *perfide* five times in the *Heroides.*[42] Hypsipyle fixates on Medea throughout her letter to Jason (*Heroides* 6.75-165), and Medea fixates on Creusa (*Heroides* 12*, passim,* with Creusa identified specifically at 26-8 and 53-54). As part of this fixation on fidelity, there is a specific focus on their marriage rites. Arethusa remembers her wedding and looks for details that could have foreshadowed Lycotas' unfaithfulness:

haecne marita fides et pacta haec munera nuptae,
cum rudis urgenti bracchia victa dedi?
quae mihi deductae fax omen praetulit, illa
traxit ab everso lumina nigra rogo;
et Stygio sum sparsa lacu, nec recta capillis
vitta datast: nupsi non comitante deo.
Propertius 4.3.11-16

Is this the marital faith and bridal gifts that were promised
when I, undeveloped, gave my conquered limbs to you when you urged me?
The torch, an omen, which offered me over when I was led down the aisle,
it drew its unlucky light from an overturned pyre;
and I was sprinkled with water from the Styx, and the ribbon

[42] Heroides 2.78, 7.79 and 118, 10.58, and 12.37.

was not set on my hair straight: I married without the god present.

Hypsipyle similarly remarks on her wedding day:[43]

heu! ubi pacta fides? ubi conubialia iura
faxque sub arsuros dignior ire rogos?
non ego sum furto tibi cognita; pronuba Iuno
adfuit et sertis tempora vinctus Hymen.
at mihi nec Iuno, nec Hymen, sed tristis Erinys
praetulit. infaustas sanguinolenta faces.
Heroides 6.41-46[44]

Alas! Where is the promised faith? Where are the conjugal vows
and the torch, more suited to set my funeral pyre aflame from beneath?
I was not married to you secretly; Juno was there as my attendant
and Hymen with garlands binding his temples.
But it was not Juno nor Hymen who carried the torch,
but sad Erinys, stained with blood.

This fixation on their weddings is particularly notable given that the definition of these relationship as marriages is questionable.[45] James argues that Arethusa was in fact not a Roman wife, but an elegiac courtesan. As she points out, Arethusa worries about specifically sexual cheating, as evidenced by marks on his neck (*plorandas per tua colla notas,* 4.3.26) rather than an affair that would disturb a legal marriage. Additionally, James argues, the problems with the marriage ceremony reflect that it was not valid in the first place, and Arethusa's remark that she turned down Coan silks and expensive jewelry makes much more sense if Arethusa is a courtesan.

[43] See also *Heroides* 2.31-34, where Phyllis similarly questions Demophoon about his marital promises. For a slight variation on this theme, see *Heroides* 12.143 where Medea laments as the sounds of Jason and Creusa's wedding ceremony (mostly cries of *"Hymen Hymenaee!"*) reach her although she is shut inside. For an even more interesting inversion, see *Heroides* 14.21ff. where Hypermnestra recalls the deceiving wedding ceremonies preceding the slaughter of her husband's 49 brothers, featuring again the shouts of *"Hymen Hymenaee!"* (27) unholy incense dedicated at unwilling hearths (*dantur in invitos inpia tura focos, 26)* and marriage chambers that double as tombs (*thalamos – sua busta!,* 31).

[44] I have followed the Loeb Classical Text, G. Showerman, trans., rev. G. P. Goold (1977) for the Latin of Ovid's *Heroides*.

[45] Medea's focus on Creusa's marriage to Jason (cf., n. 41 on pg. 28) may be because the legality of Medea's marriage to Jason is also dubious, particularly viewed through the lens of Roman marriage. She was a foreigner*,* they married without her parents' consent, and he was able to take a new wife, Creusa, this time with the wife's father's consent, without legally divorcing Medea. For more on the legality of Medea's marriage, see Abrahamsen, "Roman Marriage Law."

Finally, Arethusa refers to herself as a *puella,* which seems an unlikely choice for a *matrona.*[46] Hypsipyle and Jason were not officially married in Apollonius' *Argonautica,* although it was sometimes implied.[47] Finally, Cynthia was also a *meretrix,* a courtesan. While she does not reference a marriage in the same way that the other women do, her expectation of loyalty, including caring for her both financially and in acts of service, seem more in line with the expectations of a marriage than a client-courtesan relationship.[48]

Poem 4.3 is the first poem in Propertius' corpus where we see the female voice without the frame of the male narrator. Arethusa shares certain fixations with the women of 4.7, 4.4, and the Heroides, such as concerns of fidelity, absence and presence, and marriage. When considering different variations on traditional Roman elegy, this poem serves as the bridge between the rest of book four and Ovid's *Heroides.*

Propertius' Poem 4.4 also features a monologue from a female character. While the poem is aetiological in that it tells the quasi-historical story of Tarpeia, it is filled with erotic themes and shares many qualities with poems 4.3 and 4.7. This poem tells the story of Tarpeia, the Vestal virgin who betrayed the Romans to the Sabines. In Propertius' account of the story, Tarpeia commits this betrayal because she falls in love with the Sabine Tatius. While Tarpeia is known for betraying Rome, Propertius' poem tells the story from her perspective and grants her a 35-line monologue. After this monologue, she falls asleep, "unaware that she was lying with new furies" (*nescia se furiis accubuisse novis,* 68.) While she is asleep, Venus "rears the sin and buries many flames in her bones" (*culpam alit et plures condit in ossa faces,* 70). Propertius' account makes Tarpeia a more sympathetic character than accounts that do not provide this glimpse into her

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[46] James, "Re-Reading Propertius' Arethusa." James' argument is more thorough than the highlights included here.
[47] Knox, *Ovid Heroides: Select Epistles,* 171, Introductory Note to Poem VI.
[48] On why the relationship depicted in Propertius' elegies cannot be that of a husband and wife, see James, *Learned Girls,* 42-52.

perspective such as those of Livy, Varro, and Dioinysius of Halikarnassus. In Propertius' version, readers watch the story unfold from her perspective, she voices her experience, and the blame is even shifted away from her and onto Venus. This is a poem offering a new perspective on a woman from myth, which is precisely the function of the *Heroides.* Given Tarpeia's poor reputation, this poem is particularly comparable to *Heroides* 12, in which readers see Medea, the child-murdering witch, portrayed in a more sympathetic light as she suffers with her children as her husband (their father) marries a new woman.

Propertius' final book is characterized by the mixture of elegiac and aetiological poems; poem 4.4 particularly demonstrates the ways that elegiac themes can be woven into poetry about Rome's history:

hinc Tarpeia deae laticem libavit: at illi
urgebat medium fictilis urna caput.
vidit harenosis Tatium proludere campis
pictaque per flavas arma levare iubas:
obstipuit regis facie et regalibus armis,
interque oblitas excidit urna manus.
saepe illa immeritae causatast omina lunae,
et sibi tingendas dixit in amne comas:
saepe tulit blandis argentea lilia Nymphis,
Romula ne faciem laederet hasta Tati:
dumque subit primo Capitolia nubila fumo,
rettulit hirsutis bracchia secta rubis,
et Tarpeia sua residens ita flevit ab arce
vulnera vicino non patienda Iovi:
Propertius 4.4.15-30

Here Tarpeia gathered water for the goddess:
a pot of clay pressed on the middle of her head.
She saw Tatius preparing for battle on the sandy plains
and lifting his painted arms over the golden mane of his horse:
she was amazed at the appearance of the king and his royal arms,
and the pot fell from her forgetful hands.
Often she feigned that there were rites of the blameless moon,
and she said that her hair must be dipped in the river:
often she would bear silver lilies to the gentle nymphs,
so that the spear of Romulus would not wound the face of Tatius:

> and advancing to the Capitoline, cloudy with the first smoke,
> she bore back branches cut from the prickly brambles,
> and Tarpeia, sitting down far from her citadel, wept
> for the wounds not endured by nearby Jupiter:

After this passage, Tarpeia goes on to continue to lament that she is separated from her love interest. This passage, and much of the poem, would not be out of place in the typical erotic poetry written by Roman elegists. Tarpeia was captured by Tatius' appearance and, being all consumed by passion, was not able to serve Rome. Again, Venus is to blame (*nam Venus, Iliacae felix tutela favillae, / culpam alit et plures condit in ossa faces,* "for Venus, the favorable guardian of the Roman embers, fed her fault and established many flames in her bones" 4.4.69-70). The elegists similarly also often describe themselves as under the control of Venus, Cupid, or Amor: In *Amores* 1.1, Cupid prevents the Ovidian poet from writing about war. In *Amores* 2.18, the speaker-poet rests in the shades of Venus (*ignava Veneris cessamus in umbra,* 3*)* rather than participating in war. Notably, both of these poems are *recusatio'*s*,* in which the poet turns down military service or writing epic poetry in light of his love affair (with elegy and the *scripta puella*). Both war and epic poetry serve the state, either by building its legacy or recording it, so the elegists' preference for elegy is almost a rejection of supporting the state. Elegy's association with the Greek tradition only furthers this divergence from the ideal Roman identity. Tarpeia's betrayal of Rome as a reaction to the workings of Venus is similar.

In her chapter on this poem, Tara Welch identifies Tarpeia's struggle as a conflict between *Amor* and *Roma*. In the poem, Tarpeia fantasizes about a wedding to Tatius, dreaming especially of herself as a bride (*ego..nupta,* 59), the pacts of such a marriage (*foedus,* 60), the chants of *Hymenaee* (61), and the wedding bed softening weapons (*vestra meus molliet arma torus,* 62). Welch understands Tarpeia's hope for a wedding as a solution to the conflict she is facing, pointing out that the hope of this marriage, and all Roman marriages, is to "blur the distinctions

between families and strengthen the community."[49] If Tarpeia can bring together the Sabines and Romans through the *foedus* of marriage, she no longer has to choose between *amor* and *Roma*. Tarpeia's fixation on marriage, especially over the pacts of marriage and the chants of *Hymenaee,* also recalls the language and obsession with marriage from the poems of Arethusa and the *Heroides* (see pg. 27-29). Tarpeia is in a very different position from these other women, who have all been abandoned by their lovers. However, the reader familiar with the myth will recognize that she is soon to be betrayed. She will not marry Tatius, but will be murdered with him leading the charge. With the knowledge of this betrayal by Tatius, her excitement at the thought of a wedding becomes grotesquely ironic.

The wedding language continues into the final scene of the poem, although at that point it is no longer Tarpiea's fantasy. Instead, both Tatius and Propertius use the language of marriage to describe the violence enacted against her:

> '*nube' ait 'et regni scande cubile mei!'*
> *dixit, et ingestis comitum super obruit armis.*
> *haec, virgo, officiis dos erat apta tuis.*
> Propertius 4.4.90-92

> "wed" [Tatius] said "and climb into my royal wedding bed!"
> He spoke, and he crushed her with the weapons of his companions heaped on her.
> This, maiden, was a fitting dowry for your services.

This marriage imagery ties into the irony of Tarpeia's fantasy of a wedding. After Tatius references this wedding, Tarpeia does not have a chance to respond; among the company of men, she is silent. Despite the power of speech that she has in the rest of the poem, she is voiceless here and her body becomes disposable. Propertius then goes on to suggest that this was a fitting "dowry" for her services. Vestal virgins never wed; instead, their lives were committed to serving Vesta, including tending to her flame in the forum. Thus, Propertius' use of the word *dos*

[49] Welch, *The Elegiac Cityscape,* 65.

here may emphasize how she has betrayed her post. She was supposed to guard Rome and practice chastity; instead, she betrays Rome in pursuit of a love affair. In Propertius' eyes, her death was a fitting dowry for her *officiis.* She failed to fulfill her *officium* to Rome as a Vestal virgin, so her death acted as payment, *dos,* for this *officium.* While Tarpeia's death did not directly impact the outcome of the war with the Sabines, her story is an important reflection of the Roman identity.[50] So important, in fact, that the Romans not only named the Tarpeian rock after her (an honor that Propertius says was undeserved, *a duce turpe Iovis mons est cognomen adeptus:o vigil, iniuste praemia mortis habes*, 93-94), but also venerated her at her tomb in the city as a celebration of her "contribution to Roman pluralism."[51] In this way, her death is tied into the state's succession, a theme that is further explored in chapter three.

Conclusion

Although female speech in elegy is often sparse, the bodies of the elegiac *puellae* offer another important method of communication. Just as their speech is often carefully crafted to manipulate the lover's emotions, their bodies likewise trick the *amatores* by communicating false information about the *puella*'s emotional state. This manipulative communication gives the *puellae* a degree of power in the relationship. While her body is often treated as the object of male sexual desire at best and domestic violence at worst, it can also help the women achieve their goals in the relationship. When women use their bodies to manipulate the speaker, they reclaim at least some of the power over their bodies and the relationship from the speaker-poets. At the same time, of course, this action serves the poet's purposes; their manipulation is a trope that makes the men seem more desirable and that justifies the women's subjugation.

[50] Welch, *Tarpeia: Workings of a Roman Myth.*
[51] Welch, *The Elegiac Cityscape,* 56.

In book four of Propertius, female speech enjoys an unprecedented dominance in the poems, and the women showcase their ability to write and speak extended monologues that feature persuasive speech, elegiac tropes, and appropriation of male fantasies. Poem 4.7 in particular features a woman using references to the body to enhance her speech. The similarities among poems 4.3, 4.4, and 4.7, from the dominance of female speech to the appropriation of male fantasies, set the stage for Ovid's *Heroides* and *Fasti,* in which the female voice and body continue to appear in new ways. While the *Heroides* are entirely written in the female voice, the *Fasti* features female silence as a significant theme, as I discuss in chapter three. The understanding of female speech and the female body in Roman erotic poetry that I provide in this chapter is a vital foundation for an understanding of Ovid's works and of the development of these themes in Roman elegiac poetry.

In the next chapter, I argue that this appropriation of male fantasies by a female speaker is also at play in *Heroides* X. Ariadne deploys the female voice and embodiment of male fantasies in a way that showcases her own abused body for specific purposes. Propertius 4.7 also shares several elements of the *Heroides'* epistolary form. While Cynthia delivers her message above the Propertian speaker's bed, there is no back-and-forth conversation. It is the deliverance of a one-sided message, just like a letter. A defining feature of the letter is its communication across a divide of space and time.[52] While Cynthia is not separated from the speaker in quite the same way as the heroines of the *Heroides*, she and Propertius are living in separate worlds. Cynthia is dead and is only able to return to deliver this message as a shade in a dream. Although Cynthia is theoretically in the room with Propertius, they cannot embrace (*inter complexus excidit umbra meos,* 96). There is one crucial difference between Cynthia's speech and an elegiac epistle; there is

[52] Gibson and Morrison, "What is a Letter?" 3.

a frame narrative that shows Propertius' reaction to her words. His perspective still very much encloses, shapes, and defines how we read hers, so Cynthia is subsumed to him. In the *Heroides,* this frame drops away and the female written voice entirely dominates.

III

Adspice Mente: Ekphrasis, Mourning, and the Female Written Voice in *Heroides* X

Introduction

In the last chapter, I investigated the role of the female body and voice in typical Roman elegy, specifically Propertius' *Elegies* and Ovid's *Amores*. As argued in chapter one, the bodies of the *puellae* often serve as an alternative means of communication, allowing them to participate in non-verbal persuasion or manipulation. Sharon James argues that female speech in elegy is generic, and the chapter expands this understanding to argue that elegiac women also communicate using body language in accordance with their profession.[53] Erika Zimmermann Damer's monograph, *In the Flesh,* also offered an important paradigm for the role of the body in elegy beyond being the object of the male gaze, creating the foundation for my analysis of female body language in the poems.

Propertius' final book departs from this model and features more extended passages of female speech, including, but not limited to, 4.3, formatted as a letter written by a Roman woman, Arethusa, to her absent lover; Propertius 4.4, which gives an account of Tarpeia's betrayal of Rome from her perspective and includes an extended monologue from the Vestal virgin; and Propertius 4.7 where the bulk of the poem is expressed through the female voice. These poems share several themes with the *Heroides* including abandonment, the tension between presence and absence, and a fixation on fidelity and marriage rites. They also feature women using the epistolary form in 4.3 and descriptions of their body in 4.7 to have an intentional effect on the speaker in a way that is different from earlier elegies. In both content

[53] James, *"Ipsa Dixerat."*

and form, these poems serve as a transitional moment between typical Roman elegy and Ovid's *Heroides,* which purport to be entirely female-authored and also feature women lamenting their abandonment by their lovers. In *Heroides* X, Ovid crafts a letter written from Ariadne to Theseus. In this letter, Ovid picks up on the themes and strategies from earlier elegy, especially Propertius' final book, to craft a letter that appropriates the male fantasies of the abused female body to serve Ariadne's own purposes. Like Cynthia in Propertius 4.7, Ariadne challenges the way that her story has been told elsewhere as she narrates her own story. Additionally, Ariadne specifically responds to the male fantasy of the mourning woman seen throughout elegy.

While there is debate about exactly which letters should be considered genuine, the most inclusive versions of the *Heroides* include 15 letters written from the female perspective followed by three pairs of letters written between lovers (each pair includes one male-authored letter and one female-authored).[54] A work written so heavily from the female perspective is extremely unusual among the extant texts from ancient Rome, and thus it offers the unique opportunity for the extended examination of the female voice in Latin literature. The letters are written in elegiac meter, aligning them with Ovid's *Amores,* but their epistolary form and framing generally aligns them with the prose letters most commonly associated with the epistolary genre.

<u>The Written Female Voice in *Heroides X*</u>

The epistolary form presents a set of unique traits, and it is worth considering why Ovid may have chosen it for his experiment with female-authored poetry.[55] Letters require

[54] Clark, "The Authorship and the Date of the Double Letters in Ovid's *Heroides.*" Courtney, "Ovidian and Non-Ovidian *Heroides*" and "Echtheitskritik." Gordon, "The Lover's Voice in Heroides 15." Knox, "Ovid's *Medea* and the Authenticity of *Heroides* 12." Tracy, "The Authenticity of *Heroides* 16-21." Tarrant, "The Authenticity of the Letter of Sappho to Phaon."
[55] For more on the Epistolary form, see Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Epistolary Fictions,* and Gibson and Morrison, "Introduction: What is a Letter?"

separation between the speaker and the addressee. In this way, the need for the women to write letters again emphasizes the isolation that they are facing as a result of their abandonment. This distance also means that by the time the letter is read, some amount of time has passed. This lapse in time creates a particular sense of tragedy in the letters in which the heroines are on the brink of committing suicide; by the time the letter is read, it will presumably be too late for the lover to take any action. This divide between writer and reader contrasts with what we see in traditional Roman elegy, where there is more immediacy and emphasis on the physical interaction between the narrator and *puella.*

This necessary distance between writer and reader of a letter is particularly interesting when considering the role of the female body because, of course, it is impossible for the reader of the letter to see, much less touch, the writer's body. In the case of the *Heroides,* this gives the female speaker complete control of how her body is perceived by her lover/reader and what role, if any, it plays in the story she tells about their love affair. In some ways, too, the letter is a stand-in for her body. The letter is a physical object she can send as a proxy when she can't travel to her lover in person. These women, as crafted by Ovid, demonstrate cleverness and rhetorical skill, and are not mere objects of male speaker's fantasy (although they may be that too). Instead, they take on a voice of their own and describe their own experiences. As one of these heroines, Ariadne takes full advantage of the power she has to craft her own image in a way that will be enticing to her abandoner, Theseus.

Ariadne enacts this power in *Heroides* X, a 152-line letter addressed to Theseus. She writes from the shore of the island Naxos after Theseus has abandoned her on his ship. The poem opens with an address to Theseus, calling out his wickedness and betrayal, before describing the different phases of Ariadne's discovery of his departure. She describes waking up to their empty

bed and then running back and forth on the shore, crying out for him. She finally climbs up onto the cliff, where her fears are confirmed when she sees his ship sailing away in the distance.

Ariadne's descriptions of the landscape include a great deal of imagery, from the shore extending as far as the eye can see to the rough cliff eaten away by the water (*quod videant oculi, nil nisi litus habent,* 18; *hinc scopulus raucis pendet adesus aquis,* 26), pulling the reader and Theseus into the scene with her. Beyond creating a vivid tableau for her reader, Ariadne desperately wants Theseus to see her within this landscape:

> *si non audires, ut saltem cernere posses,*
> *iactatae late signa dedere manus;*
> *Heroides* 10.39-40
>
> so that if you did not hear [me] you would at least be able to see,
> I gave broad signals, throwing about my hands

And also, later in the poem:

> *Di facerent, ut me summa de puppe videres;*
> *movisset vultus maesta figura tuos!*
> *nunc quoque non oculis, sed, qua potes, adspice mente*
> *haerentem scopulo, quem vaga pulsat aqua.*
> *Heroides* 10.133-6
>
> May the gods bring it about that you would see me from the top of your ship;
> My sad figure would have moved your expression!
> Now look at me clinging to the cliff, which the
> Wandering water beats, not with your eyes, but with what you are able – your mind.

The vivid descriptions of Ariadne and her self-identified desire for Theseus to see her establish the gaze as a crucial element of this poem. I argue that Ariadne approaches her letter similarly to an author composing an ekphrasis; because she is physically separated from Theseus, she must use the written word to paint an image of herself in order to achieve an effect on him that argument alone cannot achieve. Ekphrasis is narrowly defined in modern scholarship as

describing a work of visual art.[56] In this poem, Ariadne paints portraits of herself to attract Theseus' gaze as a viewer of her in distress.

Ariadne and Ekphrasis Outside of *Heroides X*

Ariadne exists as the object of the gaze elsewhere in Latin literature. Jaś Elsner has offered an analysis of Ariadne and the gaze, focusing primarily on Catullus' ekphrasis in poem 64.[57] In this poem, there is an extended description of the coverlet from the marriage couch of Peleus and Thetis. This coverlet is embroidered with the scene of Ariadne on the shore watching Theseus sail away. Elsner considers the role of the gaze at several levels within this poem, focusing partially on unfulfilled desire as it is enacted by the gaze. Echoes of Catullus 64 can be seen in Propertius' elegies and in *Heroides* X.

When considering the emulators of Catullus, Elsner begins with Propertius 1.3.[58] In this poem, Cynthia, Propertius' beloved, is immediately compared to Ariadne:

> *Qualis Thesea iacuit cedente carina*
> *languida desertis Cnosia litoribus;*
> Propertius 1.3.1-2
>
> "Like the Cnosian lay sleeping on the deserted shores
> with Theseus' ship departing…"

The speaker of the poem arrives drunkenly (*multo…Baccho,* 1.3.9), which alludes to Bacchus' discovery of Ariadne on the shore.[59] There is an ongoing emphasis on the gaze and vision in this poem, highlighted by the role of Cynthia's sleeping and waking (i.e., having closed eyes and then opening them), while the main role of the gaze is the speaker gazing upon Cynthia's form. Elsner argues that:

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[56] Elsner and Bartsch, "Introduction," in *Classical Philology* (2007). See Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination, and Persuasion,* for a discussion of the more expansive definition of ekphrasis in antiquity.
[57] Jas Elsner, "Viewing Ariadne," 20-24.
[58] Elsner, "Viewing Ariadne," 25ff.
[59] Elsner, "Viewing Ariadne," 25.

> "This gaze is not within an ekphrasis nor at a work of art (as are the various gazes in Catullus), but self-confessedly the poet's gaze at his woman reduced to a simile (Cynthia as Ariadne). This sets up the objectification of the female as the viewed, only to surprise us when the poem ends with the objectified Cynthia emulating Ariadne's curse and berating Propertius in her rage."[60]

Elsner acknowledges here the similar feature shared by the ekphrasis of Catullus and Propertius' poem – the role of the gaze. Another key component of Elsner's observation above is that Propertius' gaze in this poem makes the female form the object of the view. He argues that this is not contained in an ekphrasis, which is certainly valid based on popular definitions of ekphrasis as a "verbal representation of visual representation."[61] While these descriptions from Propertius are not true ekphrases, because they do not describe a work of visual art, they are ekphrastic in nature; that is to say, they share certain elements with ekphrasis. The ekphrastic nature of these descriptions deserves further attention.

Ekphrasis is most common in epic poetry. When an epic author is composing an ekphrasis, he offers an extended description of a work of art (one that is often beyond the scope of what could feasibly exist). The author benefits from this imagined work of art in that it contributes significantly both to the artistic style of their writing and to the development of the story itself. As Don Fowler argues in his seminal article on ekphrasis in Latin literature, ekphrasis has an important relationship with the plot of the story, rather than simply being a "narrative pause" with little significance.[62] Fowler considers the "relation of description [i.e. ekphrasis] to narrative on a psychological level."[63] These descriptions may communicate information about the narrator, the person with whom the described object is associated, or more

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[60] Elsner, "Viewing Ariadne," 26.
[61] Webb "*Ekphrasis* Ancient and Modern," 7. See for an overview of the various ways that ekphrasis has been defined.
[62] Fowler, "Narrate and Describe."
[63] Fowler, "Narrate and Describe," 27.

broad information through metaphor. As an example, Fowler refers to the ekphrasis from Juno's temple in book one of the *Aeneid*.[64] He argues that this description reflects information about Aeneas, particularly his emotional state (e.g., when viewing the scene of Hector's abused body, Aeneas lets out a groan; *tum vero ingentem gemitum dat pectore ab imo*, line 485). Not only does this description tell readers about Aeneas' grief and his relationship with Hector, for example, but Fowler also cites Horsfall and others who argue that Aeneas is misreading the scenes.[65] Given that the scenes are in a temple of Juno, they are presumably a *celebration* of Troy's suffering, rather than a sympathetic portrayal. However, Aeneas is happy to see these significant moments recorded in the temple. This misreading reflects Aeneas' blindness to the fact, reflecting either naivety or perhaps grief that overwhelms his logic, and may also offer information about what the Carthaginians valued.

Propertius' descriptions of the visual aspects of the scene he encounters in poem 1.3 are not quite long or detailed enough to be considered an ekphrasis, even if one excuses the traditional need for a work of visual art. However, Cynthia's body is serving a similar role in this poem as a work of art would in ekphrasis. The writer uses the description of her form in the composing process; he incorporates similes alluding to multiple myths in order to express his artistic style. These similes also, as Valladares argues, would have called to mind works of visual art for the Roman reader.[66] Propertius is already using descriptions of the female form to create references to visual art; Ovid takes this a step further by having Ariadne refer to her own body as something to be looked at, as if it were a form of art itself. Cynthia's gentle character is revealed to be an unrealistic fantasy. While she is sleeping, she has no agency or control over how she is

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[64] Fowler, "Narrate and Describe," 32.
[65] Fowler, "Narrate and Describe," 32.
[66] Valladares, "The Lover as Model Viewer," 219 and *passim.*

perceived or depicted by the speaker-poet, but once she awakens the fantasy is disrupted and she berates him. Thus, while this poem does not contain an ekphrasis per se, the beloved's body is gazed upon in the same way as a work of art. The male gaze is thus forced upon Cynthia (who is compared to Ariadne) for the benefit of the male author and audience members who get to "gaze" upon her through the poet's descriptions.

Adspice Mente

Elsner then goes on to discuss *Heroides* X, continuing to focus on the role of gaze in the poem. Here, rather than being the object of ekphrasis described on a coverlet, Ariadne is "all voice."[67] However, the gaze continues to play a significant role in this poem; Ariadne gazes out at Theseus; there is an abundance of vocabulary concerning sight, eyes, and tears; and Ariadne even laments that no one will close her eyes when she dies (*nec, mea qui digitis lumina condat, erit?,* 120). Elsner also notes that "part of Ariadne's purpose is to attract Theseus' gaze back at her" and "to have him see her in her misery, with his mind if not his eyes (Her. 10.133-38)."[68]

Ariadne asks Theseus to look at her with his mind rather than his eyes because their physical separation prevents him from actually looking at her (which she references when she says to look at her with what he is able to, *qua potes,* i.e. his mind). Her "ekphrasis" of herself solves a problem inherent to letter writing. The reader cannot "see" the writer due to their physical separation. Ariadne's visual language is a way to overcome the problem of separation through an attempt to create a type of visual presence. Esther Milne argues that a "sense of presence and immediacy" is vital to the epistolary genre, and that this "presence produced within the epistolary exchange can seem more 'real' than that experienced when correspondents meet face-to-face." She identifies "references to the body in the epistolary act" as particular players in

[67] Elsner, "Viewing Ariadne," 27.
[68] Elsner, "Viewing Ariadne," 41.

the creation of the sense of presence. These references can "eclipse the corporeality of the actual body of the writing subject."[69] The epistolary form of the *Heroides* allows for Ariadne to include these highly visual descriptions of herself in a natural way that would not make sense if communicated in person. The way that Ariadne's descriptions guide the gaze is similar to ekphrasis, while the necessity of these descriptions is a product of the epistolary form. I will investigate the similarities of these descriptions to ekphrases while considering the relation of ekphrasis to both the epistolary and elegiac genres.

***Heroides* X as Ekphrasis**

Ariadne paints a series of distinct scenes at the beginning of the poem, each serving as sort of its own work of art. Just as ekphrases from epic often contain multiple scenes that cannot coexist simultaneously (cf. the Shield of Achilles, book 18 of Homer's *Iliad*, and the Temple of Juno, book 1 of Vergil's *Aeneid*), each of these scenes, which could not occur simultaneously, are united into one visual tableau as the subject of her description. While these scenes are episodes of a narrative, she presents them to have one overall effect on her reader. Like Aeneas' lament when he views the images on Juno's temple walls, Ariadne hopes to stir up pity (and, as I will argue, desire) in her reader; she imagines his face twisting at the sight of what she describes (*movisset vultus maesta figura tuos,* 134).

The first scene is that of Ariadne waking up on their shared bed:

> *Tempus erat, vitrea quo primum terra pruina*
> *spargitur et tectae fronde queruntur aves.*
> *incertum vigilans ac somno languida movi*
> *Thesea prensuras semisupina manus—*
> *nullus erat! referoque manus iterumque retempto,*
> *perque torum moveo bracchia—nullus erat!*
> *excussere metus somnum; conterrita surgo,*
> *membraque sunt viduo praecipitata toro.*
> *protinus adductis sonuerunt pectora palmis,*

[69] Milne, "The Simple Transcripts of Natural Feeling," 73.

utque erat e somno turbida, rupta coma est.
Heroides 10. 7-16

It was the time when the earth is first sprinkled with glassy frost,
and the birds, sheltered by the leaves, were lamenting.
Not quite awake and sluggish from sleep,
I rolled onto my side, reaching out my hands to Theseus.
There was no one! I pull back my hands and try again,
and move my arms over the bed- there was no one!
Fear shook away my sleep; terrified, I rise up,
and throw my limbs headfirst from the widowed bed.
Immediately my chest resounded from the strikes of my palms,
and my hair, which had been messied by sleep, was torn.

This scene is set up with vivid visual descriptions. The time of day is established with the "glassy frost" and singing birds covered by the foliage; both visual and auditory imagery place the reader in the scene from the start. Additionally, the *vitrea…pruina* establishes the cold temperature, again allowing readers to imagine themselves in the scene and setting up Ariadne's coming description of her waking up alone in bed as even more pitiful.[70] This painting of the scene is ekphrastic in nature in its vividness. In antiquity, ekphrasis was less associated with visual art and was instead associated with vivid description; it was associated with the Greek *enargeia,* vividness.[71] The imagery of this scene creates *enargeia;* it is vivid enough to "seem as if it is seen" (*cerni videantur*, from Quintilian's definition of *energeia*).[72] Because the letter's audience is not able to actually see what Ariadne wants them to see, she instead describes the scene in detail to recreate what she can of the viewing experience.

Ariadne then paints herself into the scene. Just as the scene began somewhat idyllically with its morning dew and singing birds, Ariadne appears the same way.[73] She is just stirring from

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[70] Peter E. Knox, *Heroides: Select Epistles,* 236 n. 7.
[71] Francis, "Metal Maidens," 3. See alsoValladares, "The Lover as Model Viewer," 216.
[72] Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria,* 8.3.61; cited by Francis, "Metal Maidens," 3.
[73] Knox, *Heroides,* 236 n. 8: Knox points out that while *queri* is commonly used to describe bird's songs, it is also particularly appropriate as Ariadne begins her own song of complaint. Knox 237 n.14: Similarly, her description of the bed as *viduo* "foretells her own condition."

sleep, and is described in a way that evokes Propertius's speaker-poet describing Cynthia when drunkenly admiring her sleeping figure in 1.3. This poem is the first time that Cynthia appears and speaks in Propertius' corpus, and, as we have seen, Propertius opens the poem by comparing her sleeping figure to that of Ariadne:

> *Qualis Thesea iacuit cedente carina*
> *Languida desertis Cnosia litoribus;*
> Propertius 1.3.1-2
>
> "Like the Cnosian lay sleeping on the deserted shores
> with Theseus' ship departing…"

This is during the idealistic portion of the poem, before Cynthia awakens and forces a more realistic understanding of her. Notably, Ovid's Ariadne picks up on the vocabulary that Propertius uses to describe this optimal version of Cynthia by describing herself as *languida.* Propertius figured the female body as an object to be viewed, and Ovid is asking us to do the same. This intertext therefore encourages us to read this scene as ekphrastic. While the serenity of Propertius' scene is disturbed when Cynthia is awoken by the speaker's intrusion and chastises him, Ovid's Ariadne is disturbed by her lover's absence.

Ariadne's descriptions of herself here rely heavily on imagery. Rather than saying she beat her breast and pulled out her hair, she describes the sounds of the beating of her chest and how her hair has been broken. She even includes the aside that her hair, right before it was torn out, was disturbed by her sleep (*erat e somno turbida,* 16) so that readers can imagine exactly what her hair looked like as this action was being completed. Ariadne is describing herself in highly visual language here, using her body as fodder for the poetic descriptions. She mentions her hands, arms, limbs, hair, and breast, inviting a roving graze. However, these descriptions have a distinct purpose from those in elegy because here they are presented as having been written by the woman's own hand. Rather than her body being used as a vehicle for fantasy in male-authored poetry or as the

object of the male gaze, Ariadne here uses her own writing in two ways: to reclaim her story and body and to make Theseus "see" her in a particular way and to thus entice him to return.

It will be useful to compare Ariadne's descriptions of herself with ekphrastic descriptions. The famous shield and temple ekphrases are not ideal comparanda given the extreme difference in subject matter. There are, however, suitable comparanda in Hellenistic ekphrastic epigrams. In her recent monograph on Roman tenderness, Herica Valladares devotes her third chapter to an analysis of both visual and textual depictions of Medea, another one of the heroines featured in Ovid's *Heroides*.[74] For the textual depictions, she focuses on Medea's letter from the *Heroides,* while much of the material for the visual analysis comes from ekphrases describing statues of Medea. These ekphrases, describing another woman in a similar situation to Ariadne (they are, after all, both authors in the *Heroides* for a reason – they both face immense grief after being abandoned by their lovers in foreign lands, after betraying their family to escape with their lovers), are a particularly useful point of comparison when considering Ariadne's self-description as a sort of ekphrasis. Consider the epigram below, written by an anonymous author:

> Δεῦρ᾽ ἴδε, καὶ θάμβησον ὑπ᾽ ὀφρύσι κείμενον οἶκτον καὶ θυμόν,
> βλεφάρων καὶ πυρόεσσαν ἴτυν, καὶ μητρὸς παλάμην ἀλόχοιό τε
> πικρὰ παθούσης ὁρμῇ φειδομένῃ πρὸς φόνον ἑλκομένην.
> ζωγράφος εὖ δ᾽ ἔκρυψε φόνου τέλος, οὐκ ἐθελήσας θάμβος
> ἀπαμβλῦναι πένθεϊ δερκομένων
>
> Anth. Gr. 16.140[75]
>
> Come, look and wonder at the pity and anger beneath her brows,
> and the fiery orb of her eyes, and the hand of a mother and bitterly
> suffering wife drawn to murder by a forbearing impulse. The
> painter did well to hide the act of murder, not wanting to dampen
> the viewers' amazement with sorrow.
>
> Transl. Valladares

[74] Valladares, *Invention of Tenderness.*
[75] From Valladares, *Invention of Tenderness,* 126.

As Valladares point out, this epigram (and the others she considers) focus heavily on the role of emotions in these works of art.[76] This epigram does not simply describe the emotion, though, but it describes the physical components of Medea's figure that convey that emotion. Her brows, her fiery eyes, and her hand convey her emotions, especially pity and anger. The anonymous author recognizes the control that the artist has over the viewer's emotions when he points out the intentional suppression of sorrow. The artist has created a woman's form to elicit a very specific reaction, and the epigram's author uses his ekphrastic description to recreate the same reaction for his readers.

As an author, Ariadne is more successful than the authors of the epigrams that Valladares considers at using the physical descriptions to convey emotion. For the most part, Ariadne does not communicate her emotions by describing them, but instead describes what an onlooker would have seen. In this first scene, there is particular attention paid to her hands (*manus),* like in the description above of Medea, and arms (*bracchia* and *membra)* and the actions that they are performing. Readers, including Theseus, can then assume her inner turmoil from these images. Ariadne's self-description then transitions to center on her expressions of her grief: she beats her chest and rips her hair, as women mourning in Greek and Roman literature often do.

The next scene is marked by a transition in setting, signaled by the phrase *luna fuit* ("the moon was out", 17).

> *Luna fuit; specto, siquid nisi litora cernam.*
> *quod videant oculi, nil nisi litus habent.*
> *nunc huc, nunc illuc, et utroque sine ordine, curro;*
> *alta puellares tardat harena pedes.*
> *interea toto clamavi in litore "Theseu!":*
> *reddebant nomen concava saxa tuum,*
> *et quotiens ego te, totiens locus ipse vocabat.*
> *ipse locus miserae ferre volebat opem.*

[76] Valladares, *Invention of Tenderness,* 140-151.

Heroides 10.17-24

> The moon was out; I look to see if I can discern anything except shore.
> What the eyes see holds nothing except shore.
> Now here, now there, and every way without order, I run;
> the deep sand slows my girlish feet.
> Meanwhile I shouted on the entire shore "Theseus!"
> The hollow rocks return your name,
> and as often as I called you, just as many times the place itself does too.
> The very place wanted to bear help to poor me.

In this scene the role of sight is particularly prominent. Even the way Ariadne sets the scene, by describing the presence of the moon, emphasizes her ability to see even though it was not daytime. The first two lines contain the verbs *specto, cernam, videant,* and the noun *oculi,* all drawing attention to the fact that Ariadne is describing what she can see so that Theseus' gaze can follow hers. Ariadne is not simply inviting him to gaze at her here, but to adopt her perspective. She describes her actions using the historical present to enhance the vividness of the scene. In this scene, rather than her arms and hands (as in the last scene), she describes her feet, running frantically through the thick sand. While she was previously *languida,* she now runs in every direction. She also finishes this scene by drawing attention to her pitiable state (*miserae*) which even the inanimate place wanted to help.

The description then cuts to a mountain, with the scene again being set by a noun and a form of *esse* (*mons fuit*):

> *Mons fuit—apparent frutices in vertice rari;*
> *hinc scopulus raucis pendet adesus aquis.*
> *adscendo—vires animus dabat—atque ita late*
> *aequora prospectu metior alta meo.*
> *inde ego—nam ventis quoque sum crudelibus usa-*
> *vidi praecipiti carbasa tenta Noto.*
> *ut vidi haut dignam quae me vidisse putarem,*
> *frigidior glacie semianimisque fui.*
> *nec languere diu patitur dolor; excitor illo,*
> *excitor et summa Thesea voce voco.*
> *"quo fugis?" exclamo; "scelerate revertere Theseu!*

flecte ratem! numerum non habet illa suum!"
Heroides 10.25-36

There was a mountain – sparse shrubs can be seen on the peak;
there a rock hangs, eroded by rough waters.
I climb it – my spirit was giving me strength – and
I measure the deep water with my gaze wide-reaching.
There I – for I also enjoyed the friendship of the cruel winds –
saw the sails stretched taught by the headlong southern wind.
As I saw that which I thought I did not deserve to see,
I was colder than ice and lifeless.
Suffering did not suffer my sluggishness long; I was roused by it,
I was roused and I call out to Theseus with my loudest voice.
"Where are you fleeing?" I exclaim; "turn around, wicked Theseus!
Curve back your ship! She does not have her rank!"

Here, again, Ariadne's gaze is emphasized, although what she sees is given far less description than her environment and actions. She paints a landscape, with details down to the shrubs on the mountain top, so that Theseus can imagine exactly what she looked like when she saw his boat. While he has "seen" her sluggish and running back and forth, here she is half-dead (*semianimis*). It is as though seeing Theseus sail away has nearly killed her. Her grief at his deaprture has rendered her like a still life in her own depiction of herself – frozen and unmoving. Again, the scene ends emphasizing her grief, with her shouting laments.

These three scenes begin the poem. With these scenes, Ariadne creates a triptych of images of herself within the landscape. Each panel begins with a noun and a form of *esse* setting the scene, each depicts a stage of her progressive realization that Theseus has left her, and each ends by emphasizing her grief. From here, Ariadne's writing is a bit less organized, but continues to emphasize how her body appears in its grieving state.

Caroline Kroon understands this shift in Ariadne's writing style as a switch from epic-style writing to elegiac writing, where Ariadne grows into an elegiac speaker as the poem

progresses.[77] Kroon relies on a heavily linguistic analysis to argue that *Heroides* X is a marriage of epic and elegy. She asserts that Ariadne slowly gains more agency and more of an actual voice as the poem progresses, with the poem climaxing when she calls out to Theseus and becomes an elegiac speaker.[78] Part of her analysis considers the sequence of tenses seen early in the poem, based on the argument that they are epic in nature. The imperfect followed by the perfect, as seen in *tempus erat… movi,* is the "diegetic or narrative discourse mode." [79] This mode appears often in epic because the clause with the imperfect verb "creates the temporal frame for the occurrence of the first main event on the narrative time line."[80] At the beginning of the next scene, the progression is instead from perfect to historical presents (*luna fuit…specto, habent, etc.*). While this is not the narrative discourse model, Kroon points out that the use of historical presents is also very common in Vergil.[81] Not only is ekphrasis itself most often seen in epic, but the flowing between past and present tenses is also a hallmark of ekphrasis. For example, in the temple wall ekphrasis of *Aeneid* Book One, verbs appear in the following order:[82]

Verb	**Tense**	**Line**
fugerent	imperfect	467
premeret	imperfect	467
instaret	imperfect	468
vastabat	imperfect	471
avertit	perfect or present	472
gustassent	pluperfect	473
bibissent	pluperfect	473
fertur	present	476
haeret	present	476
trahuntur	present	477
inscribitur	present	478
ibant	imperfect	479
ferebant	imperfect	480
tenebat	imperfect	482
raptaverat	pluperfect	483

77 Kroon, "*Voce Voco.*"
78 Kroon, "*Voce Voco,*" 245.
79 Kroon, "*Voce Voco,*" 241.
80 Kroon, "*Voce Voco,*" 241.
81 Kroon, "*Voce Voco,,*" 243.
82 Verbs describing Aeneas' actions outside of the ekphrasis are omitted. I have used the Loeb Classical Text, H. R. Fairclough, Transl, Rev. G. P. Goold, 1999 for the Latin of Vergil's *Aeneid.*

vendebat	imperfect	484
ducit	present	490
ardet	present	491
audetque	present	493

In this chart, we see the verb tenses flow from imperfect to present from 467-478 and then again from 479-493. This variation between past and present tenses helps to create the effect of the gaze roaming over different scenes that are each distinct parts of the story, happening at different times, but presented together in one image. It helps break up the image into different events, both in the *Aeneid* and in the *Heroides.* The present tense verbs also make the reader feel present in the action, as thought events are unfolding in the moment.

While Kroon identifies Ariadne's emphasis on her physical movements at the beginning of the poem as the awakening of her "tactile senses," one step in her progression to the persona of the elegiac speaker, Kroon does not address the continued emphasis on her body and actions in the rest of the poem. Throughout the entire poem, Ariadne continues to describe her actions in detail. She continues to beat her breast (*plangore replebam,* 37) and she weeps (*tum denique flevi,* 43). At times she wanders around with her hair undone, in the manner of a mourning woman (*aut ego diffusis erravi sola capillis,* 47), while at other times she sits perfectly still, like a rock (*aut mare prospiciens in saxo frigida sedi, / quamque lapis sedes, tam lapis ipsa fui,* 49-50). She weeps on their shared bed (*incumbo, lacrimisque toro manante profusis, 55)*.

Elsner argues that in lines 49-50 (*aut mare prospiciens in saxo frigida sedi, quamque lapis sedes, tam lapis ipsa fui*) Ovid is "avoiding ekphrasis…and bringing art to life in the text" in comparison to Catullus' description of Ariadne as a stone statue of a Bacchante (61: *saxea…effigies Bacchantis*).[83] There is a key difference between these two scenes; while Catullus

[83] Elsner, "Viewing Ariadne," 28.

compares Ariadne to a recognizable character, a Bacchant, Ovid's Ariadne becomes like stone through sitting. The two descriptions are also similar in many ways, though. Catullus is describing a woven representation of a real woman as another woman (a Bacchant), which makes it easier to categorize his description as an ekphrasis, since there are multiple layers of visual reference here. The first person verbs of Ovid's passage also mark it as a personal experience rather than a third-person description of a work of art. Ovid's Ariadne freezes herself as a natural reaction to her emotions rather than being frozen by the poet while Catullus' image of a Bacchant is one of a frenzied woman frozen in motion by the poet and the sculptor of this statue.

The way that Ovid's description creates a snapshot of what Theseus would see if he could gaze upon her in this moment is reminiscent of an ekphrasis. Ovid paints a scene of Ariadne gazing out onto the sea, frozen in time and blending into the rocks upon which she sits. Catullus' entire description is:

> *Quem procul ex alga maestis Minois ocellis*
> *saxea ut effigies bacchantis prospicit, eheu,*
> Catullus 64.60-61[84]
>
> [Theseus] at whom from the seaweed the Minoan, with gloomy eyes,
> Looks forth like a rock statue of a bacchant, alas!

Ovid's description is similar to this one. Both describe Ariadne resembling a rock gazing out from the island. Elsner focuses on the comparison of Ariadne to a statue here because it compares her to a work of art, but Ovid creates almost the same image. Rather than her body appearing in a work of visual art that is meant to be gazed upon, Ariadne describes her actual experience as a series of visual scenes as if they were works of art. The female form is often used in poetry as an object of the male gaze, as Elsner establishes, and here Ariadne is able to reclaim her body and use

[84] I have used the Loeb Classical Text; F. W. Cornish, J. P. Postgate, and J. W. Mackail, transl.; rev. G. P. Goold, 1913 for the text of Catullus' poetry.

it for her own benefit. This (pseudo-) female-authored description of the female body allows Ariadne to control how her body is described, and an investigation of how she chooses to describe it can inform our reading of the poem further.

Interestingly, this image of Ariadne sitting on the rock is also popular in actual visual images from Campanian wall painting. Elsner brings several of these images into conversation with the poems he considers by tracking the gaze in both the texts and the images.[85] He looks at the images as a continuation of his analysis of the gaze. Some of this discussion centers on the "strangely sociable" Ariadne, images where Ariadne, in her moment of abandonment, is not alone. Often, she is surrounded by winged figures, or occasionally depicted with Bacchus.[86] These figures are a key point for Elsner's analysis because they are often pointing or covering their eyes, helping to establish diverse gazes in the images. These images are also an interesting point of comparison when considering Ariadne's agency in her depiction.

While Elsner views these images with gaze as his central consideration, viewing them through the lens of agency is also illuminating. In these images, Ariadne is often reclining with her chest exposed. The reclining position is very passive in that she is not taking any action. This is especially apparent when juxtaposed with the figures around her; they are always standing and are often taking some action such as pointing or covering their eyes. Ariadne's passive position and reclined chest make her an ideal candidate for male viewing, while all of her agency is handed over to the figures that surround her. The presence of these figures is interesting, particularly when compared with *Heroides* X; she complains about her utter isolation throughout the letter, because Theseus has abandoned her on this desolate island. Ariadne should really be alone in the pictures, yet these figures appear more often than not. The actions that these figures

[85] Elsner, "Viewing Ariadne," 28-44 (figures start on pg. 34).
[86] Elsner, "Viewing Ariadne," 29.

take, pointing at the ship and covering their eyes in grief, convey Ariadne's experience without requiring her form to do so. The pointing at the ship draws attention to the fact that Theseus has abandoned her, while the covering of eyes emphasizes Ariadne's grief.

Meanwhile, Ariadne is free to recline with a relatively neutral face. Her hair is never disturbed, and there are no marks on her chest or face from her expressions of mourning. This is very much divergent from the poem; while there is a great deal of emphasis on these actions in the poem, Ariadne's pristine appearance is preserved in the images. In this way, also, she is a fantasy figure; abandoned on a desolate island, she still manages to appear relaxed and well-groomed; her hair appears recently styled, she has removed any trace of body hair, and is even wearing jewelry in some (e.g., figure 3 from Elsner – fresco from Pompeii (IX.5.11)).[87] In these images, Ariadne is very much a form to be gazed upon rather than an active participant in the telling of her story. In this way, the images of Ariadne are much more in line with the male fantasies in the male-authored elegies. While expressions of her grief are suppressed rather than emphasized in these images, her body at this horrible moment of abandonment and betrayal is presented as an object for men to delight in viewing. This depiction of her is a fantasy; she would surely not be this put together and pleasant to gaze upon when actually deserted and mourning on an isolated island.

Ariadne Coopts the Male Elegiac Fantasy of the Mourning Women

In the *Heroides*, Ariadne (as Ovid creates her) has complete control of how to tell her story. These descriptions are very different than the way she is represented in these images.[88] Throughout all of Ariadne's self-description, she is guiding Theseus' "gaze" to different points

[87] Elsner, "Viewing Ariadne," 36.
[88] Knox 240 n. 37: Of course, aspects of her portrayal are also unrealistic; as Knox points out, this eloquent letter at the time of her abandonment would have been an unrealistic reaction in the Roman mind; lamentation would have been more apt. Knox asserts that Ariadne underlines this (or perhaps acknowledges it) when she says *quod voci deerat, plangore replebam* (line 37).

of her body, but not for their beauty or attractiveness. In fact, her hair is torn, her chest is presented as an object being struck like a drum rather than something erotic, and her face is crying and shouting. There is no mention of the curves of her body, her waist, her delicate features, etc. Ariadne is not trying to seduce Theseus with her beauty, but with her grief. This is confirmed when Ariadne expresses how she wishes Theseus could only have seen her sad figure that would have stirred his expression (*Di facerent, ut me summa de puppe videres; movisset vultus maesta figura tuos,* 133-4). She then insists that he "look now not with his eyes, but with what he is able, his mind" (*nunc quoque non oculis, sed, qua potes, adspice mente,* 135), and this is what she wants him to "see":

> *haerentem scopulo, quem vaga pulsat aqua.*
> *adspice demissos lugentis more capillos*
> *et tunicas lacrimis sicut ab imbre gravis.*
> *corpus, ut inpulsae segetes aquilonibus, horret,*
> *litteraque articulo pressa tremente labat.*
> *Heroides* 10.136-140
>
> (see) me clinging to the cliff, which wandering water strikes.
> See my hair, let down in the manner of one in mourning
> and my tunics, heavy with tears as if from rain.
> My body shudders, like crops struck by the north winds,
> and the letters etched by my trembling finger totter.

In this explanation of exactly what she wants Theseus to imagine, she continues to focus on her lament. Her hair is loose like women who are in mourning, and her tears are also heavily emphasized. Ariadne defines exactly the way in which (*more*) she wants Theseus to imagine her. She then goes on to use two similes to create vivid pictures in his mind; she is the poet creating figurative imagery and directing exactly how she appears in her desperation. Just as her body trembles, the letters she is writing teeter (*labat*). At this highly visual moment, when she is demanding that he look at her (*adspice*), she draws attention to the vehicle of the letter itself, as

thought she is reminding him that she is an artist here, using words to create a vivid picture. The analogy of her letters and her body both shaking also draws attention to the way that the letters serve to paint the picture of her body.

The role of mourning in the poem is an element that has not been given considerable attention by other scholars. When all of Ariadne's descriptions of herself are considered, though, the poem's reliance on grief as a motif is apparent. Ariadne's emphasis on her own mourning in the poem deserves further exploration, as it forms the bulk of her self-representations. Mourning women in Roman and Greek literature are often seen beating their chests, scratching their cheeks, and tearing their hair. These descriptions of women mourning are familiar from Greek and Roman literature at large;[89] they are also particularly prominent in elegy. In elegy, this mourning almost always is in response to or imagined to be in response to the speaker's (or his beloved's) death or absence.

In his elegies, Propertius demonstrates a preoccupation with whether Cynthia, his beloved, will mourn for him after his death. While he does not fear the underworld nor his inevitable fate on the funeral pyre (*Non ego nunc tristis vereor, mea Cynthia, Manes,/ nec moror extremo debita fata rogo,* 1.19.1-2), he does fear that his funeral will be lacking in her love, more than he fears death itself (*sed ne forte tuo careat mihi funus amore,/ hic timor est ipsis durior exsequiis,* 1.19.3-4). Propertius' speaker also fantasizes about how she might mourn his absence, and many of these fantasies are reflected in Ariadne's letter. When writing to Tullus explaining why he can't sail away to Athens with him, he imagines that Cynthia would "mark her face with maddened hands, and say that her kisses are only owed to the opposing wind, and that nothing is more cruel than a faithless man" (*Cynthia et insanis ora notet manibus,/ osculaque opposito*

[89] E.g., Hector's wife and mother rip their hair while holding his head and mourning (πρῶται τον γ' ἄλοχός τε φίλη καὶ πότνια μήτηρ / τιλλέσθην ἐπ' ἄμαξαν ἐυτροχον ἀίξασαι / ἁπτόμεναι κεφαλῆς…, *Il.* 24.710-12).

dicat sibi debita vento,/ et nihil infido durius esse viro?, 1.1.16-18). Here, Propertius is imagining Cynthia's reaction to him sailing away, which is exactly Ariadne's situation in *Heroides* X. In fact, the last line quoted from Propertius' poem is paralleled in the opening of Ariadne's letter: *Mitius inveni quam te genus omne ferarum* ("More gentle than you have I found every race of beast," 10.1). Ariadne has inverted the formula here to be built around how everything else is gentler (*mitius)* than her lover rather than her lover being harsher (*durius*) than everything else, but the sentiment and comparative construction is the same. In this way, Ariadne is enacting the fantasy of the male speaker poet. Ariadne opens her letter with the first person verb *inveni,* drawing attention to her own agency and the fact that she has "discovered" something. While Cynthia's declaration that nothing is more harsh than a faithless man, this *inveni* emphasizes how Ariadne has just discovered how harsh a faithless man can be. The difference between Cynthia in 1.16 and Ariadne here can also be seen in the fact that Cynthia's declaration about the harsh man is reported indirectly (*Cynthia…dicat…esse*) and in the third person, while Ariadne speaks/writes directly and in the first person (*inveni*). There is also a difference between the subjenctive verb *dicat,* showing potential, and Ariadne's indicative *inveni*.

In Propertius' second book, the speaker makes his requests for his funeral: he asks that Cynthia follow behind his funeral procession with her nude chest mangled and that she will not grow weary from calling his name (*tu vero nudum pectus lacerata sequeris, / nec fueris nomen lassa vocare meum,* 2.13.27-8). This is then echoed in Ariadne's actions when she beats her chest and mixes this sound into her calling out for Theseus (*quod voci deerat, plangore replebam;/ verbera cum verbis mixta fuere meis,* 37-8). [90]

[90] For another similar instances of Propertius' speaker imagining his lover mourning him, cf. 1.17.19ff.; For instances of him worrying that she will not mourn him, cf. 2.8.17ff. and 1.17.11-12.

Ovid also employed this trope in his *Amores.* As early as the third poem, Ovid expresses his desire to be mourned by his beloved when he dies:

> *tecum, quos dederint annos mihi fila sororum,*
> *vivere contingat teque dolente mori!*
> *Amores* 1.3.17-18

> May it come to pass that I live out the years which the thread of the sisters spins out for me with you, and that I die with you mourning!

Ovid even explicitly states that grief is becoming on his beloved; after he complains of her having other love affairs, saying that it makes him long for death, the speaker says *maesta erat in vultu – maesta decenter erat* (There was grief in her face – grief made her more becoming, 2.5.44). If the poets' fixation on the image of their beloved mourning for them was not enough to confirm that this scenario is a fantasy of the male elegist, Ovid's articulation of the relationship between mourning and allure certainly helps.

Noting the similarity in language, I would argue that in Ariadne's letter, Ovid is interacting with these precedents of women mourning from elegy. This engagement with the male elegists' fantasy of women mourning in their absence can go in a couple of directions; the first is that Ovid could simply be using Ariadne's voice to continue playing with this fantasy, enjoying the image of women mourning from a man's absence and/or providing it for his male audience's enjoyment. This option is valid, particularly given the existing arguments that Ovid fetishizes female suffering.[91] An alternative option, however, is that Ovid's Ariadne appropriates and reinterprets this male fantasy of mourning in her letter to Theseus, specifically through her ekphrastic descriptions of herself. She not only appropriates the fantasy itself, but even capitalizes on the masculine act of fantasizing and his ability to create a visual image of his female lover in his own mind. In the context of the *Heroides,* this conclusion makes more sense.

[91] Amy Richlin, "Reading Ovid's Rapes."

While the *Heroides* form a collection heavily focused on women mourning, the women are not mere pawns; they demonstrate strategy and eloquence. A number of the letters are highly rhetorical, with the women employing well-established rhetorical devices such as antithesis and chiasmus, so Ariadne's use of words to manipulate Theseus is in line with what readers can expect from the heroines.

In her analysis of Ovid's variations from Homer in Penelope's letter, Duncan Kennedy concludes that "far from being innocent, [Penelope] is being somewhat disingenuous, and indeed is prevaricating in lines 64-5 when she says she has received no firm news of him from Pylos and Sparta," citing Howard Jacobson's book to then further assert that "this is a deliberate lie on her part to impress upon Ulysses that she has gone to all reasonable lengths to find him before succumbing to the overwhelming pressure to remarry to which she alludes in 81 ff."[92] In this case, Penelope is intentionally crafting her letter to manipulate Ulysses to return, setting the precedent for the heroines being intentional about the effect of their writing on the letter's recipient.

Evidence of rhetorical prowess can also be seen in other letters. For example, in Hypsipyle's letter, she incorporates a number of defined rhetorical strategies to contrast her own character with that of both Jason and Medea. The line *non quia tu dignus, sed quia mitis ego* ("not because you are worthy, but because I am gentle," 6.148) presents a strong antithesis contrasting Hypsipyle's character with Jason's. The next bit also contrasts with her self-characterization as *mitis* when she explains how she would fill both of their faces with Medea's blood (*paelicis ipsa meos inplessem sanguine vultus,/quosque veneficiis abstulit illa suis*, 149-150). This contrast between gentleness and violence is also an abrupt juxtaposition. While this grotesque statement can at first seem to undermine her claim that she is *mitis*, Hypsipyle then declares "*Medeae Medea forem!"* This is a powerful polyptoton, drawing attention to the

[92] Kennedy, "The Epistolary Mode," 421.

line and Hypsipyle's comparison; it is not Hypsipyle who is not *mitis,* but Medea. Notably, as well, her statement about striking Medea is a woman's visual fantasy of violence; she does not enact this violence, though – the imperfect subjunctive suggests the realm of the counterfactual and thus confirms that the violence is a fantasy.

Finally, even in the paired letters, Helen proves to be more cunning than Paris. As Megan Drinkwater argues, based on Ovid's own advice in the *Ars Amatoria,* Helen is far more successful in her letter to Paris. Paris flounders and fails to successfully enact the advice of the *Ars' praeceptor* while Helen proves to be a successful pupil.[93] While Paris is over the top, writing 378 lines and making his passion known, Helen is able to be more reserved and enact the Praeceptor's advice to leave ones love interest confused: *fac timeat sper etque simul,* Ars 3.477.[94] Helen even references Paris' poor persuasion abilities while leaning on Ovid's advice that *vim licet appelles: grata est vis ista puellis* ("it may be fitting for you to apply force: this force is pleasing to girls," Ars. 1.673):

> *…quod male persuades, utinam bene cogere posses! / vi mea rusticitas excutienda fuit* ("That which you persuade ineffectively, would that you could force it effectively! My simplicity could be shaken off by means of force," Her. 17.185–86). It seems hardly coincidental that Helen ups the ante on *cogere* with her specification of physical force (*vis*) rather than more effective rhetorical persuasion…
>
> Drinkwater, 121

This analysis of the paired letters provides another example of women being clever and controlling the love affairs in the letters, and the juxtaposition with Paris' letter is interesting in that the woman, Helen, proves to be more cunning.

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93 Drinkwater, "An Amateur's Art."

94 Drinkwater, "An Amateur's Art" 114 and 121. I have used the Loeb Classical Text, J. H. Mozley, transl., rev. G. P. Goold, 1929 for the Latin of Ovid's *Ars Amatoria.*

With the use of cunning and rhetoric in the *Heroides* established, its role in Ariadne's letter is easier to grasp. These letters are not foolish musings of heartbroken women but are presented as attempts by clever women to affect the letters' recipients in a certain way. Returning to the matter of the epistolary form, the persuasive techniques used by the heroines draw attention to another key component of the epistolary genre; the matter of a recipient. The existence of a real or imagined recipient is a defining feature of the epistolary form.[95] These letters have both a fictional recipient, the heroine's lovers, and actual recipients – us, as readers.

Readers experience these letters as external parties not involved in the direct communication occurring; this position allows readers to imagine the experience both of the letter-writer and the letter-recipient. In his discussion of the Pompeian wall paintings, discussed above, Elsner considers the role of "dual gazes" in the paintings, referring to both internal and external viewers.[96] A similar approach can be applied here to the "viewers" of Ariadne's letter; Theseus would be the internal audience, the fictional intended recipient, while the readers are the external audience watching the (one-sided) exchange unfold, and both are gazing upon the third viewer – Ariadne, gazing out at the sea. This dual perspective encourages readers to consider both the speaker's intent and the recipient's potential reaction; when the letter is understood from this perspective, one can understand how Ariadne's descriptions of herself seek to excite Theseus to compel him to return to her. The image of a woman mourning is seen throughout elegy, as I will show, as a fantasy that excites the male speaker, and Ovid's Ariadne co-opts this fantasy for her own gain.

If one agrees with Drinkwater, Ovid's Paris and Helen seem to be aware of the content of Ovid's *Ars Amatoria.* There is no reason, then, that Ovid's Ariadne would not be aware of this

[95] Gibson and Morrison, "What is a Letter," 3.
[96] Elsner, "Viewing Ariadne," 30.

trope of female mourning, at least in the *Amores,* if not also from Propertius' work. An elegiac Ariadne would have been armed with the knowledge that female grief seemed to be a fixation of the male speakers in elegiac poetry, and the line from *Amores* 2.5, *maesta erat in vultu—maesta decenter erat,* particularly suggests the potentially seductive power of grief (*"*There was grief in her face – grief made her more seemly," line 44).[97] By describing herself with such vivid visual descriptions and in these terms of intense grief, Ariadne forms her strategy for recalling Theseus. While she is, in a way, conforming to these notions from male-authored elegy, she is also co-opting the fantasies. Rather than being hypothetical hopes of the male speaker, they are Ariadne's lived experiences, and now she is the one that is able to use them for her own purposes. By writing about these expressions of grief in her own demonstration of agency, she is doing something radical that departs from the paradigms of earlier elegy.

Ariadne's hope that these mournful cries will convince Theseus to come back is even supported in Propertius' elegies: the speaker suggests that these mournful cries are so powerful they can even recall lovers from the dead:

> *si modo clamantis revocaverit aura puellae,*
> *concessum nulla lege redibit iter.*
> Propertius 2.27.15
>
> If only the echo of his shouting girlfriend calls him back,
> the dead man will return on a journey not at all lawful.

If the lover's mourning can recall men from the dead, surely Ariadne's calls can pull Theseus back from his voyage. However, Theseus cannot hear her calls, so Ariadne has to create an equally persuasive experience through her writing.

Ariadne's necessary reliance on writing is a particular challenge for a woman in Ovidian literature. Throughout Ovid's corpus, particularly in his *Amores,* the female form is given

[97] See James, *Learned Girls and Male Persuasion,* on why the elegiac *puella* must be *docta*.

particular attention: poem 1.5 is known for its vivid descriptions of the female form, with almost no attention given to any other aspect of the woman. Similarly, while Propertius' Cynthia rebukes him multiple times throughout his elegies, Ovid's Corinna is more often silent. In the poem describing his domestic violence towards Corinna, the comparative roles of her appearance versus her voice are particularly apparent:

> *Quis mihi non "demens!" quis non mihi "barbare!" dixit?*
> *ipsa nihil; pavido est lingua retenta metu.*
> *sed taciti fecere tamen convicia vultus;*
> *egit me lacrimis ore silente reum.*
> *Amores,* 1.7.19-22
>
> Who did not say to me "you're mad!" Who did not say "barbarian"?
> She said nothing; her tongue was held back with pale fear.
> But nevertheless, although she was silent, her face created reproaches;
> although her mouth was silent, she charged me my crimes with her tears.

Here, Ovid twice emphasizes how he was affected by her face rather than her (non-existent) words. In the same poem, we see Ovid's speaker-poet marking his beloved's body in similar ways as Ariadne:

> *At nunc sustinui raptis a fronte capillis*
> *ferreus ingenuas ungue notare genas.*
> *adstitit illa amens albo et sine sanguine vultu,*
> *caeduntur Pariis qualia saxa iugis.*
> *exanimis artus et membra trementia vidi—*
> *ut cum populeas ventilat aura comas,*
> *ut leni Zephyro gracilis vibratur harundo,*
> *summave cum tepido stringitur unda Noto;*
> *suspensaeque diu lacrimae fluxere per ora,*
> *qualiter abiecta de nive manat aqua.*
> *Amores* 1.7.49-58
>
> But then I cruelly endured to rip her hair from her forehead
> and to mark her noble cheeks with my nail.
> She stood, shocked, her face white and without blood,
> as if stones fallen from Parian cliffs,

I saw her lifeless frame and trembling limbs –
like when a breeze fans poplar leaves,
or the gentle west wind shakes a slender cane
or when the top of the wave is grazed by the warm north wind;
and the tears, hanging from her eyes for a long time, flowed,
like water flows from cast aside snow.

Ariadne's hair is also torn (…*rupta coma est*, 16), she also compares herself to rocks:

aut mare prospiciens in saxo frigida sedi,
quamque lapis sedes, tam lapis ipsa fui,
Heroides 10.49-50

or looking out on the sea I sat, cold, on the rock,
and I was as much rock as my rock seat,

and her body is also partially lifeless (*semianimisque*, 32). Her body shakes like a crop disturbed by the wind (*corpus, ut inpulsae segetes aquilonibus, horret,* 139). Finally, her tears are emphasized throughout the poem (*tum denique flevi,* 43; *vos quoque crudeles, venti, nimiumque parati / flaminaque in lacrimas officiosa meas,* 113-4; *et tunicas lacrimis sicut ab imbre gravis,* 138; *per lacrimas oro, quas tua facta movent,* 150).[98] Directly after this description of Corinna's battered body, Ovid is transformed by the sight, feels guilt, and casts himself as a suppliant at her feet; Ariadne must be hoping for the same result.

However, Ovid is face-to-face with Corinna when her appearance has this effect on him; Ariadne is attempting to accomplish the same result with her writing. Thus, she employs vivid descriptions of herself to overcome this challenge of the epistolary form. Ariadne's ekphrastic writing allows her to bridge the gap of physical distance between letter writer and recipient. With

[98] The scene described by Ovid in poem 1.7 is not as clearly one of grief or missing the poet, but is instead Corinna's reaction to Ovid's physical abuse. I would suggest that in the description of her response to the abuse, there may contain an element of grief in the realization that her lover would abuse her in this way. Although Theseus does not commit physical abuse, we can see Theseus is also mistreating Ariadne. Her reaction, and especially the male's enjoyment of it, can be compared to that of Corinna despite their different circumstances.

this understanding of Ariadne's intentions in describing her mourning, we can read the following couplet in a new light. Ariadne writes,

> *Haec ego; quod voci deerat, plangore replebam;*
> *verbera cum verbis mixta fuere meis*
> *Heroides* 10.37-38
>
> "there I was; what was lacking from my voice, I filled with the beating;
> my strikes were mixed with my words,"

The idea of her words mixing with her strikes reflects this structure of the poem in which Ariadne uses her own voice but mixes in the fantasy of the elegist, the woman destroying herself in grief. This line mingles the two concepts even with its sentence structure; *verbera…mixta* and *verbis…meis* are interwoven with the nouns and modifying adjectives shuffled together. The *puella* in elegy mourns the absence of the author in part because he creates her fame and because she would not have a voice without him.[99] Ariadne, though, has her own voice and uses it to write to Theseus about something that she thinks he wants to see. Additionally, the very idea that her voice is failing (*quod voci deerat*) produces the need for this letter. The letter is able to convey the voice, so while she is saying that her voice failed her, she is compensating for her failing voice by writing. In this process of writing, she is still generating her ideas and communicating. Even when her writing wavers as a result of her trembling and tears, this physical manifestation of her pain means that the letter also acts as a sign of her grief (*litteraque articulo pressa tremente labat,*140).

***Heroides X* and Propertius 4.7**

As discussed in the previous chapter, an important midpoint between the traditional male-authored elegy and Ovid's entirely female-authored *Heroides* arises in Propertius' final book of elegies. Poem 4.7 consists almost entirely of direct speech from Cynthia and serves as a

[99] Wyke, "Written Women," 54ff.

significant part of the analysis of the previous chapter. Cynthia's speech in 4.7 is also illuminating for understanding what Ariadne is doing in the latter part of *Heroides* X. Propertius' poem features Cynthia's ghost complaining about the poet's failure to appropriately mourn her death. While the male speaker of elegy is often concerned with his beloved not mourning his death, as established above, here Cynthia expresses the same expectations in her death. In the *Heroides,* Ariadne also worries about what will happen when she dies:

> *Ergo ego nec lacrimas matris moritura videbo,*
> *nec, mea qui digitis lumina condat, erit?*
> *spiritus infelix peregrinas ibit in auras,*
> *nec positos artus unguet amica manus?*
> *ossa superstabunt volucres inhumata marinae?*
> *haec sunt officiis digna sepulcra meis?*
> *Heroides* 10.119-124
>
> Therefore will I not see the tears of my mother when I am about to die,
> and will there not be anyone to close my eyes with their fingers?
> My unlucky spirit will go into the foreign breezes,
> and no friendly hand will anoint my positioned limbs?
> Will the crows of the sea stand on my unburied bones?
> Is this the tomb earned by my services?

Here, rather than enact the fantasy of the male speaker of elegy, Ariadne seems to take on their same concern. Notably, though, Cynthia files similar complaints in Propertius' 4.7. She complains about how he has not respected her in death even after all she did (e.g., climbing down from her window for illicit nighttime affairs, 15ff). No one cried out to her eyes as she was passing away (*at mihi non oculos quisquam inclamavit eunti*:, 4.7.23), no one is performing the appropriate rights for her (4.7.25ff.), and her unfit tomb is causing her bones damage (*laesit et obiectum tegula curta caput*, 4.7.26). This poem shows that Propertius is at least intrigued by the idea of the beloved sharing these same concerns as the male elegist, so Ariadne may be simultaneously emulating the voice of the male speaker of elegy and playing on his fantasy. We

move from male fantasy in Propertius and Ovid's *Amores,* to female speech in Propertius 4.7, to female writing in the *Heroides.* While Propertius dreams of Cynthia being upset about his actions after her death, Ovid's Ariadne narrates the experience from the first-person perspective as it happens to her.

The ending of the poem further confirms the importance of Ariadne's pitiful mourning body:

> *Has tibi plangendo lugubria pectora lassas*
> *infelix tendo trans freta lata manus;*
> *hos tibi—qui superant—ostendo maesta capillos!*
> *per lacrimas oro, quas tua facta movent—*
> *flecte ratem, Theseu, versoque relabere velo!*
> *si prius occidero, tu tamen ossa feres!*
> *Heroides* 10.147-152
>
> My hands, weary from beating my mourning chest,
> I, unhappy, stretch across the wide sea for you;
> these locks of hair – which remain – I offer in mourning for you!
> I beg through tears, which your actions stirred up –
> turn back your boat, Theseus, fall back with your turned sail!
> If I die first, nevertheless you will bear my bones.

Ariadne's reference to her outstretched hands and hair create a ring composition with her discovery of the empty bed at the beginning of the poem (*prensuras…manus*, 10; *rupta coma est,* 16), reminding us of the prominence of her grief and its connection to her body throughout the poem. This passage also closely echoes Cynthia's speech in Propertius 4.7. While Ariadne fantasized about Theseus bearing her bones, Cynthia fantasizes about her bones being mixed with the poet's upon his death:

> *nunc te possideant aliae: mox sola tenebo:*
> *mecum eris, et mixtis ossibus ossa teram.*
> Propertius 4.7.93-94
>
> Other women may have you now; soon I alone will hold you.
> You will be with me, and bones will rub away at bones, mixed together.

While earlier elegy featured the male speaker fantasizing about women mourning their death, Cynthia's poem discusses her own death and the male poet's failure to appropriately mourn it. In *Heroides* X we encounter the female writer's fantasy of her own death. Ariadne dreams of Theseus having to cope with the evidence of her death, her bones, and appropriately honor them by bearing them home. While Ariadne spent the first portion of the poem appropriating the male fantasy of female mourning, describing her own mourning for Theseus' absence with vivid visual descriptions echoing those found in elegy, later in the poem she instead evokes Cynthia's speech and content and takes over the fantasy herself. She fantasizes about her own death and what will happen after, perhaps hinting that she hopes Theseus will experience the same grief she described earlier in the poem.

Conclusion

Approaching *Heroides* X with an eye towards elegiac precedent, ekphrastic description, and mourning is illuminating not only for our understanding of Ariadne's letter, but for the *Heroides* in general. All of these letters are about women mourning their lost lovers, and they often employ highly visual descriptions such as what is described in this chapter. While a more thorough analysis of other letters is outside of the scope of my work here, this analysis offers another way that we can understand the extended use of female voice and writing in the *Heroides.* Similarly, it adds a layer of complexity to the understanding of Ovid's relationship with women's grief. Ovid's engagement with female suffering has received considerable attention by other scholars, and will continue to be a point of concern moving forward into my next chapter. I do not take the stance that Ovid does not eroticize female suffering and thus benefit from its depictions in his writing. However, the conclusion that the female authors of the *Heroides* are taking control of the male

fantasies about their bodies to use in their own writing, not only to tell their own stories but to exert influence over men's emotions, suggests a highly subversive role for the heroines of these letters.

IV

Female Suffering and Silence and Men's Power in Ovid's *Fasti* Books 2-3

Introduction

The past two chapters have considered the female voice and body through close readings of several elegiac poems. Beginning with the typical Roman love elegies and then moving to Ovid's *Heroides,* we see the female voice take the form of short snippets of quoted speech or implied speech, longer monologues quoted within poems, and poems purporting to be entirely female-authored. The female body has served as the means of communication and manipulation for these women, but also as the object of objectification and violence. This chapter investigates the same themes in Ovid's *Fasti.* Although the *Fasti* is a calendrical work structured around the holidays of Rome, erotic themes still run throughout it, and thus it is linked to earlier elegiac poetry through both meter and theme. The female body still serves as the object of violence, but the female voice dramatically recedes as silence becomes a prominent theme in the poem.

Sexual violence is a prominent and off-putting feature of Ovid's writing. The rapes in his corpus, particularly in the *Metamorphoses,* have received considerable attention from feminist scholars. His graphic telling of the story of Philomela has proven particularly disturbing for readers, given the conflation of violence and sex and the gruesome details of Tereus' removal of her tongue.[100] Descriptions of sexual violence in his other works have received less attention. The *Metamorphoses* has by far the most rapes, containing fifty stories of rape.[101] However, his *Fasti* also contains a number of sexual assaults, including a cluster of rapes spanning from book two to three. In this span of text, Ovid tells the stories of Lara, Lucretia, and Rhea Silvia. All

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[100] Richlin, "Reading Ovid's Rapes;" Waldman, "Reading Ovid in the Age of #MeToo;" Curran "Rape and Rape Victims in the Metamorphoses.

[101] Richlin, "Reading Ovid's Rapes"

three of these rape victims are connected to significant Roman events and holidays: the Feralia, founding of the Roman household gods, Regifugium, and the foundation of Rome by Rome's first king.

Throughout my chosen section of Books 2 and 3 of the *Fasti,* there are multiple references to the myth of Procne and Philomela, encouraging readers to connect the gruesome Greek myth to these stories about the founding of Rome. As this chapter will show, when all of these stories are considered, several themes emerge: female suffering is at the forefront of these stories, and is often paired with their silencing, whether by physical means or emotional trauma. This silence about their suffering is often necessary in order for men to maintain their power and advance militaristically or politically. Additionally, these stories include a variety of characters demonstrating both female-female and female-male social bonds, the results of which are often quite different. These themes come together to paint a picture of Rome as a city built on female suffering.

In her 1995 monograph on the *Fasti,* Carol Newlands identifies three tensions present in this text: male versus female, *arma* and *pax*, and Roman versus Greek. [102] Newlands shows that, as an elegist and as a Roman who was ultimately exiled for not submitting to Augustan morals, Ovid aligns himself primarily with the feminine, with elegy, and with Greek culture and literature. Ovid particularly emphasizes sexual morality in Rome as a part of this engagement with Augustan morals.[103] Newlands argues that because Ovid is concerned with legislation on sexual morality and aligns himself with the feminine, he often draws attention to female sexuality and its relationship with the state.

[102] Newlands, *Playing With Time,* 212.
[103] Cf. Propertius 2.7 for Propertius' engagement with Augustus' marriage laws.

In his telling of the stories of Lucretia, Lara, and Rhea Silvia, Ovid foregrounds the female experience. Lucretia's story is the longest and most developed within this thematic cluster, and her story is at the center of the ring of stories (preceded by Lara's story and followed by that of Rhea Silvia). It is also emphatically placed at the end of book 2. His telling of Lucretia's story (as compared to Livy's version) is a prime example of Ovid's foregrounding of the female experience, as Newlands details in her chapter on the story.[104]

In her chapter "The Silence of Lucretia," Newlands investigates the ways that Ovid shifts the focus away from the political change that Brutus ushers in and onto Lucretia's experience. In comparison to Livy's account, Ovid offers a much more detailed introduction of Lucretia; he characterizes her as an individual while Livy offers a more general image of an ideal Roman wife.[105] As Newlands details, Lucretia's silence is also portrayed differently by the two authors: while Livy's Tarquin orders Lucretia to be silent (1.58.2 – "*Tace, Lucretia," inquit; "Sex. Tarquinius sum; ferrum in manu est; moriere, si emiseris vocem"),* the silence of Ovid's Lucretia is spontaneous and closely tied in with her gender:

> "*Vocem* (voice) is juxtaposed with *vires* (strength), a noun etymologically related to *vir* (man); the sexual pun implicit in *vires*, which can describe the male genitalia, reinforces the play upon gender difference here. The qualities Lucretia lacks are specifically associated with masculine power, defined in sexual and military terms… Ovid makes her silence the involuntary sign of her feminine powerlessness and her imminent violation"[106]

After the rape, Livy's Lucretia eloquently describes the violation to a crowd of friends and family, inciting them to action with her voice. Ovid's Lucretia, though, remains largely silent: *quaeque potest, narrat; restabant ultima: flevit* (2.827).[107] While Livy's Lucretia is

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[104] Newlands, *Playing with Time,* 146-174.
[105] Newlands, *Playing with Time,* 148-149
[106] Newlands *Playing with Time,* 151.
[107] Newlands, *Playing with Time,* 151.

explicitly interested in being an inspiration (*exemplo,* 1.58.10) to future Roman wives, Ovid's Lucretia commits suicide as a more personal act and with a keen eye to "decorum" which is not shared by the men in the story.[108] Finally, in Livy's version, the focus quickly shifts to Brutus after Lucretia's suicide, but Ovid keeps the attention on Lucretia.[109]

Newlands' analysis of Ovid's Lucretia story establishes the importance of female suffering and silence in the story, yet neither Newlands nor subsequent scholars have discussed the lead-up to the story in a way that significantly contributes to our understanding of the story. There are a surprising number of themes in the introduction of the story that help us understand the story proper. The contextualization offered by Ovid reinforces the importance of female suffering and also connects this suffering to male power in militaristic and political pursuits.

<u>The Story of Lucretia</u>

Ovid begins the story by introducing Tarquin (2.687-725). During this introduction, Tarquin's military prowess is emphasized:

> *ultima Tarquinius Romanae gentis habebat*
> *regna, vir iniustus, fortis ad arma tamen.*
> *ceperat hic alias, alias everterat urbes,*
> *et Gabios turpi fecerat arte suos.*
> *Fasti* 2.687-690[110]
>
> Tarquinius was holding the final reign of the Roman people,
> an unjust man, nevertheless strong in arms.
> He had seized some cities, overturned others,
> and had made Gabii his own with shameful deceit.

After Tarquin tricks enemies into giving him some power, he sends a messenger to ask his father to show him the path for destroying Gabii (*iamque potens misso genitorem appellat amico, perdendi Gabios quod sibi monstret iter*, 701-702). The father is found in a garden:

[108] Newlands, *Playing with Time,* 152.
[109] Newlands, *Playing with Time,* 153.
[110] I have used the Loeb Classical Text, J. G. Frazer, transl., rev. G. P. Goold, 1931 for the Latin of Ovid's *Fasti.*

hortus odoratis suberat cultissimus herbis
sectus humum rivo lene sonantis aquae:
illic Tarquinius mandata latentia nati
accipit et virga lilia summa metit.
nuntius ut rediit decussaque lilia dixit,
filius "agnosco iussa parentis" ait.
nec mora, principibus caesis ex urbe Gabina
traduntur ducibus moenia nuda suis.
Fasti 2.703-10

There was a garden under [the palace] ornamented with odorous herbs
the ground split by a gentle stream of echoing water:
there Tarquin received the secret commands of his son
and he mowed the tallest lilies with his staff.
When the messenger returned and told of the struck down lilies,
the son said "I understand the orders of my father."
Without delay, when the leaders from the city of Gabii were slaughtered,
the walls were surrendered, stripped of their leaders.

While the father's actions are immediately recognized as orders to plunder the city, they could just as easily be connected to Tarquin's violence against Lucretia. This passage is rich with sexual vocabulary and metaphors. The similarity of Tarquin's conquering of Gabii and rape of Lucretia is explicitly stated by Tarquin later in the story: when planning his rape of Lucretia, he says

"*…audentes forsque deusque iuvat.*
cepimus audendo Gabios quoque"
Fasti 2.782-3
"fortune and god help the bold,
we captured Gabii by boldness also."

He suggests that the boldness he displayed in his military conquest will also benefit him in his violence against Lucretia (and perhaps that fortune and the gods will assist him). This scene thus specifically foreshadows the sexual mistreatment of Lucretia, which is where we first see Ovid's foregrounding of Lucretia's suffering. The inclusion and placement of the scene in the garden encourages readers to anticipate Lucretia's experience.

This scene also appears in Livy's account of the story:

> *ex velut deliberabundus in hortum aedium transit sequente nuntio filii; ibi inambulans tacitus summa papaverum capita dicitur baculo decussisse.*
>
> Livy, *History of Rome* 1.54.6[111]
>
> As if he was deliberating, [the king] went out of the house and into the garden with his son's messenger following; there, walking up and down silently, it is said that he struck down the tallest heads of the poppies with a staff.

Ovid preserves some of Livy's words, such as *hortus*, *decussit*, and *summa*.[112] Some of these words have a sexual connotation. Gardens and plowable land are often metaphors for female genitalia, and the act of plowing often represents sexual penetration. J. N. Adams establishes that metaphors relating land and vagina were common enough for authors to freely coin new ones.[113] Thus, these two words likely would have had some sexual overtones for a Roman reader. Additionally, in Latin literature and especially in Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* idyllic nature landscapes such as the one described here are often the setting for rape scenes.[114] The connotations of idyllic nature scenes even go as far back as the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* where Persephone is in a *locus amoenus,* picking flowers, when she is raped by Hades.[115] Notably, bodies of water, especially rivers, are also often referenced in the aforementioned settings. The image of a garden is also associated with rape scenes.[116] Thus, the garden cleaved by a stream in which Tarquin's father gives his coded orders would have been suggestive of a coming rape, particularly when it appears in Ovid.

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[111] I have used the Loeb Classical Text, B. O. Foster, transl., 1919 for the Latin of Livy's *History of Rome.*

[112] *Summa* can be used in sexual contexts to denote the mouth, but I understand it in this situation as simply being apt for describing the tops of the flowers. For its sexual use, see Adams, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary,* 47.

[113] In Adam's research, *hortus* is primarily associated with the *culus* rather than the *cunnus,* and he primarily notes *humus* as euphemistic for the female genitalia in later Latin. Adams, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary,*84-5.

[114] cf. Ilia's dream in Ennius (*Annales* 1.34-50 Skutsch), the setting of the rape of Europa (*Met.* 2.843ff.), the setting of Ianachus' mourning 1.568ff. and Io's flight from Jove 1.597ff.

[115] Homeric Hymns 2.1-21.

[116] Keith, *Engendering Rome,* 43.

Words for cutting, splitting, and penetrating are also widespread in sexual contexts, so the combination of *sectus, hortus,* and *humum* combine to create an undercurrent of sexual imagery. Adams devotes a section in his book to verbs about striking and beating as metaphors for intercourse, and *decussa* would fall into this category. While he does not discuss *decussa* specifically, he does get into compounds using **cutio* including *percutio* and *recutio* used in a sexual sense, so interpreting *decussa* in similar fashion is logical and reasonable.[117]

Ovid makes two significant departures from Livy's vocabulary in this scene. The first is that in Livy, the king uses a *baculum* to cut down the flowers. In Ovid, though, a *virga* is used. While *baculum* does not have a well-established sexual connotation, *virga* was a common euphemism for the penis.[118] Ovid's substitution further establishes the sexual undertones of the scene. The other important substitution that Ovid makes is the choice of flowers. While Livy describes poppies, Ovid says that the flowers were lilies. Comparison to other texts that feature lilies can elucidate the role of lilies in Roman literature and the implications of this choice.

There is a well-established connection between flowers, particularly white flowers, and innocence and virginity. Propertius praises Cynthia for her *candor* by comparing her to lilies (*lilia non domina sunt magis alba mea,* 2.3.10). Ovid references lilies' white color in his telling of the Pygmalion myth:

> *Et modo blanditias adhibet, modo grata puellis,*
> *munera fert illi conchas teretesque lapillus*
> *et parvas volucres et flores mille colorum*
> *liliaque pictasque pilas et ab arbore lapsas*
> *Heliadum lacrimas;…*
>
> *Met.* 10.259-63[119]

> And now he offers flatteries, now things pleasing to girls,

[117] Adams, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary,* 147-8.
[118] Adams, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary,* 14.
[119] I have used the Loeb Classical Text, F. J. Miller, transl., rev. G. P. Goold, 1916 for the Latin of Ovid's *Metamorphoses.*

> He bears gifts to her: shells and round stones
> And small birds and flowers of a thousand colors
> And lilies and painted balls and tears of the Heliades that have floated down from a tree

Pygmalion brings his sculpted lover multi-colored flowers and lilies; lilies are specified separately from the other flowers because of their color (or, rather, their whiteness that lacks color).

Ovid emphasizes Lucretia's fairness later in the story: Tarquin falls for her "snowy hue" (*niveusque color,* 2.763), and as he obsesses over her he again recalls the color (*hic color*, 2.774). Lucretia is praised for her loyalty and purity; while she is presumably not a virgin since she is a married woman, she is nonetheless "chaste" in the sense that she has only had sex with her husband and she is the model of a dutiful wife. In fact, it is Lucretia's loyalty that puts her in Tarquin's path in the first place; the men go to see whose wife is the most loyal, and Lucretia wins when she is discovered inside weaving.[120] Her fair skin emphasizes this purity. The lilies of the story are already acting symbolically, representing the leading men of Gabii who will be slaughtered after Tarquin receives his father's orders. It makes sense to extend this metaphor to also see the white lilies as a symbol of Lucretia, specifically her purity. For a Roman reader familiar with Lucretia as a model of the loyal Roman wife and aware of her fate, the father's striking down of the lilies with his *virga* would likely have been quite ominous.

Lucretia's fairness disappears after the rape: when she is telling her father and husband what has happened, her cheeks redden (*et matronales erubere genae*, 2.828). As discussed above, Lucretia's silence in the *Fasti* has received considerable analysis by Newlands. To add to Newlands' analysis, though, it is notable that her cheeks redden while she is talking; it is not only the rape but talking about it that introduces shame into her otherwise unmarred face. It is her

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[120] Ovid, *Fasti* 2.725-59.

choice to verbally disclose what has happened (to the best of her ability) that causes her body to also reveal her violation. If she had stayed silent, no one may have ever known what happened.

The language of Lucretia's reddening cheeks calls to mind Vergil's simile of Lavinia's blush:

> *Indum sanguineo veluti violaverit ostro*
> *si quis ebur, aut mixta rubent ubi lilia multa*
> *alba rosa, talis virgo dabat ore colores.*
> Aen. 12.67ff.
>
> Like if someone were to stain Indian ivory
> With a bloody purple, or when white lilies are reddened,
> Mixed with many roses, so the maiden gave color to her face.

Lavinia is silent throughout the *Aeneid,* so this description of her cheeks reddening is one of the only characterizations readers get of Lavinia.[121] Lucretia's limited voice, blushing at sexual topics, and comparison to lilies all suggest that Ovid may have had Vergil's character in mind when writing about Lucretia. In the above metaphor, we see two objects that are remarkable for their pure white color being discolored with purple or red. This metaphor serves as another reinforcement of the connection between white lilies and purity and the way that other colors can introduce a symbolic interruption to this purity.[122] The other significant result of comparing these two passages, though, is the different statuses of the two women. While Lavinia is a *virgo,* emphasizing her status as a young maiden, Lucretia's cheeks are *matronales.* Lavinia's blush reflects her maidenly (*virgo*) discomfort at the discussion taking place, whether it is in response to the mention of suicide, her love for any certain man, or the thought of Aeneas as a husband.[123] Lucretia's blush, though, communicates how her innocence has already been disrupted by

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[121] The way that Lavinia is speechless but communicates with her body recalls the role of the female body in elegy, as discussed in chapter one.

[122] For more on the connection between blushing and ἔρως and *pudor,* see Lyme "Lavinia's Blush," 57ff. For red and white as an ominous symbol of coming violence, see Clarke "Colours in Conflict," 171.

[123] Cf. Lyme, Quinn, Woodworth, and Todd.

Tarquin's violation. She is no *virgo*, as she has now had more experience of the world than she wanted to.

Ruth Todd points out that this red and white contrast in the *Aeneid* is closely tied to the "blood-red Tiber adjacent to the fields white with bones," associating this erotic blush with the violence of warfare. She argues that "Lavinia is a symbol, passive instrument and keystone of destiny; she is an object of and a tool to be manipulated for desire, as well as a filial convention and prize of war."[124] Lucretia shares many of these characteristics, as she is viewed erotically, particularly by Tarquin, and her sexualization and rape are closely associated with military violence. And, like Lavinia, Lucretia's body is used as an instrument for change and a keystone of Roman history. Her rape is the event that sparks the revolution that drives out the kings and ushers in the Roman republic.

While Tarquin used Lucretia for his own pleasure, Brutus and her family used her body to incite political upheaval. They displayed the wound, lying open for all to see, before gathering the *Quirites* for revolution (*volnus inane patet. Brutus clamore Quirites / concitat et regis facta nefanda refert; Fasti* 2.849-850). The use of Lavinia's body by Tarquin is obvious; after her suicide, though, Brutus seizes (*rapit*) the sword from her body (2.848). This verb at the very least has a strong suggestion of something being done against the will of the victim and often suggests rape.[125] The choice of *rapio* subtly emphasizes the way that Brutus is using Lucretia's body against her will. After all, she was quite ashamed of what had happened, and could not even tell the details to her own family. Brutus then displays her open wound to the whole city, though, and the story of her rape goes down in Roman history so that future Romans may read her story and learn from her

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[124] Todd, "Lavinia Blushed," 30.
[125] Adams, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary,* 175.

example. Lucretia's suffering is necessary for the establishment of the Roman republic, and her rape and self-inflicted knife wound are put on display to incite Rome's revolution.

The Myth of Philomela in the *Fasti*

The Lucretia story is an ideal starting point for two reasons: first, it provides an essential paradigm for other stories in the *Fasti,* especially those in book two. Secondly, the connections between the Lucretia story and the story of Philomela are numerous, particularly as told by Ovid. Both women suffer sexual violence at the hands of a powerful man and are subsequently physically or emotionally silenced. Philomela's abuser, Tereus, removes her tongue so that she cannot tell what he has done to her. Lucretia's rapist, Tarquin, does not silence her in such an obvious manner, but Lucretia's silence is a significant component of Ovid's account of the story, as I have shown above. Both women communicate to family members what has happened, though, and their violation inspires revenge against their aggressors. As discussed below, Ovid emphasizes the connection between these two stories in the *Fasti.* In doing so, Ovid highlights these similarities and the shared themes of female suffering and silence and men's power.

Ovid references the Philomela myth shortly before the Lucretia story, so it would have been in readers' minds. When describing the Caristia, a day for celebrating kin and worshipping the household gods (the Lares), he says this day is for the innocent (*innocui*) and insists that family members who go against the natural order stay away (*procul hinc, procul impius esto / frater et in partus mater acerba suos*, 623-4). He then goes on to list people that fall into this category, including Procne, Philomela, and Tereus (*et soror et Procne Tereusque duabus iniquus,* 2.629). This reference not only puts the story in readers' minds but also establishes how Ovid is characterizing this myth: it is an example of an upsetting and unnatural family dynamic. Other

characters from myths with unnatural family dynamics are included: *Tantalidae fratres absint et Iasonis uxor/et quae ruricolis semina tosta dedit* (627-8).

These stories are characterized by their problematic family relations, all involving attempts (sometimes successful) to kill one's children. That is, of course, also a defining feature of the Procne and Philomela story. This list includes several of the most dysfunctional families from Greek literature. While no children are killed in the Lucretia story, an unnatural family dynamic is still involved; Sextus Tarquinius, her rapist, is her husband's cousin. Ovid's choice of Greek myths here may make it easier for Romans to realize the grotesqueness of the stories, while the ties between the stories of Philomela and Lucretia may then also emphasize the problematic storyline of the latter that Romans embrace as their history.

Shortly before this reference to Philomela, Ovid discusses the rites of Tacita. This ceremony underscores the theme of forced silence in the story. While an old woman is performing the rites of Tacita, she "binds hostile tongues and unfriendly mouths" (*hostiles linguas inimicaque vinximus ora,* 2.582). This description by the old woman of her own actions could also be said of Tereus' actions against Philomela. He, too, silences a tongue that would be hostile to him if given the opportunity to disclose what he has done. Notably, though, Tarquin does not forcibly silence Lucretia in the same way. In Livy's account, he orders her to be silent, while in Ovid's, her silence is a response to her fear and shame rather than Tarquin's orders. If anything, Tarquin's rape forces such shame on Lucretia that she struggles to speak, but it is a more psychological silencing than the physical silencing of Philomela. She continues to struggle with talking even after the rape has occurred, and when she does speak, it is hesitating, and she cannot utter the full story, blushing instead.

The woman binding hostile tongues introduces the theme of silence. Since this passage comes before the stories of both Lara and Lucretia, it plants the seed of this idea of silencing those who may threaten you. The woman performing the rites of Tacita presents an interesting contrast to Tarquin and Tereus in that she is a woman, and her actions are quite gendered. She is identified as an *anus*, a word that refers specifically to women (generally in an unflattering way).[126] She is practicing magic, which is closely associated with women in Greek and Roman literature.[127] The binding of tongues here by a woman in the feminine realm of magic is, in some ways, uneasy; for example, the alliteration and assonance throughout this section may imitate an incantation.[128] However, the instances where males silence tongues in Ovid are far more sinister. The *anus* binding hostile tongues here provides a foil emphasizing the violation and violence that accompanies the same action by men.

There are ample parallels drawn to the Philomela story within the Lucretia story proper, as established by both Robinson and Newlands. As Robinson points out, Tarquin and Tereus experience a similar burning love for their victims (*Fasti* 2.769-74; *Met.* 6.490ff) and analogous similes are used at *Met.* 6.527-30 and *Fasti* 2.799-80:[129]

> *sed tremit, ut quondam stabulis deprensa relictis*
> *parva sub infesto cum iacet agna lupo.*
> *Fasti* 2.799-80
>
> But she trembled, like when a small lamb, caught
> with her herd abandoned, lies under a hostile wolf.
>
> *illa tremit velut agna pavens, quae saucia cani*
> *ore excussa lupi nondum sibi tuta videtur,*
> *Met*. 6.527-8

[126] The word is associated with ugliness (*deformitas),* chattiness (*garrulitas*), alcoholism (*ebriositas*), and worthlessness (*nequitia*). Vollmer, *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae Online.*
[127] Cf., Robinson, n. 571 p. 360.
[128] Robinson, n. 572 p. 360.
[129] Robinson 480ff.

> She trembled like a frightened lamb, who has been wounded
> and tossed aside by a gray wolf and does not yet seem to herself to
> be safe.

These similes are strikingly similar; they describe the exact same situation of a lamb being attacked by a wolf and use several identical lexical items (*tremit, agna, lupus).* These comparisons are too similar to be a coincidence; Ovid is intentionally connecting the two scenes. Robinson also remarks on how the appearances of the victims after their rapes correspond:

> *…* ***passos*** *laniata* ***capillos,***
> *lugenti similis caesis plangore lacertis*
> *intendens palmas…*
>
> *Met.* 6.531-3
>
> She tore her **disheveled hair**,
> like one in mourning, she struck her arms
> reaching her hands out with a cry…
>
> … **passis** sedet illa **capillis**,
> ut solet ad nati mater itura rogu
>
> *Fasti* 2.813-4.
>
> She sat with her **hair disheveled**,
> like a woman going to the funeral of her son.

Again, the similes are the same (both women are compared to those in mourning), and they both have disheveled hair (*passi capilli).* The similarities between the two stories are striking. While the story of Lucretia is a keystone of Roman history, the origin of the revolution that founded the republic, the story of Philomela is a Greek story, foreign and about rape and violence. By connecting the two stories using such similar descriptions and language, Ovid throws the story of Lucretia into relief and highlights its corresponding rape and violence.

Newlands also identifies several similarities between the two stories, from the rape by kinsman to the way that the men are aroused by the women's virtue and chastity. They both fall so passionately in love upon sight that they are blind to the consequences. The women have similar

reactions to the rape, and both are voiceless. Ovid refers to both as *puella* although Lucretia is properly a *matrona*. They feel similar guilt and shame and ultimately become violent, either against another (Philomela against Tereus) or herself (Lucretia). Especially interesting is the fact that Tereus and Tarquin are both characterized by their military success.[130] As established above, Tarquinius Superbus' orders regarding conquering Gabii involve a great deal of erotic language, so the connection between military conquering and conquering through rape is hinted at here. Tarquin later makes the connection more explicit by saying that he conquered Gabii with the same boldness that will help him rape Lucretia (*cepimus audendo Gabios quoque*, 2.783). Robinson suggests that Tarquin "takes a rather too literal approach to the concept of *militia amoris*, a concept familiar from elegy and that he speaks to himself similarly to Turnus talking to his men, reinforcing his militaristic approach to the rape: ***audebimus*** *ultima…****audentes*** <u>*forsque*</u> *deusque* **iuvat** (*Fasti* 2.781-2); *nunc coniugis esto/ quisque suae tectique memor…/* ***audentis*** <u>*Fortuna*</u> ***iuvat*** (*Aeneid* 10.280-84).[131] Robinson also notes the irony here: "Turnus is encouraging his men to protect their wives, whereas Tarquin is planning on violating the wife of another."[132]

This interplay between military conquest and rape creates a clash between epic and elegy. It characterizes Tereus and Tarquin as aggressive. It also reinforces the connection, though, between female suffering, particularly of sexual violence, as a sacrifice for the furthering of political and/or masculine power. In one case, it is the rapist whose power is furthered (Tereus), while in the other a reversal occurs where power shifts from Tarquin to the Romans. However, in both instances, silence and suffering furthers the rapist's power, communication reverses the rapists' power, and a woman's suffering fuels that reversal. Lucretia's suffering leads to the

[130] Newlands, *Playing with Time,* 162-4.
[131] Robinson, p. 485-6 n. 781-2.
[132] Robinson, p. 480 n. 761-78.

expulsion of the kings and the founding of the Roman republic. Philomela suffers her tongue being cut out in hopes that she cannot reveal her rape and thus set back Tereus' success. Just as Tereus and Sextus conquer cities and peoples to gain political power, their "conquerings" of Philomela and Lucretia (and the suffering of these women as a result) are closely related to Rome's power, in the latter case, and Tereus' personal power and that of the Thracians, in the case of Philomela. His marriage to Procne was to form a pact with the Athenians, after all (*Met.* 6.425-9).

At the end of the Lucretia story, Ovid again refers to the story of Procne and Philomela:

> *fallimur, an veris praenuntia venit hirundo*
> *nec metuit, ne qua versa recurrat hiems?*
> *saepe tamen Procne, nimium properasse quereris,*
> *virque tuo Tereus frigore laetus erit.*
> *Fasti* 2.853-6
>
> Am I deceived, or has the swallow, the herald of spring, come
> does she not fear that winter has turned and hurries back?
> Nevertheless often, Procne, will you complain that you have hurried too much,
> and your husband Tereus will be happy at your chill.

Robinson offers a rich analysis of this reference. He points out that the Philomela story involves themes seen in book 2 of the *Fasti:* rape by a cruel tyrant, silence, and suffering. He also suggests that Philomela offers a "figure of the artist" in that she uses art (weaving) to deliver her message since her voice has been silenced by a tyrant. Richardson draws a parallel between Philomela and Ovid, pointing out that in the *Metamorphoses* Ovid has Philomela compose an elegiac song.[133] Newlands argues that by tying together themes in book two and three, this reference to Procne "stresses the repetitive pattern of sexual violence which lies at the core of Rome's founding myths".[134]

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[133] Robinson, 510-11.
[134] Newlands, *Playing with Time.*

Connecting the two stories also draws attention to the ways that they differ. There are two significant differences between the stories: the type of revenge sought and the gender relationships involved in the revenge. In the Lucretia story, the consequence of her rape is political upheaval and the expulsion of the monarchy in Rome. In the Philomela story, the women seek vengeance by killing Procne and Tereus' son, Itys, and cooking him into a soup and serving it to Tereus. Similarly, in the Lucretia story, men are the ones driving the revenge plot; Lucretia has served her role of being violated, and it was an offense that violated the boundaries of male control over female sexuality. Philomela's rape, however, violated the expectation of loyalty between spouses and the familial bonds that exist between husband, wife, and sister/sister-in-law. The revenge in each story reflects these bonds: Lucretia's family members seek political revenge, using her violated body for their gain in the public sphere (*volnus inane patet,* 2.849). Procne, however, works alongside Philomela to react to Tereus' rape. She helps her escape and then together they seek revenge in the domestic sphere of women: their plot is carried out within the home and involves domestic expectations such as child-rearing and cooking. Notably, the plot is really an abuse or violation of these expectations: they kill the child and cook his body and serve it to Tereus, taking advantage of the relative power they hold within the household. While Brutus benefitted from the revenge of Lucretia's rape, Procne suffers in her sacrifice of her own son. While Lucretia's violated body helps her avengers gain political power and move along the Roman state's progress, Procne's assistance is an act of sacrifice and suffering in the name of female bonds.

As Robinson explains, in the Greek tradition, it is Philomela that is transformed into the swallow and Procne into the nightingale. The nightingale's song was associated with Procne because, according to the story, it sounds like "Itu," the name of her son, Itys, whom she killed

with her sister's help as revenge for her husband's violation. The swallow's "twittering" also was supposed to reflect Philomela's attempts to talk without a tongue.[135] While these metamorphoses are confused often in Roman literature,[136] it is notable that Ovid names Procne rather than Philomela at the end of the Lucretia story. The swallow fits the timeline of story; Lucretia's rape occurs near the end of February and the swallow signals the return of spring (admittedly a bit early in February, but a reasonable stretch). However, since the swallow is most properly associated with Philomela, it is curious why Ovid chooses to force the tie with Procne. After all, Lucretia is arguably a more Philomela- type figure – she is the one who suffers the rape, is silenced (at least in Ovid's telling), and whose violation incites revenge.

The Story of Lara

I suggest that Ovid invokes Procne here as part of his effort to tie together the themes of book two. While Lucretia is not a Procne-figure, Lara is in many ways a blending of the two sisters, so by referencing Procne Ovid may be harkening back to this story. Immediately after the rites of Tacita, described above, Ovid tells the story of how the Lares got their name. The story begins with Juturna, a figure familiar from contemporary Augustan literature; in the *Aeneid,* she is Turnus' sister, made an immortal nymph by Jupiter after he takes her virginity. Juturna is in this story again the object of Jupiter's desire, but Ovid departs significantly from Vergil's account. In Ovid's telling, Juturna is a nymph from the start, and Jupiter does not successfully rape her. Instead, her sister nymph, Lara, warns her to run away and Juturna escapes. While in Vergil, Juturna's relationship to Turnus is central, Ovid emphasizes instead the bond between sisters. Jupiter punishes Lara by cutting out her tongue and then having Mercury transport Lara to the

[135] Robinson, 512-513.
[136] Robinson, 512.

underworld. On the journey to the underworld, Mercury takes advantage of Lara's inability to communicate to rape her.

This story has many parallels to the myth of Procne and Philomela, the most obvious being the removal of the victim's tongue. Here, rather than being silenced after the rape, the removal of the tongue creates the opportunity for violence. This inversion is slight, but significant. Tereus' removal of Philomela's tongue is an attempt made after-the-fact to escape the consequences of his unchecked passion. It may highlight the lengths men will go to in order to hide their transgressions. By having Mercury take advantage of Lara's existing state, Ovid emphasizes the opportunity that is available to men when women are silenced. Of course, talking was a major realm of power for women in Rome; they were often criticized for gossiping, but the webs of female communication would no doubt have been vital for women. These paths of communication would have let them communicate about issues such as contraceptive techniques, childbirth, and perhaps remedies for menstrual pain.[137]

The power of intra-female communication is apparent in the stories considered here: Philomela's ability to communicate to Procne through weaving, a highly gendered craft, is key to Tereus' downfall, and Lara's insistence on communicating with Juturna is responsible for Jupiter's inability to rape her. As soon as this ability is taken away, though, both through physical silencing and isolation from other women, Lara is at risk for powerful men (or deities) taking advantage of her condition with no consequences. Lara's helplessness is grotesquely emphasized in the story: *vim parat hic, voltu pro verbis illa precatur, / et frustra muto nititur ore loqui.* Lara has to plead with her facial expression in place of words (*voltu pro verbis*) and she struggles in vain to speak with her mute mouth (2.613-14). Earlier in the story she spoke to multiple other women and was

[137] Fleming, "Women, Writing, and Medicine." Riddle and Estes, "Oral Contraceptives."

characterized by needing to hold her tongue more often. Ovid claims that her name used to be Lala, on account of her crime– that is to say, she was named after the Greek verb *lalein,* "to prattle" on account of her talking too much. This earlier characterization of Lara makes the image of her struggling in vain to speak more dramatic and upsetting.

Meanwhile, the men of the story actively speak several times: Jupiter flings out his words (*iacit…verba* 2.590) and his act of speaking is again emphasized after his speech, directly contrasted with the silent agreement of the nymphs (*dixerat: adnuerant…* 2. 597).[138] Lara's father, Almo, speaks (*dixerat*) when he would often tell her to hold her tongue (*nata, tene linguam* 2.601-2). Finally, Jupiter calls for Mercury (*vocat*), with the speaking verb at the end of the line adding emphasis after he has silenced Lara (2.608). Lara does speak, but as little as possible:

> *"effuge" ait "ripas"; dicta refertque Iovis.*
> *illa etiam Iunonem adiit, miserataque nuptas*
> *"naida Iuturnam vir tuus" inquit "amat."*
> *Fasti* 2.604-606
>
> "flee the banks" she said; and she relayed Jove's words.
> She even went to Juno, pitying the wife,
> and said "Your husband loves the nymph Juturna."

Notably, Juturna does not speak in this story at all. In the *Aeneid*, she gives a speech (Aeneid 12.872-84) in which she laments her immortality when she sees her brother die. She wishes that she had not been made immortal as recompense for her rape, and she longs to descend to the underworld (*… o quae satis ima dehiscat / terra mihi, Manisque deam demittat ad imos?, Aeneid* 12.883-4). With characteristically grotesque irony, Ovid inverts Juturna's longing for the underworld. While Juturna, having been made immortal as recompense for her rape, longs for the underworld, Lara is unwillingly sent there, creating the opportunity for her own

[138] Robinson, 597.

rape. Additionally, the drastic changes in Ovid's telling make it so that Juturna, who formerly gave this notable speech, does not speak at all.

Mercury's role in this story is not surprising; he is the one who escorts the dead to the underworld. What is surprising, however, is his enacting of violence against Lara. In the *Metamorphoses,* Jupiter sends him to help while Io is being guarded by Argus, Juno's henchman, and he lulls Argus to sleep with music and then kills him. In this story, he is helping the rape victim and makes no attempt on her, although she is also vulnerable (1.668-721). Mercury's role in this story, not only as a rapist but as someone with significant autonomy from Jupiter, is surprising and worthy of further consideration. Mercury is also associated with the invention of speech. Ovid references this association later in the *Fasti* when he describes Mercury as *quo didicit culte lingua docente loqui*, (5.668) and Horace identifies Mercury as *Mercuri, facunde nepos Atlantis, / qui feros cultus hominum recentum / voce formasti…* (Hor. *Carm* 1.10.1-3).[139] Thus, there is a dramatic juxtaposition between Mercury, who allows men to speak convincingly, and his victim, who desperately struggles to form words. [140]

When considering the stories of Lara, Philomela, and Lucretia together, there is one other theme worth considering: the relationships between the characters. All three stories involve familial relationships – Lara and Juturna are sisters, Procne and Philomela are sisters, with Tereus as their husband and brother-in-law, and Sextus Tarquinius, Lucretia's rapist, is her husband's

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[139] Robinson, n. 608.

[140]It is unclear whether the story of Lara existed outside of Ovid's telling. Vergil seems to have invented the sibling relationship between Turnus and Juturna, so if Ovid was building exclusively on Vergil's rendition, it is almost certainly of his own creation. The only other time we have Lara named is at Lact. *Div. Inst.* 1.20, and he is likely using the *Fasti* as his source (Robinson, 599). Robinson does note that "in the hymn of the Arval Brethren we find the form Lases for Lares, preserving an early form of the word predating the rhotacization of intervocalic 's'; it is possible that a connection may have been drawn at some point (whether or not it has any basis in fact) between these Lases and the Etruscan female figure Lasa. Her name would by the same process become Lara" (599). Regardless, the myth does not seem to have been commonly told, so Ovid's choice to include it is significant.

cousin. The point of interest here is the relationship between the victim and the person who helps her. So, Juturna is originally the victim of Jupiter's intent, and Lara, her sister, helps her. This has horrible consequences for Lara. Philomela is the victim of her story, and she is also helped by her sister. When Procne learns what Tereus has done, she helps Philomela escape and then the sisters kill Procne's son and cook him into a soup as punishment for Tereus. Here, as with Lara, Procne suffers in the name of helping her sister. Lucretia, on the other hand, is "helped" in the sense that family members seek revenge for her rape (and subsequent suicide). The family members that help her, though, are men. The consequence for these men is that they create a revolution and usher in the Roman republic. In these stories that Ovid clusters together, there is a disparity between the consequences for women who help rape victims (or potential rape victims, since Juturna was spared) and men who help rape victims; the women suffer alongside the victims while the men profit.

Lara's story is not only strikingly similar to the story of Philomela, but also shares parallels with the story of Echo from the *Metamorphoses.* Because Echo would distract Juno with conversation while Jupiter held company with the nymphs, Juno curtailed her speech as punishment. As a result, Echo could not speak on her own but was compelled to repeat the last few words of any utterance she heard. Echo then fell in love with Narcissus but could only communicate with him by repeating the last words of his utterances. Nevertheless, their conversation is surprisingly meaningful: the last few words of each of his sentences conveniently forms a reasonable reply. They meet, and Echo tries to embrace him, but he rejects her, ending his statements with "*ante" ait "emoriar quam sit tibi copia nostri"* ("he said 'let me die before I give my resources over to you", 3.391). Consequently, Echo's response is *sit tibi copia nostri* ("I give

my resources over to you," 3.392). After this rejection, Echo goes away to a cave and wastes away in her misery until she is just a voice resounding out as an echo (*Met.* 3.359-401).

Thus, both the Echo and Lara stories are about a nymph who (to varying degrees) loses her ability to speak because she has interfered with Juno and Jupiter's marriage in relation to Jupiter's infidelity. In many ways, though, the stories are inverted; while Lara tells Juno about Jupiter's affairs, Echo helps disguise them. Therefore, Jupiter punishes Lara while Juno punishes Echo. Although both stories hinge on the loss of intentional speech, Ovid focuses heavily on the loss of Echo's body. When he first introduces Echo, Ovid writes, *Corpus adhuc Echo, non vox erat et tamen usum / garrula non alium, quam nunc habet, oris habebat / reddere de multis et verba novissima potest* ("At that time Echo was a body, not (just) a voice, and although she was talkative she had no other use for her voice than what she has now, and she was able to return from many words the most recent ones" 3.359-61). By establishing that Echo was at that point still a *corpus,* Ovid emphasizes the fact that this is no longer the case.

The structure of line 3.359 also creates a juxtaposition between body and voice, *corpus* and *vox.* This contrast is important when considering the stories of Lara and Echo together; Lara loses her voice entirely, while Echo loses her body entirely. Lara is helpless after her loss of voice, causing her to lose autonomy over her body when she is raped. Echo is similarly helpless and lacks autonomy over her voice. The story of her infatuation with Narcissus emphasizes this helplessness; not only do we see her limitations acted out, but her final echo of the story is *sit tibi copia nostri,* which translates to something like "let my supplies be for you" or "may my power be yours." This pitiful last interaction emphasizes Echo's lack of power. Powerlessness are key components of both Lara and Echo's fates.

Lara and Echo's crimes and resulting punishments are different. While Echo betrays Juno

and helps Jupiter get away with philandering, Lara prevents him from raping Juturna by telling her to run and then tells Juno about what he attempted. Echo is being punished by a woman for betraying the female-female bond. Her betrayal results in a loss of control over her own voice and complete loss over her body. In contrast, Lara honors the female-female relationship by telling Juno that Jupiter is once again running around on her. In this story, Jupiter is the one to remove the nymph's speech, and it is in a much more violent manner. Lara is punished by a man for directly challenging the patriarchal power structure, and her betrayal results in a loss of bodily autonomy and a complete (and gruesome) loss of her voice. Her punishment is no longer couched in the vengeful action of a jealous wife or even in the realm of interpersonal relationships, but rather is punishment for defying Jupiter's commands. Thus, the punishment has moved away from the feminine sphere of marital relations and into the masculine sphere of men's power over others- in this sphere, the punishment is much more violent. These two stories also seem to suggest that female autonomy is limited no matter how they react to the existing power structure. Lara is harshly corporally violated and loses her voice entirely because of her refusal to submit. Echo complies but serves as a mouthpiece for men and her body wastes away from suffering.

Returning to the story of Lara, there are different schools of thought on why Ovid makes Juturna a nymph from the beginning. Robinson points out that by making her a nymph from the beginning, Ovid strengthens parallels between this story and that of Echo.[141] The Lara story introduces a series of stories relating rape to the founding of the empire: Lara is the mother of the Lares, the household gods. Next comes Lucretia, whose rape results in the expulsion of the kings and the ushering in of the republic. Finally, at the beginning of book three comes the story of Rhea Silvia, whose rape results in the birth of Romulus and Remus, the founders of the city. The

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[141] Robinson, n. 603.

references to Procne and Philomela throughout this section (before the story of Lara and after that of Lucretia) remind readers of the violence at hand and the other common themes of female silence and male power. The connections with the Echo story further develop some of these themes, particularly female silence and male power, while introducing a new element by tying in a story in which the silenced woman was already complying with existing patriarchal structures.

The Story of Rhea Silvia

As identified above, the final story in this series of rapes relating to the founding of Rome is the story of Rhea Silvia. This story particularly focuses on the idea of male power. Silvia was a follower of Vesta. She was maintaining her virginity in the name of a goddess, but Mars was (like Tereus and Tarquin) blinded by his passion for her and raped her while she slept. He was able to hide this because of his "divine power" (*et sua divina furta fefellit ope*; "and he hid his theft with his divine power, 3.22). The result of this rape was the conception of Rome's founders, again emphasizing the importance of the story for Rome's political (and therefore masculine) power: immediately, *somnus abit, iacet ipsa gravis: iam scilicet intra / viscera Romanae conditor urbis erat* ("sleep left her, she lay heavy: for already in her womb was the founder of the city of Rome," 3.33-34). After this, Ovid also heavily emphasizes the burden that pregnancy is on Rhea Silvia; on top of "lying heavy" (*iacet ipsa gravis,* 3.33), she is languid upon waking (*languida consurgit non scit, cur languida surgat,* 3.25), emphasized by its repetition in the line.[142] She speaks and lifts her pitcher with unstable strength (*non firmis viribus*, 3.39) and her womb swells with a heavenly burden (*caelesti tumidus pondere venter erat,* 3.42).

This story is not as graphic as the others, as the details of the rape are omitted. Readers have experienced plenty of gore from the other stories in this series of rapes and from references to

[142] N.b. *languida* is also used to describe Cynthia in Propertius 1.3 and Ariadne in *Heroides* X; cf. chapter two, p. 47-9.

Philomela's story, and those details are no doubt in their minds. This story which opens book three refocuses on the themes of female suffering, emphasized by the physical toll the pregnancy takes on Rhea Silvia's body, and male power, as emphasized by both Mars' *divina ope* and the conception of Rome's founders as a result of the rape. The story forms a sort of ring composition with the Lara story, which started the string of rapes related to Rome's founding, in that these are the only two stories discussed where the women conceive. Not only do they conceive, but they both have twins (*fitque gravis geminosque parit…;* "[Lara] became pregnant and bore twins," 2.615).

Rhea Silvia is also referenced in the Lara story: …*adnuerant nymphae Tiberinides omnes / quaeque colunt thalamos,* ***Ilia diva,*** *tuos* (all the nymphs of the Tiber and those who haunt your bedchamber, Ilia diva, agreed, 3.597-8). Ilia is another name for Rhea Silvia, and these lines refer to her euphemistic marriage to the Tiber; traditionally, after her rape, Ilia is ashamed to be pregnant and unwed so she throws herself into the Tiber, and this suicide is euphemistically described as her marrying the Tiber. Ilia's suicide as a result of her rape is reminiscent of Lucretia. Ilia's marriage to the Tiber also ties into her role in the founding of Rome; Tiber was so important to Rome's founding and functioning, and it is fitting for the mother of the founders of the city to also be the wife of this vital river. Jupiter is encouraging the nymphs to help him prevent Juturna from plunging into the Tiber (*ne sua fluminea corpora mergat aqua,* 2.596). Ovid's naming of Ilia and the multiple references to her "marriage" to the Tiber in both book two and three also encourage readers to connect these two stories, considering their themes together. In this way he also draws additional attention to the ring composition, which helps to define these stories as part of a series, encouraging that they be read together and that their shared themes be considered.

Conclusion

This series of episodes, bookended by Lara and Rhea Silvia, establishes the relationship between men's power and female suffering. The silencing of women is often a key component to maintaining this power. The stories also offer a representation of female-female versus female-male social bonds, in which women tend to suffer alongside victims when they help other women. Men, on the other hand, are more violent, relate their sexual violence to militaristic violence, and continue to profit from female suffering even while avenging a woman's rape. The fact that all three rapes are vital to Rome's history is significant: Lara's rape results in the birth of the *Lares,* Lucretia's results in the *regifugium,* and Rhea Silvia's results in the birth of Romulus, Rome's first king. Ovid's choice to cluster these three rapes together emphasizes the role of female suffering in the founding of Rome. The references to Philomela's story offer a Greek point of comparison for these tales from Rome's foundation as they help to draw attention to the violence and suffering so crucial to these familiar Roman tales.

In chapter one, I considered Propertius 4.4, which tells the story of Tarpeia. This story features several similarities to that of Lucretia, and a comparison between the two tales connects many themes seen throughout the past three chapters. In Propertius' poem, Tarpeia condemns Rome with an insult to Romulus (*te toga picta decet, non quem, sine matris honore / nutrit inhumanae dura papilla lupae.* "It is you the *toga picta* befits, not the one whom, without the honor of a mother, the harsh nipple of a wolf-bitch nursed. 4.4.53-54; Transl. Welch). Like Tarpeia (in some traditions; see Welch 57), Rhea Silvia was a Vestal Virgin. Tarpeia's contempt for Romulus may reflect her knowledge that his birth was a result of another Vestal's rape. This line from Tarpeia's speech, particularly the mention of Romulus' *mater,* may have activated in Romans' minds the myth of Romulus' birth, including the rape. After all, Romulus was not raised by his human mother because the fallout from this rape caused the death of Rhea Silvia

shortly after his birth.. Finally, as Welch argues, Tarpeia is caught between *Amor* and *Roma* because of the war between the Sabines and Romans. War is often contrasted with love in elegy (as in our society); compare, for example, the elegiac tropes of the *militia amoris* and the *recusatio,* where the speaker-poets reject military service in war in favor of the military service of love.[143] War is at the heart of Tarpeia's troubles, standing in the way of *Amor,* and Romulus' father was Mars, the god of war, giving her another reason to begrudge the city's founder.

Lucretia provides an interesting foil to the character of Tarpeia. Both stories involve a betrayal: Tarpeia's betrayal of Rome to the Sabines and Tarquin's betrayal of his family (and social expectations/morals) when raping Lucretia, his cousin's wife. Both stories are told in conjunction with a major facet of Rome's history. Tarpiea's story is told in the context of the war between the Romans and Sabines. Lucretia's rape is told in the context of the *regifugium.* While Tarpeia was the willing betrayer in her story (excluding Venus' intervention), going out of her way to open up Rome to its enemies, Lucretia was a rape victim who resisted the invasion of her space (and her body). Tarpeia experiences physical harm at every stage of the story; her service to the state requires her to remain a virgin regardless of her wishes; her love leads her to return home with her arms scratched by brambles (*rettulit hirsutis bracchia secta rubis*, 4.4.8), and her betrayal results in her death. Lucretia suffers rape and the self-inflected knife wound that kills her. The immediate result for both women is the same: both women end up dead, and their bodies lie lifeless as men take political action around them.

The significant difference between poem 4.4 (and Propertius' final book in general) and the *Fasti* is that the latter features silence as a prominent theme. While the *Heroides* expands the

[143] Cf. Am. 1.9, 2.12, 3.11; Ars 2.179– 260; Tib. 1.5, 6. List from James, *Learned Girls,* pg. 111. For more on the elegiac theme of love versus war, see Gale, *Propertius* 2.7.

increased role of the female voice found in Propertius, the *Fasti* shifts back to the frame of the male narrator and, like a pendulum, swings even further away from the *Heroides* by emphasizing female voicelessness. This departure presents a use of the female voice (or lack thereof) that is distinct from those discussed in the first two chapters. While I have focused on the increased role of the female voice in Propertius' final book and the *Heroides,* the female voice is often suppressed in Rome's foundational myths in the *Fasti.* Additionally, the earlier two chapters have focused on the ways that the women of elegy use their bodies as an alternative mode of communication and use descriptions of their bodies to elicit certain emotions from their lovers. In the *Fasti,* however, the female body is used as a pawn for the pleasure and advancement of men; the women's bodies considered in this poem are seen suffering, and their silence is necessary for the continuation of male power and Rome's progression.

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