

A LITERARY COMMENTARY ON THE FIFTH BOOK OF OVID'S FASTI

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the literary nature of Ovid's *Fasti*. This aspect of the poem has been largely neglected in previous commentaries, yet recent research on the *Fasti* indicates that the poem was composed with considerable literary artistry.

The introduction outlines the major issues surrounding the interpretation of the *Fasti* as a poetic work, and establishes the text of Book V which will be used for the purposes of this investigation.

The main body of the thesis falls into two parts. In Chapters 1-13 I subject each of the constituent episodes of Book V to close scrutiny and attempt to trace the techniques which the poet uses to present his material in an entertaining fashion. In Chapters 14-17 I consider various elements which pervade the book as a whole, looking at the poet's success in investing his composition with poetic language and drama, and his ingenuity in manipulating his material.

My analysis leads me to conclude that Ovid's literary achievement in the *Fasti* may be greater than many critics have been prepared to admit, and indeed that Ovid's primary goals in writing this piece were surely poetic rather than didactic or political.

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INTRODUCTION

For many years the *Fasti* was something of an embarrassment to Ovidian scholars. The work was acknowledged to be of importance for the study of Roman religion, but was considered to be a failure as a literary project.

Scholars such as Fowler and Wissowa had used the *Fasti* as a source for their researches into Roman religious practices¹, and this treatment of the poem influenced commentators such as Bailey and Frazer². Frazer's five volume edition of the *Fasti*, published in 1929, is, in spite of its large scale, predominantly concerned with questions of comparative anthropology, and leaves the literary aspects of the poem virtually untouched. This neglect has not been remedied by the only subsequent detailed commentary on the poem, that of Bömer. Bömer's work gives detailed information about matters of philology, but makes little attempt at interpretation of the poem.

Apart from these commentaries there have only been two large-scale studies of the poem. Of these, the work of Peeters³ is primarily concerned with the manuscript tradition, while Porte⁴ discusses the aetiological

nature of the poem. Neither work pays much attention to the status of the *Fasti* as poetry.

In the absence of any full-scale literary studies of the *Fasti*, there grew up an orthodoxy that the poem was fundamentally flawed as a work of literature⁵. Probably the most influential work on the literary nature of the *Fasti* has been Richard Heinze's essay *Ovids elegische Erzählung*, which was published in 1919⁶. Heinze contrasted Ovid's handling of episodes in the *Fasti* with his treatment of the same stories in the *Metamorphoses*, and concluded that in the *Fasti* the elegiac genre has a fundamental role in Ovid's presentation of his material. Heinze's work had the effect of setting the agenda for the appraisal of the *Fasti* in terms of comparison with the *Metamorphoses*, as though the *Fasti* were a *carmen perpetuum*. Not surprisingly, perhaps, this led to criticism of the *Fasti* on several fronts.

The subject matter of the Roman calendar dictates that the *Fasti* is constructed in a series of self-contained episodes each representing a different entry in the Roman calendar. The *Metamorphoses*, on the other hand, progresses in a fluent, sweeping narrative which

gains much of its appeal from skilful transitions between the different stories.

In addition, the *Fasti* is composed in elegiac couplets, with each couplet forming an independent sense unit⁷. This verse-form imposes a certain regularity which has been judged monotonous in comparison with the variety achieved by the use of hexameters in the *Metamorphoses*⁸.

The failure of the *Fasti* to display the fluidity and variety observable in the *Metamorphoses* led scholars to question the aesthetic validity of a calendar poem. Fränkel concluded that "Ovid's *Fasti* could never be real poetry: to versify and adorn an almanac was not a sound proposal in the first place"⁹.

However, it seems to me that the view that the *Fasti* is a literary failure rests upon the observation that it does not match up to the *Metamorphoses* as a *carmen perpetuum*. Scholars like Fränkel and Otis pointed out that the *Fasti* does not approach the achievement of the *Metamorphoses* in terms of its large-scale construction, but they did not analyse the poem on a smaller scale. The *Fasti* does not, in fact, claim to be a continuous narrative. On the contrary, the poem is

to be read as a series of episodes, each self-contained but adding to the effect of the whole.

In an article published in 1975¹⁰, R.J. Littlewood challenged the prevailing orthodoxy about the literary status of the *Fasti*. Whereas previous critics had based their opinions on general surveys of the poem, Littlewood took a single entry - Ovid's treatment of the Lupercalia festival in Book II - and examined the passage in detail in order to reveal the poet's artistry. This approach has subsequently been applied to other entries¹¹, and has led to a reappraisal of the poem. By subjecting the individual entries to close scrutiny, critics have discovered depths to the *Fasti* that had gone unnoticed in the more general surveys of earlier scholars, with the result that scholarly research on the *Fasti* is now focused very much on literary approaches to the poem¹².

Nevertheless, in spite of this upsurge in interest in the literary aspects of the *Fasti*, many of the episodes in the poem have not been studied in detail, and John Miller has recently stated that "thorough explications of the individual entries remain one of the desiderata in research on the *Fasti*"¹³.

This is particularly true of the fifth book of the *Fasti*. The fifth and sixth books of the poem have been denigrated even by critics who have found things to admire in the first four books. Scholars have seen signs of hasty and unfinished composition¹⁴, and concluded that Ovid was running short of material and losing enthusiasm for the project¹⁵. There has been a corresponding lack of interest in these books. At the time when this project was begun, only the Chiron episode (V.379-414) and the prayer to Mercury (V.663-692) had been the subject of extended analysis¹⁶, although since that time the studies of Riedl on Mars Ultor¹⁷ and Barchiesi on the Muses¹⁸ have been published.

There is, therefore, a place for a detailed literary commentary on Book V of the *Fasti*. In producing this commentary I have tried not to address the aspects of the poem that have been treated in the commentaries of Frazer and Bömer, but to consider the literary techniques which are employed to enable the poet to present his material in a lively and interesting fashion.

In keeping with the belief that the *Fasti* is best

appreciated as a series of complementary pieces rather than as a *carmen perpetuum*, I have divided Book V into thirteen self-contained sections, each of which is the subject of one chapter of this thesis. Each chapter begins with a commentary on the episode, but I have chosen to supplement the commentary in each case with one or more broader discussions dealing with subjects that are either too large to be dealt with in the format of the commentary, or which pervade the whole episode and whose significance is such as to merit special attention.

This method concentrates upon the integrity of the individual episodes. However, there is inherent in this approach a tendency to overlook effects gained from the interaction between the various episodes, and so I have chosen to follow the thirteen chapters devoted to close examination of the individual entries with a chapter looking at the aesthetics of the book as a whole.

A further three chapters discuss the literary nature of the poem in more general terms. Taking examples from Book V, Ovid's achievement is examined in terms of his use of poetic devices, dramatic techniques and political sentiments.

I have not considered it to be within the scope of this project to establish a new text of Book V or to make a detailed study of the manuscripts¹⁹. A reliable text of the *Fasti* is available in the form of the Teubner edition of Wormell and Courtney, based upon the researches of E.H. Alton, which has become established as the standard modern edition²⁰. It is to this text (henceforward referred to as AWC) that the commentary is keyed.

However, it is impossible to draw a rigid line of demarcation between interpretation and textual criticism, and there are a few places where I have felt it necessary to make emendations to the text of AWC to accord with my understanding of the poem. These places are listed in the table below:

<u>Line</u>	<u>Reading of AWC</u>	<u>Proposed Emendation</u>
17	<i>neque terra diu caelo</i>	<i>neque Terra diu Caelo</i>
62	<i>opem;</i>	<i>opem.</i>
66	<i>honor,</i>	<i>honor.</i>
74	<i>tangor, et aetati consuluisse</i>	<i>auguror: aetati consulere</i>
158	<i>tvirum†</i>	<i>virum</i>
335	<i>tota</i>	<i>pota</i>
355-358	not in direct speech	in direct speech
372	<i>lepus?</i>	<i>lepus?"</i>
465-466	<i>ubi Mars pater est? si...</i>	<i>ubi Mars pater est - si...?</i>
525	<i>primae mihi vere iuventae</i>	<i>primae mihi tveret iuventae</i>
684	<i>vana</i>	<i>magna</i>

The reasons behind these proposed emendations are given in the commentary, with the exception of line 372, where the omission of inverted commas in AWC is clearly a typographical error. Apart from these places, I have restricted the textual notes in the commentary to readings where there is significant and unresolved controversy among editors about the true reading.

Notes to Introduction

1. Fowler (1899); Wissowa (1912).
2. See the preface to Bailey's edition of Book III.
3. Peeters (1939).
4. Porte (1985).
5. Attempts to defend the literary status of the *Fasti* have been made by Titone (1929), Peeters (1939, p.19), Schilling (1966) and Wormell (1979).
6. This essay is reprinted in Heinze (1960) pp.308-403.
7. Occasionally Ovid allows sentences to run from one couplet to the next with only a weak pause at the end of the couplet - e.g. II.600; III.324; III.706; IV.420; VI.142; VI.482. This violation of normal practice is especially appropriate in places where the poet aims to recreate the style of epic hexameter poetry (see Littlewood (1980) p.320).
8. This criticism is made by Otis (1966, pp.35-44) and Barsby (1978, p.29).
9. Fränkel (1969) p.148.
10. Littlewood (1975b).

11. See, for example, Littlewood (1980) on III.523-710; Harries (1991) on II.193-242; Newlands (1991) on II.243-266; Miller (1992b) on I.317-334 and III.835-848.
12. See the recent survey of research on the *Fasti* by Miller (1992a).
13. Miller (1992a) p.4.
14. D'Elia (1959, p.349) calls Book V *uno dei più frettolosamente costruiti e scritti*; Le Bonniec (1969, p.10) talks of *une rédaction hâtive*.
15. On the paucity of material for May and June, see Fantham (1983) pp.210-215. On the theory of Ovid's declining enthusiasm in the later stages of his project, see Johnson (1978) p.17; Syme (1978) p.35; Newlands (1992) pp.47-51.
16. The Chiron story is analysed by Albrecht (1968a) and Santini (1976); the prayer to Mercury by Littlewood (1975a, pp.669-674).
17. Riedl (1989).
18. Barchiesi (1991).
19. On the manuscripts of the *Fasti*, see Peeters (1939), Alton, Wormell & Courtney (1977) and Tarrant (1983).
20. See the reviews of Le Bonniec (1980) and Hall (1982). Hall is critical of some of the methodology behind the production of the text. See also the verdicts of Tarrant (1983, p.266) and Miller (1992a, p.1).

CHAPTER 1: THE ETYMOLOGY OF MAY

1.1 Commentary on V.1-110

1-10. The book begins with Ovid imagining himself in the middle of a conversation with his readers, who ask him how the month got its name. Ovid declares his ignorance, and calls upon the Muses to explain.

1. quaeritis unde putem Maio data nomina mensi?: The opening word of the book places the scene in the context of a learned discussion between the divinely inspired *vates* and his audience. This use of an imaginary question is a didactic convention (see Kenney (1958) p.203), and creates the expectation that Ovid will, in the normal fashion of the didactic poet, answer the enquiry. However, this expectation is humorously demolished in the following line.

Newlands (1992, pp.34-47) shows that the narrator of the *Fasti* fails to conform to the expectations set by the didactic genre with increasing frequency in the latter part of the poem, and sees this as evidence of the poet's disenchantment with his work. Perhaps, however, there is more humour in these floutings of the didactic conventions than Newlands is prepared to allow.

3-6. ut stat et incertus qua sit sibi nescit eundum, \

cum videt ex omni parte, viator, iter...: This simile is the most elaborately worked one in the book, with the description of the lost traveller in lines 3-4 corresponding at each point with the poet's own situation as set out in lines 5-6 (*incertus* and *nescit* are picked up by *ignoro*; *qua sit sibi...eundum* by *qua ferar*; and *ex omni parte* by *diversas*).

The simile has been compared with Theognis 911-914 and Plato *Leges* VII.799c, although the purpose here is to illustrate the confusion arising from the large number of choices available, rather than the dilemma of choosing between just two paths.

6. copiaque ipsa nocet: The paradox that it is the abundance of choices that causes the problem is characteristically Ovidian - compare Narcissus' lament at *Metamorphoses* III.466: *inopem me copia fecit*.

7-8. dicite, quae fontes Aganippidos Hippocrenes, \grata Medusaei signa, tenetis, equi: In invoking the Muses, Ovid employs learned allusion and Greek style, indicating his place in the tradition of Hesiod and Callimachus (see Section 1.6).

The spring of Aganippe was located at the foot of Mount Helicon, near the grove of the Muses. Hippocrene,

which was supposed to have emerged from the hoof-print of the winged horse Pegasus, was near the summit of the mountain. The assimilation of the two springs into a single phrase may be explained as a poetic conceit, although Newlands (1992, pp.49-50) argues that this confusion is a sign of the inability of the narrator to perform his proper function in the closing books of the poem.

9. dissensere deae: Ovid has invoked the Muses in the style of Hesiod and Callimachus, and it is expected that the goddesses will provide him with information just as they had Ovid's poetic predecessors in the *Theogony* and the *Aetia*. The failure of the Muses to perform this function is a humorous reversal of the poetic tradition.

10. (silent aliae, dictaque mente notant): The attentiveness with which the Muses listen to their sister is typical of the sort of reception that would greet an accomplished orator (see Section 1.2).

11-54. The first explanation of the name of May is given by Polyhymnia, who derives the name of the month from the goddess Maiestas.

The genesis of the physical universe (11-16) is

contrasted with the "chaos" among the gods (17-22). This "social chaos" is finally resolved by Maiestas (23-32). The new-found harmony is disrupted by the revolt of the Giants (33-42), the defeat of whom establishes Maiestas as a representative of authority both among gods (43-46) and men (47-52).

11. post chaos: It is customary for the Muses to begin a speech with a description of the genesis of the universe, taking primeval chaos as their starting point (see Barchiesi (1991) p.8). The account of the origins of the universe has little immediate relevance to the etymological question under discussion, but the clever transition at line 17 allows this traditional opening to be integrated with the practical function of Polyhymnia's song.

data sunt tria corpora mundo: As Bömer and Frazer (both *ad loc.*) point out, Ovid recognises all four Empedoclean elements at I.105-6, *Metamorphoses* I.5-32, XV.239-243, and *Ibis* 109-110, but here appears to acknowledge only three. The commentators assume that in this passage Ovid groups aether and air together under the term *caelum*, as he does at *Metamorphoses* I.22. In lines 14-16, however, Ovid specifically distinguishes

between *caelum*, which has little weight (*levitas*), and the celestial bodies, which are totally weightless, (*nulla gravitate retentus*). It may be, therefore, that Ovid does recognise four elements, but that the *mundus* contains only earth, water and air (cf. *Metamorphoses* I.10, *nullus adhuc mundo praebebat lumina Titan*, where the celestial bodies are portrayed as existing outside the *mundus*). Thus the *loca summa* of line 14 are the extreme areas of the *mundus*, but it is still possible for the celestial bodies to exist outside - hence *exsiluistis* in line 16.

13-16. pondere terra suo subsedit et aequora traxit...:

Ovid uses characteristic variety of sentence structure in compiling his list of the separations of the elements.

Weight is the crucial factor in the orientation of the elements. The importance of *gravitas* in ordering the physical universe corresponds to the key role of *Maestas* in bringing order to the gods.

17-18. sed neque Terra diu Caelo, nec cetera Phoebos \ sidera cedebant: This couplet introduces an important contrast between the organisation of the physical universe, as described in lines 11-16, and the social

disorganisation of the Olympian gods. Whereas the physical bodies have escaped from chaos and achieved stability, the gods are still in a state of "social chaos", for whereas the elements can be separated by weight, the gods cannot be distinguished in terms of authority.

The point is accentuated by the contrast of the gods Terra, Caelum, Phoebus and the stars with their physical counterparts *terra* (13), *caelum* (14), *sol* (15) and *stellis* (15), but the point is lost in the text printed by AWC, who do not recognise that the figures in line 17 are personifications.

19-22. saepe aliquis solio, quod tu, Saturne, tenebas, \
ausus de media plebe sedere deus...: Polyhymnia gives three examples of the "social chaos" among the gods, using political, military and social metaphors, and binding them together with verbal correspondences: *saepe* (19) is picked up by *saepe* (22), *aliquis* (19) by *quisquam* (21), and *de...plebe...deus* (20) by *deus advena* (21).

Each example takes a representative of seniority amongst the gods and shows them being slighted by an inferior. These examples are expressed using terms that

are familiar in Roman society. In the first example it is Saturn, Jupiter's predecessor as king of the gods, whose chair of office is occupied by a "plebeian" god. In the second example, Oceanus, the ancestor of all of the gods (according to Homer *Iliad* XIV.201), does not receive the appropriate respect when walking in company, and in the final example, Themis - a Titaness, whose name significantly means "order" - is given the place of least respect at the dining table. (On the "Romanness" of these examples, see Section 1.3.)

21. nec latus Oceano quisquam deus advena iunxit: The phrase *latus tegere*, originally a military term meaning to protect the unprotected (left) side of a comrade-in-arms (cf. Xenophon *Cyropaedia* VIII.4.3), is used by Horace (*Satires* II.5.18), Suetonius (*Claudius* 24.3) and Juvenal (*Satires* 3.131) to mean a sign of deference to a social superior when walking in company. The failure of the *deus advena* to conform to this custom exemplifies the lack of respect for seniority which there was on Olympus until the arrival of Maiestas.

24. corpora legitimis imposuere toris: The legitimacy of the marriage is the first step away from "social chaos" and towards social order. By remarking on this

legitimacy, the Muse stresses *Maiestas*' credentials for her role in instilling order among the gods.

25. hos est dea censa parentes: This is the reading of manuscripts G and M. The most reliable manuscript, U, offers the radically different *quae mundum temperat omnem*.

This remarkable discrepancy has been explained satisfactorily by Landi (Introduction to Landi-Castiglioni, pp.xxxi-xxxii). He argues that the banal reading offered by U was incorporated in order to avoid the rare deponent use of the verb *censor*. Although this use of *censor* is unusual, it is not, however, unparalleled. Peeters (1938) has collected evidence to show that *censor* can be used as a deponent verb. Furthermore, the word *censa* is appropriate here in that it is consistent with Polyhymnia's depiction of *Maiestas* in terms of a Roman magistrate (see Section 1.3), for she acts like a Roman *censor* in regularising the recording of personal information in Olympus.

26. magna: Ovid makes a joke of the fact that the word *maiestas* is etymologically derived from *maior*. The positive form of the adjective *magna* is paradoxically appropriate to the infant state of the goddess, who will

one day grow from a state of *magnitudo* to reach the state of *maiestas*.

28. purpureo conspicienda sinu: The colour purple is generally associated with majesty, but particularly with the imperial house, and so the description has a definite contemporary resonance (see Section 1.4).

29. videres: The use of the second person to invite the presence of the reader at the scene which is being described as a familiar rhetorical trick (see [Longinus] 26; Gilmartin (1975)). Ovid uses it again at lines 317 and 389.

31-32. intravit mentes suspectus honorum: \ fit pretium dignis: The arrival of *Maiestas* brings about a situation of order which contrasts to the anarchy of lines 17-22. The attributes of *honor* and *dignitas* have particular significance in terms of Roman political life (see Section 1.3).

34. dum senior fatis excidit arce deus: The expulsion of Saturn provides the justification for the Gigantomachy for it provoked Terra to send the Giants to attack Olympus (see Apollodorus I.6.1).

35-36. Terra feros partus, immania monstra, Gigantas \ edidit: The apposition emphasises the inhuman size and

strength of the Giants.

Moreover, the opening of the line offers an allusive reference to the etymological derivation of the name *Gigantes* from the Greek γίγαντες (see Maltby (1991) p.259).

37. mille manus illis dedit et pro cruribus angues: The unusual aspects of the physical appearance of the Giants are stressed by the placing of *mille manus* and *angues* at the beginning and end of the line respectively.

Frazer (note on III.439) accuses Ovid of "several mythological heresies" in his depiction of the giants, but Bömer (note on V.35) and Hunter (1983, p.208) point out that the mythology about the Titans, Giants and other opponents of the Olympians was confused from an early date, and aspects of the various stories became assimilated.

38. "in magnos arma movete deos": The use of direct speech is a characteristic Ovidian device for giving a dramatic quality to the narrative (cf. 394, 412, 716-718).

As at line 26 (see note *ad loc.*), there is a connection between *magnus* and *Maiestas*. The use of the word *magnus*, which is the etymological root of *maiestas*,

as an epithet of the gods suggests a family relationship between them and Maiestas.

40. magnum bello sollicitare Iovem: The etymological connection between *magnus* and Maiestas is now used to hint at a special relationship between Jupiter and Maiestas, in preparation for the explicit observation of this relationship in lines 45-46.

42. vertit in auctores pondera vasta suos: The idea that the Giants contribute to their own downfall echoes Horace *Carmina* III.4.65: *vis consili expers mole ruit sua* (see Fantham (1986) p.268).

45-46. assidet inde Iovi, Iovis est fidissima custos, \ et praestat sine vi sceptrum timenda Iovi: The relationship between Maiestas and Jupiter is presented in the form of a tricolon. The insistent repetition of the name of the king of the gods in each part of the tricolon adds to the impressiveness of the catalogue of Maiestas' functions.

48. tempore quisque suo: The reference to the changes in the cult of Maiestas in each successive age has special reference to Ovid's own day, as there was a change in the application of the law of *maiestas* at the start of the imperial period (see Section 1.4).

49-52. illa... \ illa... \ illa... \ illa...: Polyhymnia ends by listing the different sorts of people with whom Maiestas is connected, including men and women (49-50), young (50) and old (49), common people (49-50) and the nobility (51-52).

Fantham (1986, pp.268-272) sees this list as being unusually widespread, and believes the move away from the majesty of the emperor to the majesty of the people to be a sign of late reworking, in keeping with the more "Republican" tone of the early days of the principate of Tiberius (see Appendix).

The quadruple anaphora which is used to introduce the items of the catalogue gives the ending of the speech a hymnic form. Barchiesi (1991, p.10) sees the effect as being to undermine the seriousness of Polyhymnia's song, saying that "No Augustan poet would begin four consecutive lines with *illa* unless he had a definite purpose, a purpose that borders on pastiche and parody".

50. comes: Maiestas' terrestrial functions parallel her heavenly ones. Her role as *comes* is similar to her role as *Iovis... fidissima custos* on line 45.

pueris virginibusque: The formula provides a close

verbal echo of Horace *Carmina* III.1.4 (*virginibus puerisque*). Ovid shows his metrical virtuosity by reversing the order of the words and transferring the phrase from Alcaic to elegiac metre.

51. fasces commendat: As in the previous line, *Maiestas*' role on earth matches her role on Olympus. Her guardianship of the *fasces* corresponds to her association with Jupiter's *sceptra timenda* (line 46).

53. finierat voces Polyhymnia: The use of the poetic plural *voces* may constitute an etymological joke. *Polyhymnia*'s name translates literally as "many songs", and so it is apt that she should be described as completing not one *vox*, but many *voces*.

55-78. *Urania* argues that *May* is derived from *maiores*. She supports her thesis that the older generation was formerly treated with great respect with examples from military (59-62), political (63-66) and social (67-70) customs. She then concludes that the *maiores* were appointed senators and legislated that their name should be given to the month (71-74). Finally, the Muse strengthens her case by adding a further possible explanation of the etymology, and citing the

corroborative derivation of June from *iuniores* (75-78).

55-56. fecere silentia cunctae, \ et vox audiri nulla, nisi illa, potest: Urania is greeted with the rapt attention commanded by an expert orator, just as Polyhymnia was at line 10 (see note *ad loc.*).

57-58. magna fuit quondam capitis reverentia cani, \ inque suo pretio ruga senilis erat: Urania begins her account with a word that is cognate to *maiores*, the key word in the etymology. The Muse is faced with the problem of establishing a link between the key word *maiores* and *senes*, the more usual term for the older generation. In the discussion of the role of old men, the Muse uses many forms of the word *senex* (see Porte (1985) p.203), whereas the word *maiores* has no such prominence in the text. However, Urania's use of the word *magna* in her preliminary observation suggests that the older generation enjoyed *maior reverentia*. This provides an extra justification for calling them *maiores*.

In referring to the *maiores*, the Muse uses synecdoche, representing old age by the symbols of grey hair and wrinkled skin. This poetic device helps to add variety to a passage where variants of *senex* and

senectus abound.

59-62. Martis opus iuvenes animosaque bella gerebant...:

The first of Urania's observations about the role of the *maiores* concerns the deference paid to them in the defence of the state. The division of military duties between the young and the old which is described here was also made by Fulvius Nobilior (apud Macrobius *Saturnalia* I.12.16) who said that Romulus divided the people *in maiores iunioresque...ut altera pars consilio altera armis rem publicam tueretur*.

In Urania's account, two lines (59-60) describe the role of the *iuniores* as active soldiers, while a further two lines (61-62) describe the contrasting role of the *maiores* as counsellors. The balance between the two couplets suggests that the two groups of citizens perform tasks of similar value: *opus...gerebant* (59) corresponds to *ferebat opem* (62), while *pro dis...suis* (60) matches *patriae* (62).

61. viribus illa minor: There is humour in the fact that although the older men are called *maiores*, they are paradoxically *minores* as far as strength is concerned.

62. opem.: AWC punctuates with a semi-colon at the end of this line. However, the structure of the speech

suggests that lines 59-62, 63-66 and 67-70 form three separate blocks, with full stops required after lines 62 and 66, rather than the weaker punctuation offered by AWC. The words *nec* and *et*, which begin lines 63 and 67 respectively, do not have a connective function, but are used to introduce new themes (as they do at lines 77 and 75).

63-66. nec nisi post annos patuit tunc curia seros...:

In these four lines, Urania moves from the military functions of the *maiores* to their political distinction, citing membership of the senate, legislative power and the age restrictions attached to political offices as evidence for their pre-eminence in this field.

The last of these claims appears to involve Urania in an anachronism, for the *leges annales*, which restricted the age at which particular offices could be sought, did not apply in the archaic period to which the passage refers (see Cicero *Philippics* V.47-48; Tacitus *Annales* XI.22).

The Muse transposes the conditions which prevailed in Ovid's day onto a scene in Rome's ancient past in order to corroborate her claim about the political privileges given to the *maiores*.

64. senatus: The etymological connection between *senatus* and *senex*, made explicit here, was commonplace in ancient literature (see Bömer *ad loc.*). Ovid implies that the connection was not a natural linguistic development, but that the title was consciously granted as an honour to the older generation.

66. honor.: A stronger punctuation than AWC's comma is required at the end of the line (see note on line 62).

67-70. et medius iuvenum, non indignantibus ipsis, \
ibat, et interior, si comes unus erat...: The final examples of respect for the *maiores* consider aspects of social behaviour. A couplet each is devoted to the deference of young men when walking in the company of their elders (*interior* refers to the practice of walking on the left hand side of a social superior - see note on line 21), and the restraint of language caused by the presence of older men.

69-70. verba quis auderet coram sene digna rubore \
dicere?: The rhetorical question provides sudden variety in the speech, breaking up the sequence of statements with striking effect (Ovid uses the same technique at lines 138, 227-228 and 313-314).

70. censuram: The word refers to the prerogative of

older men in Romulus' day to rebuke their juniors, but it is also tempting to imagine it referring to the political office of the censorship, the function of which was to expel unworthy individuals from the senate. As with the allusion to the *leges annales* (see note on lines 63-66), Urania uses the institutions of the Roman republic to embellish her description of Rome in the time of Romulus.

73. maiores: Only at the point of the narrative where the etymology is made explicit is the term *maiores* substituted for the variations on the word *senex* which prevail elsewhere in the passage (see note on lines 57-58). The subtle shift from *seniores* to *maiores* enables Urania to make her point about the derivation of *Maius* from *maiores*.

Maio: The dative form of the name of the month has the maximum number of letters in common with the letters of *maiores*. The link between the two words is thus made more cogently than if *Maius* had occurred in the nominative, accusative or genitive case.

74. auguror: aetati consulere suae: This reading is an emendation proposed by Delz. AWC retains the reading of the main manuscripts: *tangor, et aetati consuluissē*

suae. A further emendation *censeo, et aetati consuluisset* *suae* has been proposed by Fuchs.

The use of *tangor* to mean "I am led to believe" is unprecedented. Housman (1972, p.1275) defends the reading of the manuscripts as an extension of the use of *adducor* and *permoveor* in similar circumstances by Cicero (*de Divinatione* I.35) and Tacitus (*Annales* IV.57) respectively. However, the use of *tangor* seems to involve a different metaphor than either of the analogies cited by Housman.

Delz (1971, pp.57-58) argues that *auguror* could easily have been changed by haplography to *augor*, and subsequently to *tangor*. Furthermore, the appearance of *et* may have been caused by dittography from *aetati* (perhaps written *ETATI* in the archetype). It is, therefore, easy to imagine the corruption of the configuration *AUGURDRETATI* to *AUGDRETETATI* and finally - to make sense of that corruption - *TANGOR ET AETATI*, with the necessary adjustment being made to the ending of *consuluere*. The emendation of *censeo*, tentatively suggested by Frazer (note on V.73) and confidently taken up by Fuchs (1972, p.218) is less plausible palaeographically.

Further support for Delz's conjecture is provided by the sense made by the change he is forced to make in the punctuation of the couplet. The phrase *aetati consuluere suae* standing after a colon has more point as an explanation of the decision reported in the hexameter (cf. IV.62) than the alternative reading, which merely repeats the sense of the previous line.

consuluere: There is an additional point gained by the use of this word, as it may refer not only to taking thought for one's own interests, but also to the act of passing a *senatus consultum*.

75-76. et Numitor dixisse potest "da, Romule, mensem \ hunc senibus", nec avum sustinuisse nepos: Urania does not stop once she has explained her etymology, but continues in an attempt to strengthen her case.

The mention of Romulus and Numitor is meant to appeal not to the reader's logic but to his emotions. This is achieved through the depiction of Romulus' affection for his grandfather. The use of the terms *avus* and *nepos* generalises the scene, so that it becomes an expression of the love of all grandsons for their grandparents, with which the reader can readily identify.

In addition, the use of direct speech, with the imperative *da* and the vocative *Romule* emphasising Numitor's pleading, makes the appeal to the emotions more cogent.

77-78. nec leve propositi pignus successor honoris \
Iunius, a iuvenum nomine dictus, habet: Urania's final piece of evidence is stronger than the fanciful but alluring notion of Romulus naming the month to please his old grandfather. The neat correspondence between *Maius* and *Iunius* and *maiores* and *iuniores* gives great plausibility to this etymology. It was on the basis of this correspondence that Varro accepts the etymology at *de Lingua Latina* VI.33 and Ovid elsewhere treats it as orthodoxy (I.41; V.427; VI.88). The employment of this argument as the *coup de grace* provides a powerful conclusion to the case presented by Urania.

79-107. Calliope derives the name of the month from Maia, the mother of Mercury. However, Maia has only a small part to play in the narrative. The Muse tells how Maia gave birth to Mercury on Mount Cyllene (81-88), and how Evander brought the rites of Mercury and Faunus into Italy (89-100). It is only among the footnotes to this

story (101-106) that the claim that Mercury gave his mother's name to the month of May is mentioned.

79. neglectos hedera redimita capillos: Loosened hair and the wreath of ivy are features readily associated with inspired singers (see Frazer and Bömer, both *ad loc.*). Thus Ovid draws attention to Calliope's credentials as a story-teller, and prepares for the high-flown speech which she will give.

80. prima sui coepit Calliopea chori: Since Hesiod (*Theogony* 79), Calliope is presented as the leader of the Muses. In the fifth book of the *Metamorphoses* she adopts the role of spokeswoman for the sisters in their contest against the Pierides. The force of *prima* here thus seems to be to stress Calliope's status as a leader, rather than to indicate any chronological detail.

The pronounced alliteration in this line heralds the beginning of a speech which is filled with archaic diction (see Section 1.5).

81. quondam: The word serves to place the narrative in a distant, ill-defined past which enhances the sense of antiquity. *quondam* is similarly used to introduce ancient stories in the *Fasti* at I.489, II.461, II.547

and VI.31.

83. cum caelifero Atlante: In this line and also in line 87, Ovid allows himself the licence of using a spondee in the fifth foot. The irregularity is compounded in line 83 by the "Greek hiatus" at the fifth foot caesura. The use of these Greek metrical techniques is consistent with the archaic tone of Calliope's speech (see Section 1.5).

84. ut fama est: This qualifying phrase may have three functions (see Norden on Virgil *Aeneid* VI.14): to stress the traditional nature of an established story, to rationalise an unlikely tale, or to express scepticism. In this case, as Frécaut observes (1972, pp.160-161), the purpose - in conjunction with *traditur* (86) - is to draw attention to the tradition, deriving from Hesiod and the Homeric *Hymn to Hermes*, in which Calliope places herself.

87. cupressiferae Cyllenes: The unusual metrical feature of the spondaic fifth foot is repeated from line 83 (see note *ad loc.*).

Cypresses are nowhere associated with Mount Cyllene in the literary tradition, and in fact do not - in modern times at any rate - grow there (see Frazer *ad*

loc.). Virgil (*Aeneid* VIII.139) gives the epithet *gelidus* to the mountain top, as does Silius Italicus (*Punica* III.203), while at *Priapea* 75.10 it is called *nivosus*.

Theophrastus (*Historia Plantarum* IV.1.3) and Pliny (*Naturalis Historia* XVI.142) record that the cypress tree normally grows only in a warm climate, but will grow with apparent spontaneity on the inhospitable mountain tops of certain areas of Crete.

Calliope may perhaps be inserting a detail from a story about the infancy of Jupiter in Crete into her narrative about the birth of Mercury in Arcadia. Alliteration and the exotic Greek sound (see Section 1.5) recommend the phrase rather than strict geographical accuracy.

(The adjective *cupressifer* also occurs at *Heroides* 9.87 describing Erymanthus, another mountain of Arcadia. However, the ninth poem of the *Heroides* exhibits many strange properties that have caused its authorship to be questioned (see Courtney (1965), Vessey (1969)). If this poem is un-Ovidian, then the phrase may well be an imitation of Ovid's use of the epithet in the *Fasti*. Even if the authenticity of *Heroides* 9 is maintained

(for the arguments in favour of this, see Jacobson (1974) pp.228-234), the adjective is relevant in that poem, for it aptly describes the lair of the Erymanthian boar.)

88. aetherium volucris qui pede carpit iter: The dactylic rhythm of the line matches the swift movement of Mercury through the air.

89-90. Arcades hunc Ladonque rapax et Maenalos ingens \
rite colunt: Calliope represents the people of Arcadia by a river, Ladon, and a mountain, Maenalos. The nature of both these geographical features is stressed by the appropriate epithets - *rapax* of the river, and *ingens* of the mountain. Having had their non-human natures thus highlighted, Ladon and Maenalos are then surprisingly anthropomorphised as the subjects of the verb *colunt*. The result is to create two levels of meaning. On one level, Ladon and Maenalos stand by metonymy for the inhabitants of Arcadia, who worship Mercury. On a more poetically suggestive level, the mountain and the river are personified as joining in with the worship, giving an impression of all nature harmonising in its acceptance of the deity. This sort of personification also occurs in Virgil *Eclogues* 10.14-15.

91. exul: The theme of exile is a common one in the *Fasti*. On some occasions (e.g. I.540; IV.81-84) the exile theme can be traced directly to Ovid's own experience of banishment. The extent to which Ovid's own exile influenced the revision of the poem into its current form is discussed in the Appendix.

92. venerat, impositos attuleratque deos: The juxtaposition of three verbal forms - two finite verbs and a participle - allows the information to be communicated in a concise form.

The mention of carrying gods into exile draws a parallel between Evander and Aeneas, whom Virgil had portrayed in the *Aeneid* as the originator of many Roman religious practices. In Ovid's poem, Evander is a more prominent figure than Aeneas. This may amount to a statement of literary independence on the part of Ovid. Fantham (1992) sees a political significance in the position of Evander. She believes that Ovid portrays Evander as a "counter-Aeneas", so that he is able to explain the origins of Roman religion without reference to the Julian family.

93-94. hic, ubi nunc Roma est, orbis caput, arbor et herbae \ et paucae pecudes et casa rara fuit: The

contrast between Rome's rural beginnings and its exalted destiny is a standard topic of Augustan poetry. In particular, it is the theme of Virgil *Aeneid* VIII (especially lines 98-100), Tibullus II.5 and Propertius IV.1 - where the contrast is worked out at great length - and is a recurring theme of the *Fasti* (see Bömer on II.280; D'Elia (1959) p.326).

The contrast has two functions in Augustan poetry. Firstly, the achievements of the *princeps* and the Roman people are magnified by the comparison with the small scale of Rome's beginnings: *orbis caput* stands in stark contrast with *paucae pecudes* and *casa rara* (cf. Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.360-361; see further Allen (1922) p.264). Secondly, the idealised picture of early Rome is itself a matter for pride (see Bonjour (1975) pp.121-122). The alliteration and assonance in lines 93-94 increase the impression of idyllic harmony.

The observance of religious practices, which is the theme of Ovid's poem, forms a link between the pastoral ancient origins of the city and its contemporary grandeur, allowing pride in both the present and the past.

An alternative viewpoint of Ovid's portrayal of

early Rome is provided by Phillips (1983, p.811) who believes that "Ovid so avers contemporary superiority that he, in consequence, devalues much of the significance of past history".

95. "consistite": Carmentis' command breaks in suddenly on the mood of tranquillity, with the slow spondees giving way to a more urgent rhythm.

95-97. praescia mater...: Emphasis is laid on Carmentis' status as a prophetess. This provides a dramatic situation in which the idea of the growth of Rome from humble beginnings may appropriately be restated. The truth of the prediction, (which is confirmed for the reader by the process of history), guarantees the authenticity of Carmentis' status. This idea is worked out in much fuller detail at I.473-538, and derives from the similar use of prophecy in Virgil's *Aeneid* (e.g. I.257-296; XII.830-840).

96. "locus imperii rus erit istud": The prophecy takes the form of a contrast, balanced around the central diaeresis, with the striking juxtaposition of *imperii* and *rus* at the heart of the line.

The nominative neuter singular form *istud* occurs in Ovid only here, and not at all in the poetry of Virgil,

Horace and Propertius. The form appears more frequently in prose, and at Catullus 10.28 is used in a highly conversational context. The singular *rus* is also an unpoetic form. These apparently prosaic words heighten the contrast between Rome's pristine simplicity the glory it will one day possess.

Barchiesi (1991, p.13) believes that the "low" stylistic register of these words indicates that Calliope's narrative, despite its epic pretensions (see Section 1.5) does not achieve the scale of a proper epic. However, this conclusion seems to me to misunderstand the function of the prosaic words in accentuating the contrast of scale between early Rome and the Augustan city. (On the admissibility of "low" words into higher genres, see Horace *Ars Poetica* 95-98.)

97. et matri et vati paret: The joke on the fact that both *mater* and *vates* are in fact the same person is a typically Ovidian piece of word-play (compare, for example, IV.483-486).

The spondaic rhythm is suggestive of an almost ritual solemnity in the carrying out of these instructions.

98. inque peregrina constitit hospes humo: The verb

constitit picks up Carmentis' command of "*consistite!*" (95), emphasising Evander's obedience to the words of his divinely inspired mother.

99-102. sacraque multa quidem...: The gods Faunus and Mercury were both especially associated with Arcadia. Calliope describes both gods with compound adjectives. Faunus is *bicornis* and *semicapex*, while Mercury is *alipes*. These compounds are characteristic of Calliope's diction (see Section 1.5).

103-106. at tu materno donasti nomine mensem...: The observation about the cult of Mercury contrasts with that of the cult of Faunus, which the speaker mentioned in the previous couplet. The honours paid to Faunus at the Lupercalia have been duly noted, but the Muse focuses mainly on Mercury.

The god is addressed in hymnic form, with the direct address using *tu* (see Norden (1913) pp.149-163), antonomasia and the list of the god's spheres of influence. Whereas Faunus is given two lines, Mercury is the subject of four. Faunus' honours consist solely of the Lupercalia, but Mercury has fame in various fields. Faunus is associated with one festival, Mercury with a whole month.

Calliope's explanation has an unexpected end. Having given the origin of the month's name, she then volunteers a further piece of information, not directly relevant to the controversy about the name of May.

The ingenious connection between the seven strings of the lyre and the number of the Pliades is not found in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*. By giving this detail, Calliope demonstrates her *doctrina*. The surprising shift of emphasis from the etymology to the *pietas* of Mercury also ties the ending of the passage neatly in with the beginning of the Muse's song, for the mention of the Pliades harks back to the genealogy of Mercury (lines 81-88), which was Calliope's starting point.

107. suarum: This is the reading of D, a manuscript which is not one of those considered to be of primary importance (see Alton, Wormell & Courtney (1973) p.144). The major manuscripts, U, G and M, read *sororum*.

The situation which Ovid is describing is clear enough: he is unable to judge between the three songs as each has equal support amongst the Muses. Calliope, therefore, does not win the praise of all of her sisters, but only a couple of them, just as Polyhymnia does at lines 53-54. For this reason, the reading of the

major manuscripts cannot stand. Harrison (1916, p.13) proposed the emendation *duarum*, but Landi (see Introduction to Landi-Castiglioni, p.xxiv) rejected this non-manuscript reading in favour of *suarum*, which is found in some minor manuscripts, and can have the sense of "the ones who were on her side". This reading is not as strong as *duarum* in terms of establishing the arithmetic of the situation, but it is clear from the surrounding text just how many of the Muses side with Calliope.

108-110. After the intervention of the Muses, Ovid is still unable to decide which of the various etymological derivations of the name of the month is the correct one. He tactfully thanks and praises all of the goddesses.

108. quid faciam?: Ovid re-adopts the persona of the perplexed researcher which he had assumed in the opening lines of the book, where he was confused by the surfeit of possible etymologies. The implication behind the invocation of the Muses was that they would resolve the poet's dilemma, but, after the songs of Polyhymnia, Urania and Calliope, Ovid is still unable to decide which is the correct derivation.

Harries (1989, p.173) notes the humour involved in the reversal of the Muses' usual function. Rather than providing their normal function of inspiring the *vates*, the Muses only deepen Ovid's perplexity.

109-110. gratia Pieridum nobis aequaliter adsit, \
nullaque laudetur plusve minusve mihi: Ovid makes light of the failure to come to a clear decision about the etymology, and turns his apparent quandary to poetic advantage by directing a closing prayer for their equal favour to all the Muses. The impossibility of choosing one preferred version thus becomes, rather than an embarrassment, an opportunity for the poet to express his admiration for all the Muses.

1.2 The Dramatic Form of the Debate

According to Rutledge, the debate about the etymological derivation of the name of the month is "not really dramatic"¹. There is little indication in the brief passages which connect the three speeches of any accompanying action.

In this section, I wish to argue that this apparent absence of dramatic business does not represent any lack of imagination on the part of the poet, but can be

explained by the fact that the debate takes the form of a legal case.

Adopting the role of an investigating magistrate, Ovid consults the Muses for their opinions, calling upon them to speak with the word *dicite*². The Muses' response is described in two words: *dissensere deae*. The verb *dissentio*, as Axelson has shown³, is not part of the standard vocabulary of poetry. It is used, however, to indicate displays of opposition in an adversarial situation, such as a courtroom or political debate⁴. The word thus suggests that the different positions adopted by the three groups of Muses are to be seen in the context of a formal debate.

The atmosphere of the courtroom is also suggested by the respectful silence given to the speakers (noted on lines 10 and 55), and the approval with which the speeches are received (lines 53-54 and 107). This response is very similar to the sort of reception which, according to Cicero, might be given to a consummate orator when he rises to speak in court⁵. Seen in the light of Roman legal procedure, the absence of dramatic business accompanying the speeches is not so much a sign of the flatness of the narration as a mark of the

effectiveness of the Muses as speakers.

A further parallel with Roman legal procedure is the support which some of the Muses give to each of the speakers. This situation is parallel to the role of *assessores* in the Roman courts.

If the debate between the Muses is presented in the form of a legal debate, it is possible to see some additional layers of meaning in the text. The word *causa*, used in lines 2 and 5, has a technical meaning in the *Fasti*, equivalent to the Greek *αἵτιον*, but the word can also refer to a legal case⁶. This ambiguity allows the enquiry which Ovid makes to be seen as both an academic quest for learned information and also a judicial investigation.

In addition, it may be that Ovid is referring to a particular element of his own life by suggesting that the encounter with the Muses takes the form of a legal inquiry. In his own legal career, Ovid had served as a *decemvir stlitibus iudicandis*⁷, one of the board of ten officials responsible for arranging the business of the centumviral courts. In the situation which he imagines at the beginning of Book V, Ovid again portrays himself as one of a group of ten. Along with the nine Muses, he

makes up the panel judging the *causa* of the name of May. When his colleagues are divided into three groups of three, Ovid has the dilemma of having to cast the deciding vote, but he is unable and unwilling to choose to support one trio over the others.

The scene is not, therefore, without a dramatic element. The division of the Muses into three groups places the narrator in an embarrassing position, from which he manages to extricate himself only by a display of wit and tact.

1.3 Roman Themes in Polyhymnia's Speech

I now move from considering the contest between the Muses as a whole to an analysis of the individual speeches. In claiming that the opening of Book V lacked dramatic interest, Rutledge alleged that all of the speakers employ a "similar dignified style"⁸. However, it can be demonstrated, I believe, that at least two of the speakers perform in a highly idiosyncratic fashion, so that the three speeches are by no means uniform in style.

The subject matter of Polyhymnia's song is particularly appropriate to a goddess of poetry. The

themes of cosmology and the Gigantomachy are traditionally associated with sublime poetry⁹. Creation stories are associated in classical literature with divine or semi-divine singers such as Orpheus¹⁰, Apollo¹¹ and Atlas¹². The Gigantomachy is a subject of Orpheus' song in the *Metamorphoses*¹³.

In the Augustan period, however, these sort of elevated themes become associated with the poetic genre of the *recusatio*. It becomes conventional for poets to decline to write on such themes, professing instead an attachment to the principles of Callimachus¹⁴. The grand themes of epic poetry had inevitably become discredited after excessive and unimaginative treatment by mediocre poets¹⁵. If an Augustan poet was to use such a hackneyed theme as the Gigantomachy, it was necessary for him to find some novel form of presenting it. This could be achieved by emphasising the transformations of the gods¹⁶, or by using the story for the rational explanation of phenomena¹⁷ or for a political purpose¹⁸.

Polyhymnia's song uses two distinct techniques to breathe new life into over-used themes: firstly, the grandiose themes are given a specifically Roman slant; secondly, the career of the goddess Maestas can be seen

to be of significance in the contemporary political situation. The first of these techniques will be discussed in this section, while the second will be examined below in Section 1.4.

The Romanisation of Polyhymnia's account occurs in two ways. In lines 19-22, neglect for authority is seen in terms of situations taken from the Roman world, and in lines 25-46, the career of Maiestas is presented in language that might be appropriate to the career of a Roman magistrate.

In line 20, the unnamed god who dares to sit on Saturn's throne is called *de media plebe...deus*. By calling him a plebeian god¹⁹, Ovid uses a term which has a specific technical meaning in terms of Roman politics.

In the second example of neglect for authority among the gods, Polyhymnia uses another Roman way of distinguishing between the social standing of individuals. The old military practice of protecting the exposed flank - that is, the left hand side - of a comrade-in-arms gives rise to a custom whereby walking on the left (*latus tegere*) indicates deference to a social superior²⁰. This aspect of protocol is imported by the Muse into her description of the "social chaos"

in which the gods initially lived, thus superimposing Roman values on the world of the gods.

The last of Polyhymnia's three exempla uses the metaphor of the Roman *triclinium* to illustrate social division among the gods. Couches at a dinner party were arranged in groups of three, with the honoured guest seated on the *medius lectus*²¹, whereas the *extremus locus* was given to an unimportant guest²². Again, the language of Roman protocol is used to make the affairs of the gods readily accessible.

In all three of these examples, the language in which the social interaction of the gods is described is more appropriate to men than gods, and in particular, Polyhymnia exploits Roman social conventions to present the gods in an original and humorous light.

Polyhymnia's technique of Romanisation also extends to her presentation of Maiestas, whose political career resembles that of a Roman magistrate.

There are several points of correspondence between the two. The goddess assumes her authority by taking a seat in the middle of Olympus. The verb *consido* is appropriate to the assumption of a magistrate's seat²³.

A further correspondence comes with the word *censa*

in line 25. Maiestas may be seen as behaving like a Roman *censor* by officially registering information. Furthermore, there may be an allusion to the need for magistrates to satisfy the census requirement before they can assume their official seat.

The mention of the personifications Pudor and Metus taking their seats with Maiestas is reminiscent of the Roman principle of collegiality in the sharing of office. It was, for example, a dictum of Augustus' propaganda that he held no more power than any of his colleagues in a particular office²⁴. The repetition of the verb *consido* emphasises the collegiality of the three divinities, and so portrays Maiestas in a particularly Roman light.

The effect which Maiestas has on the morality of her fellow gods is similarly given a Roman slant. The attitudes which she encourages include *suspectus honorum* and *pretium dignis*. The first of these suggests a parallel with the *cursus honorum* of the Roman magistracies, while the second corresponds to the regard for *dignitas*, which was a highly prized characteristic among the Romans²⁵.

Finally, Maiestas' relationship with Jupiter is

also portrayed in Roman terms. The phrase *assidet inde Iovi* on line 45, recalls the Roman practice of having an *assessor* in court. On the following line, the depiction of *Maiestas* attending on Jupiter with the *sceptra timenda* recalls the Roman *lictor* who attended magistrates and bore before them the *fascēs*, the symbol of their authority.

Polyhymnia does not pursue a single metaphor that presents *Maiestas* as a specific, recognisable Roman official, but rather uses a variety of ways to draw parallels between her subject and the figures of authority who would be familiar to a Roman audience.

The prominence given to Roman customs in the speech of Polyhymnia has a dual function. It presents situations which might be in danger of becoming trite and presents them in a novel form, and at the same time it makes the affairs of the gods accessible to the readership of the *Fasti*.

1.4 *Maiestas* and Roman Politics

The derivation from *Maiestas* is not mentioned by other scholars who discuss the question of the etymology of May - not even by Macrobius²⁶, who offers a large

number of different explanations of the name.

The correlating derivations of the name of June either from *iuniores* or from *Iuno* support the derivations from *maiores* and *Maia*, and make it difficult to believe that any other explanation could account for the naming of the month. Yet Ovid accepts Polyhymnia's derivation on equal terms with those given by Urania and Calliope.

One possible explanation of the introduction of *Maiestas* into the debate reported in the *Fasti* is that the word had a resonance in the contemporary political situation.

In Republican Rome, the term *maiestas* was used to refer to offences against the sovereignty of the Roman people. With the establishment of the principate, it was natural that the concept of *maiestas* should be extended from the *respublica* to the imperial person²⁷. It is not clear whether Augustus added a *maiestas* law to Julius Caesar's *lex Iulia maiestatis* - possibly within the *leges Iuliae iudiciorum publicorum et privatorum*²⁸. What is certain, however, is that Augustus broadened the scope of the law to make it appropriate to the principate, even if this was "principally by

interpretation and precedent"²⁹.

A political dimension is particularly likely in view of the acknowledged political function of the Gigantomachy theme. The Gigantomachy is an obvious means of drawing parallels between Augustus and his political adversaries. Since the time of Alexander the Great it had been a standard symbol for the suppression of the forces of disorder³⁰. It had been used to refer to the achievements of Augustus by Horace in his fourth Roman Ode³¹. Similarly in this passage, the functions of Maiestas in lines 11-52 parallel the achievements of Augustus first in establishing the state (lines 11-32) and then in defending it (33-52).

There are several ways in which the goddess Maiestas can be seen to represent the political values of the Augustan regime.

The reference to Maiestas' censorial function, noted above³², takes on a new relevance when it is considered that Augustus reports in the *Res Gestae* that on three occasions he held a census of Roman citizens³³.

Likewise, the *purpureus sinus* which Maiestas wears when she takes her seat among the gods (line 28) becomes recognisable as the emblem of the imperial house.

The presence of Pudor as a colleague of Maiestas is significant in view of the emphasis which the Augustan regime put on sexual morality. This theme is further stressed by the association of Maiestas with *patres...matresque*, on line 49, and with boys and maidens, in a Horatian echo, on line 50³⁴. The point of the allusions seems to be to support the imperial programme concerning the importance of the family, as presented in the *leges Iuliae* and the *lex Papia Poppaea*, by suggesting that the majesty which attended the emperor was also attached to his moral programme.

Also perhaps significant in an Augustan context are the ways in which Maiestas wields her power. She establishes order on Olympus by means of universal consent, rather than through force. The way in which she receives consent from the other gods in lines 29-30 is analogous to the way in which Augustus presents his fellow-citizens conferring power on him in the *Res Gestae*. Maiestas provides support for Jupiter *sine vi* (46), thus guaranteeing the preservation of order, without resorting to violence.

The name Maiestas suggests a connection between Ovid's creation and the political situation in which he

was writing. Furthermore, the goddess is characterised as having an overtly Augustan attitude in her political career, and this characterisation puts a novel complexion on the passage.

1.5 The Style of Calliope's Speech

In Section 1.3 the speech of Polyhymnia was shown to contain a large number of references to Roman social and political life. This feature endows the speech with a distinctive style, enabling it to stand out from the speeches of the other Muses who speak in the debate.

The speech of Calliope is also delivered in a highly personal style. In this case, however, it is the speaker's ornate, epic style, featuring an abundance of archaic and Greek forms, which sets Calliope's language apart from that of the other Muses.

From the moment when she is introduced at lines 79-80, we are prepared to look at Calliope as a paradigm of the inspired singer. The free-flowing hair and the wreath of ivy are both classic features of this type of figure³⁵. Moreover, Calliope is *prima sui...chori*, reminding us that she was considered since Hesiod³⁶ to be the leader of the Muses.

When she begins to be speak, she fulfils the listener's expectations by maintaining a highly-wrought style. In particular, the concentration of poetic devices at the beginning of her speech establishes this tone.

Firstly, she employs the features of alliteration and compound words with abnormal frequency. Alliterative phrases such as *Titanida Tethyn* (81), *cum caelifero* (83), *Pleiadasque parit* (84), *suas forma superasse sorores* (85) and *cupressiferae Cyllenes* (87) produce sonorous effects reminiscent of the poetry of Ennius and Lucretius³⁷.

The resonance is amplified by the use of compounds such as *caelifer* (83), *cupressifer* (87), *bicornus* (99), *alipes* (100) and *semicaper* (101). Horace mentions such *sesquipedalia verba* as being the stock-in-trade of tragedy³⁸, and the statistics of Glenn³⁹ reveal that they occur with much greater frequency in epic poetry than in elegy. Calliope uses five compound adjectives in a speech of twenty-six lines - a rate of around one every five lines, compared to an average frequency in Ovid's elegiac poetry of one every fifty lines.

Further evidence of the elevated style comes in the

frequency of Greek sounds in the speech. Words such as *chorus* (80) - not actually contained within the speech, but nevertheless helping to create the tone - *cupressifer* (87) and *aetherius* (88) are borrowings from the Greek, containing among them the non-Roman "chi" and "theta" sounds. The Hellenic flavour is reinforced by the plethora of Greek proper names, many presented with Greek rather than Latin case endings: the Greek nominatives *Ladon* and *Maenalos* (89), the accusatives *Titanida Tethyn* (81) and *Pleiadas* (84), and the genitive *Cyllenes* (87). The concatenation of three vowels with internal hiatus in the names *Pleione* (83) and *Pleiades* (84; 106) produces a sound which is quintessentially Greek⁴⁰.

These aural effects are augmented by liberties which Calliope takes with the metre. In both line 83 and line 87 there is a spondee in the fifth foot of the hexameter. This metrical pattern is used only ten times in 2486 hexameters in the *Fasti*. On each occasion it produces a reminiscence of Greek or archaic verse⁴¹. This device is compounded in line 83 by the hiatus at the fifth foot caesura. There are only nine examples of this device in the whole of Ovid's elegiac output, eight

of them involving Greek proper names⁴². The repetition of these overtly Greek metrical forms in such close proximity demonstrates the extent of Hellenic influence on Calliope's speech.

A less extreme, but noteworthy feature of Calliope's epic style is her use of antonomasia. This device enables her to refer to Mercury without using his Roman name. Thus the pervading Hellenic tone is not interrupted, and the speaker may use elaborate poetic phrases to refer to the god. Thus at line 88, Mercury is *aetherium volucris qui pede carpit iter*, and at line 104 the god is addressed as *inventor curvae, furibus apte, fidis*⁴³.

The dignified, lofty nature of Calliope's language also extends to the rhythm of the verse. Lines 97 and 103 are two out of only three tetraspondaic hexameters in the whole of Book V⁴⁴. This is suggestive of a shift away from the lighter, dactylic rhythms which characterise much of Ovid's verse⁴⁵, and shows this passage to be the most sedate in terms of metre in the entire book.

The combination of all of these unusual features produces a most distinctive passage, where the content

is overshadowed by the style in which the speech is presented. Indeed, at places such as lines 81-88 the alliteration is so pronounced as to suggest a parody of epic style. The idea that the passage may be a parody may be supported by the cacemphaton *carpit iter* (line 88) and the hyperbaton in line 104 (*inventor curvae, furibus apte, fidis*), both of which are inconsistent with approved poetic practice⁴⁶. As Harries has suggested⁴⁷, it is perhaps significant that despite her poetic tour de force Calliope is not declared the victor in this dispute between the Muses.

1.6 Programmatic Elements in the Opening of Book V

Throughout ancient literature, the Muses appear as patronesses of poetry and providers of information to didactic poets⁴⁸. As Hinds has remarked⁴⁹, the very mention of the Muses offers the poet an occasion to dwell self-consciously on the literary tradition in which he stands.

In his invocation to the Muses in lines 7-8, Ovid uses both metrical technique and displays of erudition to draw attention to the Greek literary tradition concerning these goddesses.

In his use of the Greek genitives *Aganippidos* and *Hippocrenes*, he appears to be striving to create the sound of Greek poetry. Similarly, the metre in line 7 has several characteristically Greek features: the "bucolic" diaeresis after the fourth foot, the spondaic fifth foot, and the use of a quadrisyllable to end the line.

The home of the Muses is referred to in two learned allusions, one geographical and one mythological. Helicon is not referred to by name, but by a vague allusion to two fountains on the mountain: *fontes Aganippidos Hippocrenes*. In the following line, the fountain of Hippocrene is described in the phrase *grata Medusaei signa...equi*, referring to the legend that it was created by the blow of Pegasus' hoof. These allusions demonstrate the poet's *doctrina* at the very point in the poem where his poetic patronesses are prominent.

A final example of the self-consciously poetic nature of the couplet in which Ovid invokes the Muses can be seen in the similarity of the definition of the Muses as *quae fontes... Hippocrenes...tenetis* to Hesiod's definition αἵθ' Ἑλικῶνος ἔχουσιν ὄρος⁵⁰.

Through the use of Hellenisms, displays of erudition, and by specific allusion to Hesiod, Ovid makes a programmatic statement about the influence of the Greek literary tradition on his verse.

Ovid's use of the opening of the book to make programmatic statements about the nature of his poetry is not limited to this couplet, however. The whole concept of a debate about the name of the month is used by Ovid to set out his poetic programme.

It has already been mentioned that the three-cornered debate which Ovid presents is not an accurate reflection of the academic debate about the origin of the month's name⁵¹. By choosing to present three etymologies as though they were all equally plausible - in defiance of the orthodox academic opinion about the subject - Ovid gains certain advantages in terms of dramatic potential. The debate between three goddesses allows a situation whereby the nine Muses are divided into three groups of three, with each group claiming supremacy for one explanation.

Ovid increases the drama of the situation by presenting three very different speakers, each giving a very different speech. One way in which this is achieved

is through the poetic register of the speeches. Each of the three speakers maintains a distinctive style. Polyhymnia's narrative is characterised by her use of metaphors from Roman social and political life; Urania's speech has fewer poetic features, as is appropriate to a rational explanation which adopts the orthodox etymology⁵²; Calliope's song is different from both of these, having an elevated, poetic style, with many Greek and archaic forms.

Furthermore, not only is the stylistic register of each speaker distinctive, but each of the three speeches bears the features of a different literary genre. Barchiesi⁵³ has pointed out that Polyhymnia's speech, with its prominent anaphora and its enumeration of the deeds of a goddess, resembles a hymn, whereas Urania's explanation belongs to the field of didactic poetry, and Calliope's version stands in the tradition of epic narrative.

By producing three strikingly different types of explanation in this way, Ovid breathes life into the debate between the Muses, making it difficult for one to agree with Rutledge's verdict that the scene is "not really dramatic".

Moreover, the variety of generic styles employed - with equal success in the opinion of the poet - makes a programmatic statement about the nature of Ovid's poem. For just as the Muses use a number of different poetic genres in this scene, so Ovid's poem may be described as a *Kollektiv-gedicht*⁵⁴, containing elements of many different genres in the course of its narrative. In the variety of their verse, the goddesses anticipate and give their approval to the sort of poem which Ovid is composing.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. Rutledge (1973) p.114.
2. On the use of *dico* to indicate the making of a formal speech in court, see OLD s.v. *dico*² 1.b.
3. Axelson (1945) p.103.
4. E.g. Cicero *Epistulae ad Atticum* II.1.8.
5. See, for example, Cicero *Brutus* 200; 291.
6. See OLD s.v. *causa* A.1 and A.2.
7. See IV.383-384. On Ovid's legal career, see Kenney (1969).
8. Rutledge (1973) p.114.
9. See Innes (1979).
10. Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* I.496-511.

11. Virgil *Eclogues* 6.31-40. Silenus repeats a song on this theme that had once been sung by Apollo.
12. Virgil *Aeneid* I.740-746. The song is sung by Iopas *docuit quem maximus Atlas*.
13. *Metamorphoses* X.148-151.
14. These principles are articulated by Callimachus in the preface to his *Aetia* (fr.1 [Pfeiffer]). Examples of the *recusatio* can be found throughout Augustan poetry - e.g. Horace *Carmina* I.6; Propertius III.1. For a detailed study of the phenomenon, see Wimmel (1960).
15. Hinds (1987, pp.129-130) claims that, by presenting the Pierids as singing a Gigantomachy in Book V of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid is representing them as "rank bad poets", guilty of "the sort of unacceptable pomposity repudiated in the *Aetia* preface". Juvenal complains of the unimaginative recycling of stock themes by the poets of his day at *Satires* 1.1-14.
16. Hinds (1987, p.166) suggests that the stress on metamorphosis and Alexandrian learning in the Pierids' song in *Metamorphoses* V may be a way of producing "a Gigantomachy with some redeeming features".
17. [Virgil] *Aetna* 41-42.
18. Horace *Carmina* III.4; Ovid *Tristia* II.61-80; II.331-338; [Virgil] *Culex* 24-36.
19. The same metaphor for describing a god of the second rank is used by Ovid at *Metamorphoses* I.173 and I.595. See also *Ibis* 79, Martial *Epigrams* VIII.50.3.
20. See note on line 21.
21. Cf. Horace *Satires* II.8.18-41.
22. Cf. Juvenal *Satires* 5.15-18.
23. See OLD s.v. *consido* 1.b.
24. Augustus *Res Gestae* 34.3.

25. The importance of *dignitas* to the Romans can be illustrated by the use of the word in political statements in the late Republic - see Cicero *Pro Sestio* 98-104; Caesar *Bellum Civile* I.9.2.

26. Macrobius *Saturnalia* I.12.16-29.

27. See Bömer on V.9; Miller on Tacitus *Annales* I.72.

28. For the possibility of an Augustan *maiestas* law, see Crook (1967) p.70. Allison & Cloud (1962) argue convincingly that there is no need to postulate an Augustan law, since all of the historical evidence can be explained by the Caesarian law. On Caesar's law, see Cicero *Philippics* I.23.

29. Jones (1972) p.106. The evidence for Augustus' broadening the scope of the *maiestas* law is found in Tacitus *Annales* I.72. See Miller *ad loc.*

30. See Owen (1924) pp.72-75.

31. See Hardie (1986) p.87. In particular, line 42 (*vertit in auctores pondera vasta suos*) corresponds closely in thought to Horace *Carmina* III.4.65 (*vis consili expers mole ruit sua*).

32. Section 1.3.

33. Augustus *Res Gestae* 8.

34. See note on line 50.

35. See note on line 79.

36. See note on line 80.

37. On the history and effect of alliteration, see Marouzeau (1935) pp.42-47; Bailey (1947, vol.I) pp.146-152; Wilkinson (1963) pp.25-28.

38. Horace *Ars Poetica* 97.

39. Glenn (1936) p.66: Ovid uses compound adjectives 415 times in 22,016 elegiac verses.

40. See Herescu (1960) p.62.
41. See Section 15.3.
42. See Platnauer (1951) pp.58-59. The exception is *Heroides* 11.13, where Greek names are, however, present earlier in the line.
43. The word order in the latter example follows the pattern which has been termed "inserted apposition" by Solodow (1986) and is itself a specifically poetic feature.
44. See Section 15.3.
45. See Lee (1959) p.410.
46. On cacemphaton, see Lucke on *Remedia Amoris* 471. On hyperbaton, see Quintilian VIII.2.14. The skilful use of hyperbaton is approved by Quintilian VIII.6.62-67 and [Longinus] 22.
47. Harries (1989) p.182.
48. In particular, the Muses are associated with providing inspiration to Hesiod (*Theogony* 21-34) and Callimachus (*Aetia* fr.2 [Pfeiffer]).
49. Hinds (1987) p.3: "...the introduction into any poem of the Heliconian Muses, patron goddesses of literature itself, has always been a moment for the poet to turn in on himself (or rather, perhaps, to stand outside himself) so as to contemplate more obtrusively than elsewhere the nature of his own craft."
50. Hesiod *Theogony* 2.
51. See Section 1.4.
52. See note on lines 77-78.
53. Barchiesi (1991) pp.8-14.
54. This is the definition of Martini (1970, pp.42, 108). Barchiesi (1991, p.21, note 35) sees Ovid's Muses as presenting in pure form the elements which will be

fused together to create the subject matter of the poem.

CHAPTER 2: CAPELLA

2.1 Commentary on V.111-128

111-128. Jupiter rewards the goat of Amalthea for suckling him as an infant by turning it into a star.

An introductory epigram (111-114) announces the subject of the entry. The role of the goat in suckling the infant god is sketched over six lines (115-120), before the crucial point of the narrative - the breaking of the goat's horn, and the use of the broken horn to carry food for Jupiter - is reached (121-124). In four concluding lines (125-128) the reward given to the goat and its mistress is described.

111. ab Iove surgat opus: The phrase ἐκ Διὸς ὀρχώμεσθα, which begins Aratus' *Phaenomena*, seems to have become proverbial by Ovid's time (see Bömer *ad loc.*). Ovid's translation of Aratus' phrase at this point may be seen as an acknowledgement of his debt to Aratus in the field of astronomical poetry (see D'Elia (1959) p.344; Hinds (1987) p.138), especially as the words introduce astronomical data at this point.

Ovid's status as a poet of the stars in the tradition of Aratus is especially significant in view of the fact that the *Fasti* is dedicated to Germanicus (I.3-

26). Since Germanicus himself translated Aratus, it is possible that this phrase is intended as a compliment to the dedicatee. The reference to Germanicus' status as a poet at I.25 - *vates rege vatis habenas* - shows that Ovid was aware of his patron's literary activities (see the discussion by Fantham (1986) pp.255-256).

The proverbial expression eases the transition into the new subject matter (see Frécaut (1972) p.274). Moreover, the transition is also smoothed by the jussive subjunctive *surgat*, which continues the precatory form of lines 109-110.

prima mihi nocte videnda: Ovid begins with an event from the first night of the month, and postpones the events of the daytime until lines 129-158. As Braun (1981, pp.2366-2367) observes, this inversion of the natural order enables Ovid to begin the main body of the book with the Aratean proverb. (On the question of the principles on which Ovid arranged his material, see Section 14.1).

112. Iovis: After the proverbial opening *ab Iove surgat opus*, the name of Jupiter recurs frequently during the remainder of the passage (lines 112, 116, 120, 124 and 126). This focus on the name of Jupiter provides a

justification for the use of the Aratean phrase, even though the main subject of the story is the goat, and Jupiter's role is, until line 125, entirely passive.

113. Oleniae signum pluviale Capellae: The star Capella arose at a time associated with rainy weather (cf. Columella *de Re Rustica* XI.2.37), and the epithet *Olenius* is commonly applied to it (see Bömer *ad loc.*).

Olenius has strong associations with the childhood of Jupiter, both because he was said to be nursed by the daughters of Olenos (see Hyginus *de Astronomia* II.13) and because some strands of the tradition report that Jupiter's birthplace was the town of Olenos in Achaea (see Statius *Thebaid* IV.104-105).

115-120. Nais Amalthea, Cretaea nobilis Ida...: Despite the introductory promise to begin the work with Jupiter, it is on the Naiad Amalthea and her goat that the poet's attention is focused. To produce a satisfactory story, it is necessary for the poet to establish that these characters are deserving of the rewards that they receive from Jupiter. Thus Amalthea is shown to be *nobilis* (115) - an attribute which is exemplified by the protection she offers to the infant on line 116.

Amalthea's goat is praised for her beauty. She is

formosa (117) and *conspicienda* (118). Special attention is paid to those aspects of her appearance which are of significance in the story: the udder from which Jupiter receives milk, and the horn in which Amalthea gathers food for him. Her horns are praised for their length and form (cf. Virgil *Aeneid* VII.483) and the problem of finding a way of describing an aesthetically pleasing udder is cleverly by-passed with the phrase *quod nutrix posset habere Iovis* (120).

The goat is also generous. Although she is *haedorum mater formosa duorum* (117), she nevertheless shares her milk between her own kids and the helpless child.

121. lac dabat illa deo; sed fregit in arbore cornu: The language in this line is unadorned by adjectives or adverbs, allowing the central action of the episode to be communicated briefly and simply.

The sympathy which the reader feels towards the mutilated creature increases because of the juxtaposition of ideas in this line. The mention of the loss of the horn in the same breath as the mention of the goat's act of generosity gives rise to a feeling that not only is the goat's disfigurement undeserved, but the creature in fact deserved to be rewarded for its

service to the god.

123-124. sustulit hoc nympe cinxitque recentibus
herbis, \ et plenum pomis ad Iovis ora tulit: Amalthea's

use of the broken horn to carry food to Jupiter is a sign of the Naiad's ingenuity, and helps to persuade the reader that she is deserving of the fame she gains as a reward for her assistance to the god.

Moreover, the use of the broken horn to carry food is essential for the aetiological purpose of the episode, for it is this event which prompts Jupiter to make the horn into the Cornucopia - the symbol of eternal abundance.

125-126. ille ubi res caeli tenuit solioque paterno \
sedit: The narrative suddenly jumps forward in time, without any explanation of how Jupiter came to go from his cradle to the throne of Olympus. The elimination of details which are not strictly necessary is a feature of the narrative technique in this episode, providing pace and simplicity (cf. note on line 121).

The sudden shift in time also has the effect of creating a contrast between Jupiter's fortunes as a child and as an adult. The image of Jupiter being suckled by a she-goat contrasts with the ultimate power

he is shown as possessing at line 126.

127-128. sidera nutricem, nutricis fertile cornu /

fecit: Following the simple diction in which most of the passage has been presented, Ovid ends with a rhetorical flourish. The two objects of *fecit* are linked by asyndeton, with the polyptoton *nutricem, nutricis* forming an elegant link between the two phrases.

It is grammatically possible to translate, as Frazer does, that Ovid "made his nurse and her horn of plenty into stars" (Riley and Bömer give the same sense). On the other hand, if *sidera* is taken as a poetic plural, it is possible to translate: "He made his nurse into a star and the horn of his nurse fertile".

The latter translation seems to be necessary to explain the eternal fertility of the Cornucopia, for Ovid is suggesting that Jupiter gave the goat's horn this magical quality to commemorate the way that Amalthea had used it to provide food for him. There is only one catasterism in the passage, and that is that of the goat. The Cornucopia is not envisaged as a star in classical mythology. It is not mentioned in that form by Aratus, Manilius or Hyginus, and it is clearly perceived as retaining its terrestrial form both in literary (e.g.

Metamorphoses IX.88-91) and archaeological sources. (On the Cornucopia, see Cook (1914, vol.I) pp.501-502.)

2.2 The Catasterism of the Goat

At eighteen lines, the entry on Capella is as short as any independent episode in the Book¹, and this is reflected in the concise nature of the narrative. Even this relatively straightforward piece, however, is embellished by a concern for character portrayal² and aetiology³.

The subject of aetiology is of central interest to the poem. In the prologue to Book I, Ovid states that his work will deal with *tempora cum causis*⁴, promising a poem in the tradition of Callimachus' *Aetia*. Throughout the *Fasti*, aetiological stories act both as a unifying thematic feature and as a means of stressing the Callimachean nature of the poem.

The story of the goat's catasterism is one of a series of aetiological stories which explain the presence of celestial bodies in terms of rewards for service to a god⁵. An especially interesting feature of this particular aetiology, however, is the way in which the nature of the star is related to the reason for its

catasterism.

Ovid gives Capella the epithet *pluvialis*⁶. This apparently pejorative association is used to positive effect, for the poet goes on to explain that the goat's catasterism is *dati...praemia lactis* (114). The animal's distribution of milk during her terrestrial life is thus commemorated by her fate as a star, where she is similarly associated with the distribution of life-giving liquid. This sort of catasterism, whereby the catasterised object retains some aspect of its terrestrial nature is not unprecedented in the poem⁷.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. The entry on Taurus (V.603-620) is of the same length. The section on the Bona Dea (V.147-158) has only twelve lines, but is closely linked with the preceding section - see Chapter 3.
2. See notes on lines 115-120, 121 and 125-126.
3. See notes on lines 123-124 and 127-128.
4. *Fasti* I.1.
5. See Braun (1981, p.2365) who compares the story with those explaining the constellations of Orion (V.493-544) and Taurus (V.603-620).
6. See note on line 113.
7. E.g. II.191-192: the bear does not set in the sea because of Juno's displeasure at Callisto.

CHAPTER 3: THE LARES AND THE BONA DEA

3.1 Commentary on V.129-158

129-148. Ovid records the dedication of an altar and statues to the Lares Praestites on the Calends, and their replacement with new shrines set up by Augustus Caesar.

The introductory statement about the original dedication of the monuments (129-132) is followed by four lines on the etymology of the title *Praestites* (133-136). The poet then discusses the reasons for the association of the Lares with dogs (137-142), which leads him from the cult of the Lares Praestites to the cult of the Lares Compitales. The restoration of this cult by Augustus is mentioned (143-146) before Ovid rebukes himself for his digression and moves on to the next subject (147-148).

129-130. Praestitibus Maiae Laribus videre Kalendae \
aram constitui: The Calends of May are personified. The poet imagines them looking on at the events which occur at the start of the month. This idea is an extension of the common device of presenting the sun and moon as anthropomorphic deities who look down on events in the world (e.g. II.267-268).

131. voverat illa quidem Curius: This is the reading of U, the manuscript which is normally considered to be the most reliable of those which cover this portion of the poem. The reading *ara erat illa quidem Curibus* is found in the other two major manuscripts (it is given by the first hand of M and the second hand of G). Other manuscripts give different readings.

The discussions of Le Bonniec (1960, pp.211-212) and Alton (1973, pp.146-148) make it clear that there is no reason to doubt that U gives the correct reading, for the alternatives offered by the lesser manuscripts are caused by the presence of *ara* either in line 130 or as a gloss on 132 (see Alton (1973) p.147).

This still leaves the problem of explaining the reference to *Curius*. If this refers to Manius Curius Dentatus (see Riley *ad loc.*, Le Bonniec (1960) p.212, Fauth (1978) p.121) there is no corroborative evidence for the dedication - although this does not, of course, exclude the possibility of Curius being the dedicator. Varro (*de Lingua Latina* V.74) records the dedication of an altar to the Lares by Titus Tatius, the Sabine king. Frazer (note on V.129) says that the problem will be resolved by reading *Tatius* for *Curius*. However, there is

no palaeographical justification for this change.

It is perhaps possible that *Curius* is used as a poetic way of alluding to Tatius, whose capital was the town of Cures -although the epithet is not used in this sense elsewhere, and it would have been open to the poet to write *Tatius* instead.

Another possibility is that the word refers to the Sabine king Numa, who came from Cures and was known as an innovator of religious cults (see III.277-284; Virgil *Aeneid* VI.808-812; Livy I.18-21).

In view of the evidence offered by Varro, it is, I think, probable that the poet is referring to Titus Tatius.

131-132. sed multa vetustas \ destruit; et saxo longa senecta nocet: The ultimately impermanent nature of stone is a familiar rhetorical device (see McKeown on *Amores* I.15.31-32). The idea, which recurs at line 144, provides a convenient introduction to the theme of Augustus' restoration of religious buildings (see Section 3.2).

133-136. causa tamen positi fuerat cognominis illis...: The etymology of the title *Praestites* is stated clearly and simply in lines 133-134. The hexameter promises to

give the explanation, with the key word *causa* placed prominently at the start of the line. The pentameter duly records the origin of the cognomen, with *praestant* providing the obvious etymological link.

After making this obvious connection between the Lares Praestites and *praesto*, Ovid would seem to have made his point, but he goes on to indulge in further wordplay, using the component parts *prae* and *sto* to suggest additional reasons for the Lares' cognomen. Each of the phrases *stant...pro nobis*, *praesunt* and *sunt praesentes* bears some resemblance to the word *Praestites*. However, Ovid does not present these phrases as alternatives to the transparently correct etymology given at line 134. Both in sound and meaning these phrases complement the derivation from *praesto*.

When Ovid presents more than one etymological derivation, he is not necessarily giving alternatives from which a choice must be made (see Ahl (1985) p.162). At VI.301, for example, the derivations of *focus* from $\phi\omega\varsigma$ and *foveo* are similarly presented as complementary rather than alternative explanations.

137-138. at canis ante pedes saxo fabricatus eodem \
stabat: There is an abrupt transition from the

etymological discussion to the consideration of the association of the the Lares with dogs. The change from the present tense to the imperfect is significant, reminding the reader that the old statues have in fact disappeared (cf. lines 132 and 144), and so preparing the ground for the announcement of Augustus' new statues. The change of tense is emphasised by the enjambement of *stabat*.

138. quae standi cum Lare causa fuit?: The direct question is not structurally necessary, for Ovid immediately provides a detailed answer to his own enquiry. However, the change in the form of sentence maintains a lively style (see note on lines 69-70).

139-142. servat uterque domum...: Ovid enumerates the similarities between the Lares and dogs in four lines, each of which is balanced around the central line-break in order to highlight the equivalence. The equivalence is especially notable in the pentameter lines, where the repetitions *compita grata... compita grata* and *pervigilantque...pervigilantque* give the lines a conspicuous balance. Furthermore, the perfect correspondence in rhythm between the two hemistiches which comprise a pentameter, so that the two halves of

the line are metrically interchangeable, is rare and often reserved to produce a striking "jingle" (see Platnauer (1951) pp.14-15).

The poet avoids monotony in these four lines by varying the structure and vocabulary. In line 139 the line is balanced around the caesura in the third foot, but the comparison is not between the Lares and dogs, but between the objects of their guardianship: the *domus* and the *dominus*. The juxtaposition of *domus* and *domino* at the heart of the line provides assonance and balance. The comparison is further elucidated by the presence of *uterque* in both parts of the line and the correspondence of *servat* before the caesura with *fidus* after it, but variety occurs in the contrast of the verbal construction with *servat* and the adjectival phrase *domino... fidus*.

In the following three lines, the structure places the Lares on one side of the mid-line break and *canes* on the other. Ovid nevertheless maintains variety by using the generic term *deo* in place of *Lari* in line 140 and the periphrasis *turba Diania* in place of *canes* in line 141. This saves the explicit correspondence of *Lares* and *canes* for the climax of the comparison at line 142.

143-144. bina gemellorum quaerebam signa deorum \
viribus annosae facta caduca morae: The theme of dilapidation recurs from lines 131-132, after the intermission of ten lines of etymological and aetiological matter. The mention of the destroyed statues sets up a contrast between the obsolete old cult and the new cult of the Lares encouraged by Augustus, who combined the old twin Lares with his own Genius.

145-146. mille Lares Geniumque ducis, qui tradidit illos, \ Urbs habet, et vici numina terna colunt: There is a marked contrast between the mood of these lines and the mood of decay apparent in line 144. Augustus appears as the motive force behind the regeneration of Roman religion. The *numina terna* replace the old *gemelli di* who have fallen into disrepair. Augustus assumes the role originally taken by *Curius*, with *tradidit* (145) corresponding to *voverat* (131). In contrast to the vocabulary of decay (*annosae, caduca, morae*) the present tense forms *habet* and *colunt* produce a tone of vitality, which is augmented by the hyperbolic *mille*, which indicates the extent to which the cult is flourishing.

The figure of one thousand statues conflicts with report of Pliny (*Naturalis Historia* III.66) that, in AD

73, Rome had 265 *compita Larum*. *mille* is best understood as indicating an indefinite large number (see OLD s.v. *mille* 1.b.)).

147-148. quo feror? Augustus mensis mihi carminis huius
\ ius dabit: Having moved subtly from the Lares Praestites to the Lares Compitales and their adoption by Augustus, Ovid stops short and rebukes himself for his digression. The political function of the digression has, of course, been achieved. Ovid does not attempt to conceal the liberty he has taken with the ordering of his material, but rather implies that the deeds of Augustus are such that he has to make an effort not to become distracted from his purpose of talking about the Roman calendar.

The self-rebuke also contributes to the portrayal of the narrator as a fallible researcher, lacking in self-confidence (see Mack (1988) p.32).

Despite the scepticism of Bömer (note on V.147), there is general agreement that Ovid looks forward here to the consecration of the altars of the Lares Augusti, celebrated on the first of August (see especially Syme (1978) p.32). The consecration of these altars took place in 7 BC, the year after Augustus had renamed the

month of Sextilis after himself, and seems to have been part of a concerted propaganda campaign by Augustus.

148. Diva canenda Bona est: The use of the gerundive of obligation to introduce a new topic is paralleled at II.124, II.685, V.494 and VI.585. Although Ovid gives the impression of having to return to an externally ordered plan, he in fact manipulates the structure of his poem with some care (see Section 14.1).

149-158. Ovid reports the foundation and subsequent restoration of the temple of the Bona Dea "Subsaxana" on the Aventine.

After four lines on the location of the temple (149-152), the poet provides a concise sketch of the building's history by devoting a couplet each to the three stages of its history: lines 153-154 are concerned with the senate decreeing the building of the temple, 155-156 with its dedication by Licinia, and 157-158 with its restoration by Livia, Augustus' consort.

151-152. huic Remus institerat frustra, quo tempore fratri \ prima Palatinae signa dedistis aves: Ovid signifies the site of the Saxum by an allusion to the legend of Remus' vigil on the Aventine, when the twins

sought auguries to decide which should rule in Rome. Pointedly, he presents a version of the myth in which Romulus receives the first augury, and contradicts the traditional account in which Remus claimed to have seen an augury before his brother (see Livy I.7.1; Dionysius of Halicarnassus I.86-87; Plutarch *Romulus* 9-10). Ovid's non-confrontational form of the story is consistent with Remus' attitude towards his brother later in Book V, and may have a significance in terms of Augustan politics (see Section 7.3).

153. oculos exosa viriles: The most notable characteristic of the cult of the Bona Dea was the exclusion of men from its rites. There may be a connection between this taboo and the fact that the place where the goddess was worshipped had been an ill-omened site for Remus (see Section 3.3).

158. virum: Following Heinsius' suggestion that the word *virum* in line 158 was imported from the preceding pentameter, AWC obelises the word. The alternative conjectures of *ducem*, *pium*, *suum* and *vicem* (see Introduction to Landi-Castiglioni p.xxvi) are plausible, but not compelling.

In fact, this sort of homoeoteleuton is not

unprecedented in the *Fasti* (e.g. II.666-668, III.14-16 and V.170-172), and *virum*, although repeating the sense of *maritum* in line 157, does not weaken line 158, but strengthens it by making an antithetical point.

The two historical figures whom Ovid associates with the temple are considered in terms of their relations with men. The chastity of the Vestal Virgin is emphasised by the positioning of the words *nullum...virum* before the diaeresis and at the end of the line respectively. Livia is portrayed no less honourably as the paradigm of the Roman *matrona*, obedient and supportive to her husband. The point of the comparison is made explicit by the repetition, in the emphatic position at the end of the line, of the word *virum*.

3.2 The Imperial Family's Restoration of Religious Monuments

The entries on the Lares and the Bona Dea are linked in various ways. The transitional couplet of 147-148 links the two passages more smoothly than is usual in the *Fasti*¹. It is also notable that the two pieces stand in the centre of a panel of four entries which

bridge the only two extended discussions of Book V - the debate between the Muses and the Floralia. On a thematic level, both of the passages are concerned with religious buildings, and in particular the restoration of monuments that had fallen into disrepair. This brings a political dimension to both passages.

Augustus took great pride in his programme of public building. Many of the monuments of Rome had become dilapidated, and Augustus set about a major rebuilding programme, claiming in the *Res Gestae* to have restored all of the temples in need of repair².

Ovid's account has a similar stress on the effect of time on the public monuments and the necessity of the restoration which the emperor has undertaken³. Augustus' reforms are to the physical and spiritual benefit to the city. Moreover, they are not imposed on an unwilling population, but the *vici* are perceived as greeting the restored cult of the Lares with enthusiasm (line 146).

Ovid's apparent sympathy with the imperial regime is also evident in the figure of a thousand Lares, given on line 145. As has been shown⁴, the figure of a thousand is not an accurate reflection of the number of statues set up by Augustus, but is a poetic shorthand

for a large number. Moreover, Virgil had famously referred to the *ter centum...delubra*⁵ which Augustus had set up in the city. By mentioning here a number by far in excess of three hundred, it is possible that Ovid was aiming to surpass Virgil in his praise of Augustus.

Ovid also finds another novel way of praising the emperor. Augustus was associated with the Lares Compitales rather than the Lares Praestites. He revived the festival of the Compitalia and ordered the statues of the Lares Compitales to be garlanded twice a year⁶ and built a temple of the Lares on the Via Sacra⁷. In this passage, however, the diverse roles of the Lares are blurred, and Augustus is associated not only with the Lares Compitales, but also with the Lares Praestites, who have the function of protecting the city. This association would no doubt have been gratifying to the emperor⁸.

The political thread of the narrative is subsequently picked up by the reference to Livia's restoration of the temple of the Bona Dea. Although the poet makes a great show of postponing the theme of the emperor's religious reforms until August, within ten lines he finds himself mentioning them again. The

implication is that the reforms are all-pervasive.

The motive for Livia's restoration of the temple is said to be the desire to imitate her husband. This motive is stressed by the fact that Augustus' reforms have been mentioned in the previous passage. The idea of Livia's dutiful imitation of her husband is thus reflected in the structure of the poem.

But while Livia is compared on one level with Augustus, she is also compared with the Vestal Licinia. While Licinia dedicated the temple, Livia restored it. The connection supplied by their roles in the history of the temple is reinforced by the structure of the verse⁹, which compares their lives in terms of their relations with men, the one being the idealised figure of the virgin priestess, and the other the idealised Roman wife. This comparison with the Vestal reflects praise on the emperor's consort, and is in harmony with the generally sympathetic attitude towards the imperial regime in this part of the poem.

3.3 Implicit and Explicit Etymologising

The entries on the Lares and the Bona Dea are also linked by a shared concern with etymology. This feature

is, of course, by no means peculiar to this section of the poem, but is a theme which recurs throughout the *Fasti*.

The etymologising in the passage on the Lares Praestites is explicit. The obvious derivation of *Praestites* from *praesto* is stated clearly and simply in lines 133-134, and then augmented with supplementary arguments in lines 135-136¹⁰.

The etymological theme is introduced more subtly into the entry on the Bona Dea. The area on the Aventine where the temple of the goddess was situated is known as the "Saxum". Ovid remarks at line 149: *loco res nomina fecit*, giving the obvious explanation of the name. However, the plural form *nomina* may alert the reader to the possibility that the poet has more than one etymology in mind at this point, and Ovid proceeds to make two further etymological points in more allusive fashion.

Firstly, Ovid calls the Saxum *pars bona montis*. There is a pun here on the word *bona*. The phrase *pars bona* is used elsewhere to mean "a substantial part", and the reference to the magnitude of the area is clearly the primary meaning here¹¹. However, in this context,

there is surely also a suggestion on the part of the poet that the *pars bona montis* is an appropriate place for the worship of a goddess called the Bona Dea.

Secondly, the mention of Remus waiting for an augury on this spot is used to suggest a reason why the senate should build a temple on the site. The technical term in Latin for the place marked out for the purpose of taking auspices is a *templum*¹². The *templum* which Remus had used is thus used by the senate for the site of a different sort of *templum*. Furthermore, the fact that the site was a place of such ill-omen for Remus may explain the fact that the senate did not wish to allot it to the use of other men, but made it the site of a cult reserved for female celebrants.

Etymology is, therefore, used in two very different ways in the entries on the Lares and the Bona Dea. In the account of the name of the Lares Praestites, the theme is announced explicitly and worked out through the surface meaning of the text. In the account of the Bona Dea, etymologies are suggested in a more subtle manner. This contrast is symptomatic of the way in which Ovid varies his method of presentation throughout the poem.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. This point is made by Riedl (1989, p.6), who sees a structural purpose behind the unification of the entries on the Lares and the Bona Dea.
2. Augustus *Res Gestae* 20.4: *nullo praetermisso quod eo tempore refici debebat*. Also relevant is *Res Gestae* 20.2 where Augustus records the restoration of the aqueducts, which were similarly suffering from the ravages of old age. On Augustus' programme of cultural renewal, see Zanker (1988) pp.101-166.
3. Martin (1985, p.267) takes a different view, believing that Ovid emphasises the impermanence of Augustus' monuments, but his thesis does not seem to me to take account of the close parallels between Ovid's account and Augustus' own propaganda.
4. See note on lines 145-146.
5. Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.716.
6. See Suetonius *Augustus* 31.4. On Augustus and the Lares Compitales, see Niebling (1956); Laurence (1991) pp.147-148.
7. See Augustus *Res Gestae* 19.2.
8. See D'Elia (1959) p.340. Augustus was portrayed as the guardian of the city - see, for example, Horace *Carmina* IV.15.17-20.
9. See note on line 158.
10. See note on lines 133-136.
11. Examples of this use of *pars bona* are collected by Landi (1929, p.74), who does not, however, admit that the phrase is ambiguous.
12. See Varro *de Lingua Latina* VII.8.

CHAPTER 4: THE HYADES

4.1 Commentary on V.159-182

159-182. The group of stars in the constellation of Taurus known as the Hyades becomes fully visible in the sky on the day after the Calends.

Four lines (159-162) provide a bridge between the events of the Calends and the discussion of the Hyades. In these lines Ovid records the rising of the West-North-West wind and the beginning of the sailing season. In lines 163-164, the poet announces the subject of the Hyades, and in the next four lines (165-168) he outlines etymological and aetiological theories about these stars. The majority of the passage consists of a narrative explaining one of these theories - the legend that the Hyades are the sisters of the hunter Hyas. The narrative portion of the passage has a symmetrical structure: four introductory lines (169-172) establish the hero's illustrious background; six central lines (173-178) relate Hyas' career as a hunter; the final four lines (179-182) deal with the aftermath of Hyas' death, and especially the catasterisation of his sisters as a reward for their pious grief.

159-160. postera cum roseam pulsas Hyperionis astris \

in matutinis lampada tollet equis: The coming of the new day is a theme which Ovid handles with characteristic virtuosity throughout the course of the *Fasti*. The subject-matter of the poem forces the poet to refer to the arrival of a new day on numerous occasions. Ovid uses this as an opportunity to indulge in poetic descriptions (see Section 15.2).

The references to Aurora in these descriptions use a remarkable variety of ways of naming the goddess: e.g. *Tithonia coniunx* (III.403); *Pallantias* (IV.373); *Memnonis...mater* (IV.714); *Tithonia* (IV.943); *tua, Laomedon,...nurus* (VI.729); and here *Hyperionis*.

161-162. frigidus Argestes summas mulcebit aristas, \ candidaque a Calabris vela dabuntur aquis: The name of the wind comes from the Greek ὀργιῖς, meaning "white". Ovid alludes to the derivation of this word by using the word *candida* in line 162. This provides a link between the various events of the day, by implying that the wind which blows at the start of the sailing season may be connected with the white sails of the ships.

164. Hyadum toto de grege: Paley (note on V.163) has observed that by referring to the Hyades as a *grex*, Ovid uses an agricultural metaphor which alludes to the

popular derivation of the name of the stars from the Greek word for a pig. The supposed resemblance of the Hyades to a litter of piglets caused the Greeks to derive the name from the word ὕς, and this derivation was accepted by the Romans, who called the group of stars the *Suculae*.

The collective noun *grex* is normally applied to cattle, and only rarely to inanimate objects (see TLL VI.2 p.2334). Although there are parallels for the use of the word to refer to constellations (Manilius V.313; Seneca *Hercules Furens* 10, *Medea* 96, *Naturales Quaestiones* VII.27.5) these examples are all post-Ovidian, and the usage here may be an Ovidian coinage specifically designed to make an etymological point.

165. ora micant Tauri septem radiantia flammis: There is great stress in this line on the brightness of the stars, with the words *micant*, *radiantia* and *flammis* all contributing to the effect.

166. navita quas Hyadas Graius ab imbre vocat: After the implicit etymology in the previous couplet, Ovid now states the alternative etymology from the Greek verb ὕειν explicitly. (See Section 3.3 for Ovid's use of variety in his etymologies.)

O'Hara (1992, pp.56-58) shows that in this line Ovid alludes to earlier etymological discussions about the naming of the Hyades. Virgil (*Georgics* I.137-138) had included the Hyades among the constellations which were given their names by sailors. Ovid uses the poetic form *navita* in the same metrical position as Virgil had done to allude to Virgil's discussion. The word *Graius*, however, refers to Cicero's discussion of the etymology in his *Phaenomena* (fr.29 [Ewbank]). Finally, the phrase *ab imbre* refers to another mention of the derivation in Cicero (*de Natura Deorum* II.111.1).

167-168. pars Bacchum nutrisse putat, pars credidit esse

\ Tethyos has neptes Oceanique senis: The formula *pars putat... pars credit...* also occurs at I.323-325 to introduce diverse explanations (cf. further III.658 and V.633). The poet justifies the inclusion of dubious but interesting variants by the appeal to popular belief.

The identification of the Hyades with the nymphs of Nysa, who nursed the infant Bacchus is made by Hyginus (*Fabulae* 192), but Ovid rejects this explanation.

Braun (1981, pp.2364-2365) points out the similarity between the myth about the nurses of Bacchus and the legend about Capella told in lines 111-128. This

great similarity probably made it inappropriate for the story that the Hyades were the nurses of Bacchus to be related at length, for Ovid is concerned to give his poem as much variety as possible, but Braun sees a more complicated structural pattern at work behind Ovid's preference for the second story.

169. nondum stabat Atlas umeros oneratus Olympo: As at line 387 (see note *ad loc.*) the story is given additional plausibility by a pseudo-historical introductory detail.

There is also perhaps a joke in the observation that Atlas did not yet have the task of holding up the sky when his son was born, since that task would have made the act of procreation unfeasible.

170-172. forma conspiciendus Hyas \ ...sed prior ortus

Hyas: Each of these three lines contributes to the portrayal of the hero as a fortunate character. Hyas' beauty (170), his impressive family background (171) and his seniority (172) are established. Hyas' significance in the narrative is highlighted by the homoeoteleuton of ...*Hyas*...*Hyas*.

173-176. dum nova lanugo est...: The two couplets are closely parallel in structure. Each opens with a phrase

stating Hyas' age, with the *nova lanugo* of 173 contrasting with the maturity of line 175. There then follow two examples of the prey which Hyas hunted, with the innocuous deer and hares giving place to the more dangerous boars and lions. The position of *audet* at the start of line 176 matches that of *terret* in 174, and the cacemphaton *audet et* has a similar effect to that of *terret, et est* (see note on line 174). In addition, Hyas' prey, *apros* and *leas*, occur in the same position in lines 175 and 176 as *cervos* and *lepus* in 173 and 174 (see note on lines 173-177).

173-177. ...cervos \ ...lepus \ ...apros \ ...leas \

...leaenae: The names of the animals which Hyas hunted are positioned prominently at the end of each of these five lines. The effect is to produce a catalogue of wild animals.

The distinction between the easy prey of hares and deer and the more dangerous prey to which the hunter graduates recalls the desire of the young Ascanius at Virgil *Aeneid* IV.152-159 to engage in combat with boars and lions rather than less dangerous beasts.

174. terret, et est: The effect of the repetition of the "t" and "e" sounds is striking, and may well represent

the noise made - possibly by hunting horns (see Butler (1930) pp.101-103) - to startle wild animals and chase them into hunting nets. (The most striking example of this onomatopoeia in Latin poetry occurs at Ennius *Annales* 140 [Vahlen]: *at tuba terribili sonitu taratantara dixit.*) The enjambement of *terret* increases the effect of sudden surprise.

178. ipse fuit Libycae praeda cruenta ferae: There is heavy irony in the transformation of the hunter into the hunted (see Section 4.2). The change in Hyas' fortunes is emphasised by the change from the present tense in lines 173-176 to the perfect, which indicates the finality of the hunter's fate.

179-182. mater Hyan et Hyan maestae flevere sorores...: The concluding four lines produce ring composition, returning to the theme of the family, which is the subject of the first four lines of the Hyas narrative (169-172). Line 180 picks up the reference to Atlas in line 169. Similarly *mater* (179) picks up *Aethra* (171) and *sorores* (179) picks up *nymphas* (172).

In line 179 the name of Hyas is placed at the end of one clause and repeated at the beginning of the next. This produces the effect of the repeated wailing of the

dead youth's name by his family, with the sisters echoing the cries of the mother. Bömer (note on V.179) notes the parallel with the lament *Hyla, Hyla* at Virgil *Eclogues* 6.44.

The theme of grieving sisters is not uncommon in ancient mythology. The Hyades might be compared to the sisters of Phaethon (cf. Cicero *Phaenomena* fr.32 [Ewbank] 147: *maestae...sorores*) or Troilus (cf. Horace *Carmina* II.9.16-17: *sorores / flevēre*). What is remarkable about the sisters of Hyas is the fact that their lamentations outdid even the grieving of the dead youth's parents. It is this feat that justifies their catasterism, and the fact that they are collectively named after their brother rather than - as is usual - a parent.

182. illa dedit caelum, nomina fecit Hyas: An epigrammatic chiasmus brings the story to a neat conclusion. The name of Hyas, which is the key word in this aetiology, is appropriately emphasised by its final position.

Ovid passes over the catasterism of the Hyades in three words. This technique is in contrast to the intricate descriptions of changing forms found in the

Metamorphoses (see Frécaut (1972) pp.264-266; Kenney (1973) pp.142-145).

The phrase *nomina fecit* is used only once before Ovid - at Virgil *Georgics* I.137, in a passage where Virgil explains how various constellations, including the Hyades, were named. O'Hara (1992, pp.59-61) sees the use of this rare phrase in Ovid's story of the naming of the Hyades as a clear allusion to Virgil.

4.2 Irony in the Story of Hyas

The great appeal of Ovid's story lies in the irony of Hyas' position as both hunter and hunted¹. This is seen most strongly in line 178 when the predatory hunter is transformed into the prey of a lioness. The irony of the situation is brought out by the use of the word *praeda*. In line 174 the word had been used to refer to Hyas' victim, and now the word recurs in the same metrical position, but this time referring to Hyas himself. The point is further spelt out by the adjectives that accompany the word. In line 174 *benigna* is in keeping with the optimistic tone of the early part of the story, but at line 178, the epithet *cruenta* is used. The placing of the epithet in the metrical

position which had been occupied by *benigna* in the earlier line heightens the contrast.

The irony is also pointed by the word *ferae* at the end of line 178. By using this general term, the poet refers to all wild beasts, and not specifically to the one which killed Hyas. This formulation allows Ovid to make a cogent contrast between Hyas' former role as a hunter of wild beasts and his later role as a prey to the same animals.

The irony of Hyas' fate, whereby he is transformed from a hunter to a hunted creature, may perhaps be prefigured in the earlier part of the narrative. In the introductory lines of the narrative, Hyas is described on several occasions using terms that might be applicable either to a human or to an animal. The potential for ambiguity in these references is significant in view of the ironic conclusion to the episode.

There is a good deal of biological vocabulary in lines 170-172. Aethra gives birth *maturis nixibus* to Hyas and his sisters. The phenomenon of a multiple births is more readily associated with animals than humans². Moreover, there is emphasis on Hyas' position

as *prior ortus*, corresponding to the position of the "pride of the litter". Considering the attention paid to this theme, it is ironic that Hyas' death comes about when he is hunting lion cubs, and at the hands of a pregnant lioness (line 177).

Secondly, the phrase *forma conspiciendus*, used to describe the youth on line 170, provides an echo of the description of Amalthea's goat, who is *formosa* (117) and *conspicienda* (118). The verbal echo at this point contributes to the game of portraying Hyas both as human and animal.

Thirdly, the *nova lanugo* of line 173 is also ambiguous. The downy cheeks are a commonplace in descriptions of young men³, but *lanugo* is also found on deer and other animals⁴.

Finally, when Hyas frightens the deer in lines 173-174, his actions could be compared with those of a wolf or hunting hound, from whom deer proverbially fled in fear⁵.

In the light of the obvious irony of Hyas' position in line 178, it is tempting to see these references as suggesting the ambiguous nature of Hyas. Although he is a hunter, parallels are drawn between Hyas and the

animals he hunts, and these parallels foreshadow the fate which will befall the youth at the end of the story.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. The paradoxical nature of this idea doubtless appealed to Ovid. He also uses it at *Heroides* 20.103-104; *Metamorphoses* III.229; *Ars Amatoria* II.406.
2. The word *grex* on line 164 also encourages the reader to think of the Hyades in terms of animals rather than humans.
3. E.g. Homer *Odyssey* XI.319-320; Callimachus *Hecale* fr.45 [Hollis].
4. See Pliny *Naturalis Historia* VIII.117 (used of deer); VIII.133 (of hedgehogs).
5. E.g. *Metamorphoses* XI.771-772 (fleeing from wolves); *Epistulae ex Ponto* II.2.38 (fleeing from hounds).

CHAPTER 5: THE FLORALIA

5.1 Commentary on V.183-378

183-194. Ovid invokes the goddess Flora (183-192), explaining in a digression (184-190) why he is dealing with her festival at this point of the poem. Flora appears in response to the poet's summons (193-194).

183. mater, ades, florum, ludis celebranda iocosis: Ovid summons Flora in line 183 with the traditional word of invocation, *ades* (see Bömer on I.65). The use of her honorific title *mater florum*, and the appositional phrase *ludis celebranda iocosis* also conform to the norms of hymnic address.

The word *iocosis* characterises the festival as being light-hearted, and sets the tone for the whole entry.

184-190. distuleram partes mense priore tuas...: Ovid had postponed his treatment of the festival at IV.947-948. There is a good practical reason for dealing with the Floralia in Book V, rather than in the previous book. Book IV, even without a section on the Floralia, contains 954 lines, while Book V has only 734. It seems that Ovid chose to deal with the Floralia in this book in order to avoid producing books of greatly differing

lengths.

Ovid is eager, however, to provide a scientific justification of his postponement of the entry on the Floralia, and deploys his rhetorical skills to defend his decision. In a series of observations, he shows the festival as having equal relevance to both April and May. Lines 185 and 186 express this equality through antitheses arranged around the central line-break. In line 188 the repetition *ille vel ille* again demonstrates the festival's equal relevance to both April and May. The only pretext on which Ovid says he can choose between the rival claims of the two months is the fact that the Circus games of the festival were held in May but not in April.

191-192. ipsa doce quae sis: hominum sententia fallax; \
optima tu proprii nominis auctor eris: The invitation to the goddess to speak for herself is a characteristic method of bringing an informant into the poem to add variety and vitality to the presentation of information (see Section 16.2). Harries (1989, p.169) notes that the prayer corresponds to a formula used on several other occasions in the poem (I.467-468; III.261-262; V.635).

194. vernas efflat ab ore rosas: The exhalation of roses

as Flora speaks is a striking visual detail, which adds a dramatic element to the meeting, and also establishes that Flora is more than mortal. There are further touches of the supernatural at lines 359 and 376 (see notes *ad loc.*).

195-214. Flora explains how she came to be the goddess of flowers. Originally, she was a nymph called Chloris (195-200), but Zephyrus, the West Wind, raped her (201-204) and then married her (205-206), giving her a garden and the guardianship of flowers (209-214).

195. Chloris eram, quae Flora vocor: Flora's explanation of her name bears no relation to the obvious derivation from *flos*. Ovid ignores the obvious etymology and capitalises on the meanings of the Greek name Chloris, meaning "Green", and the Latin name Flora, meaning "Flower", to make the joke that the "Green One" became a flower as a result of her marriage with Zephyrus.

195-197. Chloris eram... \ Chloris eram...: The technique of repeating the opening words of the previous couplet is used with significantly greater frequency in this part of the poem (cf. lines 221-223; 263-265; 299-301; 305-307; 337-339; 363-367) than elsewhere in the

Fasti, and may be regarded as a characteristic mode of speech favoured by the garrulous Flora (see Section 5.3).

197. nyphe: The Greek form is not uncommon in Ovid, but seems particularly appropriate here in the light of Flora's characteristic of talking insistently about her marriage (cf. *generum* (200), *nuptae* (205), *toro* (206), *dotalibus* (209), *maritus* (211) etc.). The Greek form *nyphe* brings to mind the fact that in Greek the word means "bride".

197-199. felicis...fortunatis...fuisse...fuerit...forma:

Flora insistently repeats her new initial letter in order to underline her change of name from the Greek Chloris to the Latin Flora.

Just as the Greek letter "chi" in her old name was alien to the Latin tongue, so the Roman letter "f" in her new name does not correspond exactly to any sound in the Greek language. Quintilian (I.4.14) notes that the Greeks had difficulty in pronouncing this letter. Flora, however, uses the letter with great prominence in the opening lines of her speech (cf. also *fugio: fortior ille fuit* on line 202). By this insistent use of alliteration Flora stresses that although she was a Greek nymph she has now become fully "Romanised". The

significance of sound-play in the verse at this point is sign-posted for the reader by the word *audis* in line 197.

199-200. quae fuerit mihi forma, grave est narrare modestae; \ sed generum matri repperit illa deum:

Frécaut (1972, p.111) and Winniczuk (1974, p.103) remark on the humour of Flora's self-compliment. The sham modesty of the hexameter is exposed by the boast in the pentameter. Pride in her own success is a characteristic of Flora (see Section 5.3).

201-202. ver erat, errabam; Zephyrus conspexit, abibam; \ insequitur, fugio: fortior ille fuit: The rape is described in extremely staccato language (see Bardon (1958) p.93; Lee (1959) p.411). Flora's actions are reported in one word phrases which alternate with Zephyrus' actions. The change from the imperfect and perfect tenses to the historic present and then back to the perfect add to the pace of the scene.

Ovid exploits the fact that Zephyrus is a wind for humorous purposes. The expression *fortior ille fuit* is appropriate both to a god who overpowers a nymph and to wind increasing in severity. A similar ambiguity is present in the word *insequitur*, which could refer either

to a pursuing god or to a wind which suddenly changes directions and becomes a *ventus secundus* (see OLD s.v. *secundus*¹ A.1).

203. et dederat fratri Boreas ius omne rapinae: Flora justifies Zephyrus' action by using legal language, thus suggesting that the rape was sanctioned by law. Quadri (1964, p.289) claims that the phrase *ius omne* is a technical term denoting the *intero e totale diretto* which the gods have over mortals.

205. vim tamen emendat: Zephyrus is traditionally portrayed as a gentle breeze, favourable to sailors and symptomatic of mild weather (cf. II.148; VI.715). The appearance of the gentle breeze as a rapist in this episode is, therefore, a humorous reversal of his traditional role, and Zephyrus' eventual amelioration of his crime by marrying Flora marks a return to his traditionally mild nature.

The phrase *vim tamen emendat* may be a further play on the dual identity of Zephyrus as both wind and god (see note on lines 201-202). On one level it refers to the amelioration of the crime, and on another to the slackening in the strength of the wind.

207-208. [vere fruor semper: semper nitidissimus annus,

\ arbor habet frondes, pabula semper humus.]: AWC regards these lines as spurious, although Le Bonniec (1980, p.105) claims that the excision of the couplet is unnecessary.

The transition from the rape scene to Flora's connection with gardens is smoothly set up by line 206, and the phrase *est mihi...hortus* (209) follows more naturally from *non est ulla querella* (206) than do lines 207-208.

In fact, the phrase *est...hortus* is the normal formula for the start of an ecphrasis (see note on lines 209-214), and the disputed couplet adds little to the meaning of the passage. In particular, the phrase *nitidissimus annus* is out of place. It is imported from line 265, where it has a point in referring to the olive harvest, but it lacks any such point in this position.

Furthermore, the notion of perpetual spring in Flora's garden is contradicted by the portrayal of the arrival of Spring in lines 215-220. The mention of *pruina* and *intepuere* in lines 215-216 is inconsistent with the statement *vere fruor semper*.

Lines 207-208 are an imitation of Virgil *Eclogues* 3.56-57: *et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos*.

| *nunc frondent silvae, nunc formosissimus annus.* I would suggest that an interpolator wished to expand on the lyrical scene of lines 209-220, and inserted a banal adaptation of Virgil's lines.

209-214. est mihi fecundus dotalibus hortus in agris...: Flora's description of the garden she receives from her new husband takes the form of an ecphrasis, prefaced by the customary formula *est...hortus*. The garden is a typical *locus amoenus*, containing meadows (209), a spring (210), flowers (211) and a gentle breeze (210) - all features which are standard elements of this sort of poetic description (see Curtius (1953) p.195).

Flora does not miss the opportunity to include within the framework of the description several words, such as *dotalibus* and *maritus*, which act as reminders of the legality of her marriage (see note on line 197). The proud nature of the goddess is also evident in her observation of the literally innumerable varieties of flowers in her garden.

212. "arbitrium tu, dea, floris habe.": Zephyrus' address of Flora as *dea* represents the summit of her career. Under the auspices of her husband, she has progressed from *nymphe* (197), through *nupta* (205), to

the title of goddess.

215-260. Flora tells of her role as goddess of flowers. She outlines the significance of flowers for the gods (215-220) and men (221-228), before telling of how she used a magic flower to bring about the birth of Mars (229-260).

215-220. roscida cum primum foliis excussa pruina est...: Flora begins to move from her personal history to the subject of her areas of influence. Her first claim to significance - the use of flowers in the garlands of the gods - is described through a picture of early Spring which shares the idyllic atmosphere of lines 209-214. The portrayal of the Hours and Graces plucking her flowers and weaving them into garlands uses traditional elements, such as the dissipation of frost (cf. Horace *Carmina* I.4.10; IV.7.2) and increasing temperatures (cf. Catullus 46.1; Horace *Carmina* IV.7.9), to give a poetic setting to the scene.

221-223. prima...prima...: This is yet another example of Flora's characteristic use of anaphora (see Section 5.3). The repetition forges a link between two different claims of the goddess concerning her benevolence to

mankind - her general claim to fame as the originator of all flowers (221-222), and specific examples of mythological figures who gained fame through associations with flowers (223-228).

223-224. prima Therapnaeo feci de sanguine florem, \ et manet in folio scripta querella suo: Flora uses learned allusion to refer to the story of Hyacinthus. The epithet *Therapnaeus* provides an oblique reference to Sparta, the home of Hyacinthus (see Bömer on V.223), and the *scripta querella* of line 224 refer to the story that the markings of the hyacinth flower represent the lament of Apollo for Hyacinthus (see *Metamorphoses* X.206).

225. cultos...per hortos: Flora puns on the two meanings of the verb *colo*: gardens are normally *culti* in a horticultural sense (see OLD s.v. *colo*¹ 3), but they are also, through her, *culti* in a religious sense (see OLD s.v. *colo*¹ 6).

226. infelix, quod non alter et alter eras: The fate of Narcissus is summarised in a terse epigram. Flora wittily observes the paradox that while the boy and his reflection were the same, they were also two distinct things. The paradox is spelt out by the juxtaposition of *non alter* and *alter*. Narcissus' misfortune lay in the

fact that "you were not one of a pair, and yet you were one of a pair".

Frécaut (1972, p.37) notes the similarity in the word-play of this line and that of *Metamorphoses* X.339: *nunc, quia iam meus est, non est meus*.

At *Metamorphoses* III.424-426, Ovid also makes capital of the phenomenon that Narcissus and his beloved are in fact the same person.

227. Cinyraque creatum: The allusion to Adonis by means of his father's name draws attention in a concise fashion to the memorable fact that Adonis was born as the result of an incestuous relationship (see *Metamorphoses* X.298-518).

228. de quorum per me volnere surgit honor: The intrusion of *per me* serves to produce an unusual separation of preposition and noun. The impression is that Flora cannot wait to include her own role in the glorification of these heroes.

There is a pun in this line on two different meanings of *surgit*. The phrase *surgit honor* refers to the growth of the reputation of these heroes through their commemorative flowers. However, *surgit* also refers to the physical growth of the flowers.

229. si nescis: Flora makes her story seem more interesting by stressing the secrecy which surrounds it.

230. Iuppiter hoc, ut adhuc, nesciat usque, precor:

Flora places herself in the position of an adulterer who hopes that the cuckolded husband does not find out the true parentage of his wife's child. The staccato syntax of the line indicates the excitement of the speaker as she talks about her audacious feat.

231-232. sancta Iovem Iuno nata sine matre Minerva \

officio doluit non eguisse suo: Flora represents herself as being on the right side in this dispute by giving Juno the epithet *sancta*. The help which she offers to Juno is thus presented an act of piety. Nevertheless, the phrase *sancta Iuno* appears ironic when applied to the petty and querulous figure who appears in this story.

The story of Minerva's birth is told by Hesiod (*Theogony* 924). In Hesiod's account, however, Zeus had swallowed the pregnant Metis (*Theogony* 899-900), and so the birth was not, strictly speaking, *sine matre*. Flora glosses over this part of the story in order to give Juno a stronger motive for her jealousy.

233. ibat ut Oceano quereretur facta mariti: The idea of

Juno going to complain to Oceanus originates in an episode in Homer (*Iliad* XIV.198-210).

Paley, Peter and Bömer note (all *ad loc.*) that her journey to Oceanus' traditional location in the extreme West would take Juno to the *campi felices* which Flora gives as her abode in line 197. The West is also the logical home of Zephyrus, since he blew from that quarter. Thus there is a coherent geographical setting to Ovid's account.

234. fessa labore: Flora portrays herself as the last resort for Juno, stressing the goddess' exhaustion and desperation (see lines 238; 243-244; 249-250) in order to emphasise her own benevolence (see Rutledge (1973) p.118; Miller (1983) p.175).

235-236. "quid te, Saturnia," dixi \ "attulit?": By addressing Juno as *Saturnia* Flora alludes to Juno's distinguished parentage, but the speech is otherwise informal in tone (see Heinze (1960) p.356). Flora is not overawed by the appearance of the queen of the gods.

237. verbis solabar amicis: The assumption of *amicitia* by Flora might be regarded as presumptuous. Winniczuk (1974, p.101) sees this behaviour as typical of the way in which minor gods are humorously presented in the

Fasti as bragging about their connections with their superiors.

238. "non" inquit "verbis cura levanda mea est": These words may be interpreted in two different ways. Within the context of Flora's narrative, it is easiest to think of Juno's words being spoken in a tone of tearful desperation, in keeping with Flora's tendency to emphasise her own generosity. It is also possible, however, to imagine the words as being spoken in a more choleric tone - in keeping with the portrayals of Juno in the *Aeneid* and the *Metamorphoses*. It is open to the reader to speculate to what extent Flora interprets Juno's *ipsissima verba* in a manner which is sympathetic to herself.

239-242. si pater est factus neglecto coniugis usu \ Iuppiter...: Juno's belief that she ought to be treated as the equal of her husband is expressed in the closely parallel structure of these two couplets: *pater est factus* (239) corresponds to *fieri...mater* (241); *neglecto coniugis usu* (239) is equivalent to *sine coniuge* (241); in both couplets, the pentameter restates the idea of parthenogenesis which has been presented in the hexameter.

Furthermore, in both couplets the strangeness of the idea of parthenogenesis gives rise to characteristically paradoxical expressions. In line 240, *solus* stands in contrast to *nomen utrumque*; on the following line *sine coniuge* is juxtaposed to *mater*; and in line 242 the association of *parere* and *intacto* similarly exploits the absurdity of the situation.

243-244. omnia temptabo latis medicamina terris, \ et freta Tartareos excutiamque sinus: The quest over land and sea is a literary commonplace (e.g. *Metamorphoses* V.438-439: *filia matri / omnibus est terris, omni quaesita profundo*; Virgil *Aeneid* VI.692). The addition of *Tartareos...sinus* to the customary itinerary makes Juno's desperation seem even more extreme.

Santini (1973, p.52) sees Juno's resolve to visit the underworld if necessary as a parody of Virgil *Aeneid* VII.312 (*flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo*).

243. medicamina: The mention of herbs has a structural purpose in that it prompts Flora to think about the magic flower in her garden.

244. excutiam: The metaphorical use of *excutio* in the sense of "search" is well attested (see OLD s.v. *excutio* 9.b.), and the impression of aggression and thoroughness

which the metaphor provides is particularly appropriate to this context.

245. voltum dubitantis habebam: Flora's hesitation throws greater emphasis on the act of beneficence she is about to perform. She stresses the moral dilemma which helping Juno produces, and so makes her decision to act in defiance of Jupiter seem particularly courageous.

246-250. "nescioquid, nyphe, posse videris"...: On two occasions Juno anticipates Flora's thoughts from her body language. This device performs two functions: Flora is able to preserve her integrity, exculpating herself from any charge of tale-telling; in addition, Juno's urgency is depicted through her eliciting help before Flora actually offers it.

246. nyphe: Juno neglects to give Flora the title of *dea*, which Flora had been given by her husband at line 212. In contrast with approaches to gods in similar situations (see Section 5.5) her request seems impatient and dismissive. It is not, perhaps, surprising that her wish is not granted instantly.

247. ter volui promittere opem, ter lingua retenta est: The threefold failure to carry out an action is an epic motif, found at Homer *Odyssey* XI.206-207, and imitated

by Virgil (*Aeneid* II.792-793; IV.690-691; VI.700-701) - see Döpp (1968) p.64. By this use of epic language Flora portrays the situation in a particularly serious fashion.

Flora stresses her benevolent character by stating her good intentions, even though she does not act in accordance with them (cf. the similar statement on line 325).

249. "fer, precor, auxilium": Juno's request is more self-pitying than other examples of requests to minor deities in the literary tradition (see Section 5.5), and also represents a softening of approach from her initial words to Flora (see notes on lines 238 and 246). This change in approach demonstrates the pragmatism of the goddess as she tempers her arrogant disposition in order to gain Flora's assistance.

"celabitur auctor": Flora makes an etymological point by connecting the words *auxilium* and *auctor*, thus suggesting that an *auctor* is someone who offers *auxilium*. (Varro (*de Lingua Latina* V.90) had derived *auxilium* from *auctus*.)

251-252. "quod petis, Oleniis" inquam "mihi missus ab arvis \ flos dabit": The identity of the flower which

Flora offers to Juno remains a matter for conjecture, as does the significance of its origin in the "Olenian fields". These questions are discussed in Section 5.6.

253-256. qui dabat, "hoc" dixit "sterilem quoque tange iuvencam, \ mater erit"...: The potency of the magic flower is stressed by the repetition of various forms of the verb *tango*. By using this verb four times in four lines (*tange... tetigi... tangitur... tacto...*), Flora emphasises the fact that the flower has the capacity to impregnate merely by contact.

The speed with which the flower acts is conveyed by the epigrammatic form of line 254. The word-play of "*mater erit*"... *nec mora, mater erat* presents the birth as happening instantaneously, without any period of gestation.

255. haerentem decerpsi pollice florem: The adjective *haerentem* is reminiscent of Virgil's description of the Golden Bough as *cunctantem* (*Aeneid* VI.211).

It seems to be a property of many flowers with magical powers that they can only be picked by those who enjoy divine favour (cf. Homer *Odyssey* X.305-306, Virgil *Aeneid* VI.147-148).

257-258. iamque gravis Thracen et laeva Propontidos

intrat, \ fitque potens voti, Marsque creatus erat:

After dwelling over her own role in the story, Flora hurries through the remainder without elaboration. The change of pace is not untypical of Ovid's narrative method (see Section 16.1).

On the significance of Thrace as the birth-place of Mars, see Bömer (note on V.257).

259-260. "habeto \ tu quoque Romulea" dixit "in urbe locum": By stressing Mars' position as Romulus' father, Flora gives herself, through her role in the birth of Mars, a crucial position in the history of Rome, and thus justifies her prominence in Ovid's poem.

261-274. Flora moves from her decorative and commemorative functions to her practical role in agriculture (261-268), wine making (269-270) and the production of honey (271-272).

261-262. forsitan in teneris tantum mea regna coronis \ esse putes: The direct address to the poet adds drama and variety to Flora's speech. The device of breaking away from the narrative to place a question in the mouth of the imagined reader is a common technique in didactic poetry (see Miller (1983) p.176).

262. tangit numen et arva meum: It is characteristic of Flora that she should claim influence over a wide range of subjects (see Section 5.3).

Elaine Fantham (in a paper given to the Laurence Seminar on Ovid's *Fasti* at Cambridge in May 1990) suggests that the association of Flora with agriculture has the literary function of "correcting" Virgil's neglect of Flora in the *Georgics*.

Flora had been considered a guardian of the crops by Varro (*Res Rusticae* I.1.6). Her temple was awarded by the Romans *propter sterilitatem frugum* (see Degraasi (1963) pp.132-133). There is, therefore, a clear precedent for her association with agriculture.

263-266. si bene floruerint segetes... \ si bene floruerit vinea... \ si bene floruerint oleae...: The importance of the flowering of crops is explained in a tricolon - a characteristic device of Flora's speech (see Section 5.3). The triple anaphora hammers home the vital importance of the flower in the creation of the fruit.

By using in the anaphora a verb that is cognate to her own name, Flora emphasises her personal influence on the ripening process. The importance of Flora to

agriculture is also stressed by the examples of which the tricolon is comprised. Flora takes as her examples the staple crops of Italian agriculture: grain, grapes and olives.

265. nitidissimus annus: *nitidus* is often used to refer to oil, the principal product from olives (e.g. V.667, *Ars Amatoria* III.443), but Lucretius (*de Rerum Natura* II.594) and Cicero (*In Verrem* II.3.18) both use the epithet to indicate the fertility of the crops. The phrase is, therefore, relevant in both senses when applied to the olive harvest.

267-268. flore semel laeso pereunt viciaeque fabaeque, \ et pereunt lentesc, advena Nile, tuae: The corollary of the claim that flowers are crucial in the production of fruit is that the failure of flowers will produce a bad harvest. *flore...laeso* is thus in pointed contrast with *si bene floruerint* in lines 263-265.

Flora again illustrates her point with three examples. As the crops she lists - vetch, beans and lentils - are all annual plants, a failure to flower will mean that these plants never bear any fruit, and a new crop will need to be planted, and so these examples are particularly useful to Flora's case. The repetition

pereunt... pereunt... continues the insistent note struck by the anaphora in lines 263-265, and the apostrophising of *advena Nile* further adds to the declamatory effect.

269-270. vina quoque in magnis operose condita cellis \

florent: Roman writers on agriculture use the word *flos* as a technical term for the film which forms at the top of a vat of wine during the process of fermentation (see Cato *de Agri Cultura* 11.2; Columella *de Re Rustica* XII.30.1; Pliny *Naturalis Historia* XIV.136). Even though the film is not a flower in the botanical sense, the goddess uses this verbal correspondence to claim that she is instrumental in the production of wine.

271. mella meum munus: The alliteration suggests the humming sound made by bees as they collect pollen. Tennyson makes use of alliteration of the letter "m" for the same purpose in *The Princess* 7.206-207: "The moan of doves in immemorial elms, \ And murmuring of innumerable bees."

272. ad violam et cytisos et thyma cana: Bömer (*ad loc.*) demonstrates that these plants were valued by the ancients for their role in the production of honey. Aristotle (*Historia Animalium* IX.626b) notes that the

white flowers of the thyme were especially productive.

273-274. [nos quoque idem facimus tunc, cum iuvenalibus annis \ luxuriant animi, corporaque ipsa vigent.]: This couplet was deleted by Bentley, and is regarded with suspicion by most editors.

nos...idem facimus makes no sense as a reference to the previous couplet. The verbs that explain the phrase *idem facimus*, *luxurio* and *vigeo* are both synonyms for *floreo*, and the lines only make sense as as a metrical gloss on *florent* on line 270. Kimmig (1887, p.14) was surely correct in judging that an interpolator wished to remark that the term *floreo* can also be used of people. *nos idem facimus* is therefore equivalent to *homines florent*. (The couplet was probably inserted after line 272 because that line was at the end of a column in the manuscript.)

Flora, however, is concerned with the literal senses of the verb, rather than its metaphorical applications, and the observation does not make any sort of sense if *nos* refers to her as the speaker of the line. Castiglioni's attempt to rescue the line by reversing the order of 271-272 and 269-270, and postulating *vos...idem facitis*, besides lacking support

from the manuscripts, still fails to impress, as *idem facitis* can only refer to *florent*, and not to lines 269-270 as a whole. The observation that humans "flourish" in their youth does not follow smoothly from the remarks about wine producing *flos*.

275-294. Flora explains the origin of her festival. In response to Ovid's request for information about the Floralia (275-278), Flora begins by explaining the old custom of using public land for the pasturing of privately owned cattle (279-286). Action was taken against this abuse by the Publicii (287-290), who instituted the games of Flora and built the Clivus Publicius with the proceeds of fines imposed on the offenders (291-294).

275. talía dicentem tacitus mirabar: The depiction by the poet of his own curiosity in such conversations (cf. I.165) is a device which goes back to Callimachus (*Aetia* fr.43 [Pfeiffer] 85).

There is a humorous contrast between the silence of the poet and the loquacity of the goddess who has just given a speech of seventy-six lines.

276. ius tibi discendi: Flora addresses the narrator

using language which suggests that Ovid's position as a *vates* gives him certain legal rights in this situation.

The encouragement of questions is another customary feature of the etiquette between goddess and *vates* (cf. I.145-146; see Miller (1983) p.175, Harries (1989) p.169).

277. "dic, dea", respondi "ludorum quae sit origo": Ovid answers the goddess in formulaic language. The phrase *dic... quae sit origo* is typical of the exchanges between the *vates* and his informants (cf. I.115; II.269). Ovid also shows respect in addressing Flora by her honorific title of *dea*, in contrast with Juno's initial approach to Flora (see note on line 246).

278. vix bene desieram, rettulit illa mihi: Scarcely has Ovid completed his question when Flora is in full flow again. The phrase *vix bene desieram* is not merely a means of connecting the speeches, but indicates the alacrity with which Flora talks about herself.

279-282. cetera luxuriae nondum instrumenta vigeant...: Scenes of primitive Rome are extremely prominent in the *Fasti* (see note on lines 93-94), and often have the function of contrasting old-fashioned hardiness with contemporary luxury. Flora, however, provides a

variation from the traditional idyllic portrayal of former times by using the scene as the basis for some etymological observations (see note on line 281). She then subverts the tradition of idealising the past by depicting the greed and selfishness of the men of bygone days.

281. (hinc etiam locuples, hinc ipsa pecunia dicta est):

Porte (1985, p.203) regards the inclusion *en passant* of these two etymologies as being out of character for Flora. However the wide circulation of these etymologies among ancient writers (Bömer (*ad loc.*) cites the authors who give the derivation of *pecunia*; the derivation of *locuples* is given by Cicero *de Re Publica* II.16, Aulus Gellius X.5.2, Quintilian V.10.55 and Pliny *Naturalis Historia* XVIII.11) undermines Porte's case that these are *doctes observations*. In any case, it is not unprecedented for Ovid's informants to speak definitively on subjects which have only tenuous links with their own spheres of influence (e.g. I.238). In view of Flora's evident loquaciousness, it would be typical of her to embellish an otherwise extremely prosaic explanation with such observations.

283-286. venerat in morem populi depascere saltus...:

Flora refers to the abuse of the *lex Licinia de modo agrorum* of 367 BC. This law governed the pasturing of cattle on public land (see Appian *Bella Civilia* I.8). The people who abused the law by pasturing their cattle on public land are contrasted with those who fed their herds at their own expense. The phrase *servabat... sua publica* (285) contrasts with *in privato pascere* (286), and the majority of law-breakers in the *volgus* (285) is contrasted with the minority of *inertes* (286) who refrained from infringing the law.

287. plebis ad aediles: Varro (*de Lingua Latina* V.158)

agrees with Ovid that the Publicii were aediles of the plebs, but Festus (p.276 [Lindsay]) calls them curule aediles. Bömer (1954, pp.188-189) points out that while both curule and plebeian aediles were involved in collecting fines under the *lex Licinia*, the plebeian aediles favoured honouring "plebeian" gods, like Ceres and Faunus, with this money. Thus it is likely that the Publicii did indeed institute Flora's games as aediles of the plebs, as Ovid reports.

288. animis defuit ante viris: By implying that the Publicii were the first to have the courage to enforce the *lex Licinia*, Flora implies that her benefactors

possessed exceptional virtue. However, her statement is not strictly true, since prosecutions had been made under the law previously (see Livy X.23.13; X.47.4).

289. rem populus recepit, multam subiere nocentes: The two simple sentences, both consisting merely of unadorned subject, verb and object, are typical of the economical language of lines 279-294. The uncharacteristically concise style in this section may be due to the fact that Flora herself is not involved in the action of the narrative, and so the goddess hurries through to the part where her games are instituted (compare the change of scale at lines 257-258 - see note *ad loc.*).

290. vindicibus laudi publica cura fuit: Flora's portrayal of her benefactors as *vindices* and her talk of their *laus* reflects glory on herself (cf. the description of them as *victores* on line 292).

291. multa data est ex parte mihi: As an agrarian goddess Flora would be a suitable beneficiary of fines levied on the use of public land. In 296 BC, Ceres had benefited similarly (see Livy X.23.13).

Cels-St.Hilaire (1977, pp.255-260) emphasises the plebeian nature of the cult of Flora, and shows that

this seems to have been the chief reason for the institution of games in her honour. Ceres and Faunus, who were also honoured with the proceeds of fines for abuse of the *lex Licinia* (see Livy X.23.13; XXXIII.42.10) were also plebeian deities.

293-294. parte locant clivum...: It seems to have been customary to spread the revenue from fines charged for abuse of the *lex Licinia* around a number of projects (more detail is given by Frazer on V.283). The Clivus Publicius, which was also built from fines charged by the Publicii, was on the Aventine and may have been the site of Flora's temple (see Goodyear on Tacitus *Annales* II.49). This would account for Flora mentioning the road at this point.

Flora's speech ends with a rhetorical antithesis, stressing the utility of the new road in comparison with the previously inaccessible nature of the place: *ardua* contrasts with *utile*, and *rupes* with *iter*.

The etymological statement *Publiciumque vocant* makes a neat conclusion. (Etymology is also used to round off passages at III.328, III.654, V.128 and V.182.)

295-330. Flora explains how the festival became an annual event. She corrects Ovid's assumption that the Floralia had been celebrated on a yearly basis from the time of the Publicii (295-296). After showing that all gods are motivated by the attention of mortals (297-310), Flora relates how she caused the crops to fail when she was neglected by the Romans (311-326) and explains that the senate appeased her by making her festival an annual occasion (327-330).

295. annua credideram spectacula facta: negavit: Whereas in the previous section Flora had spoken in response to an enquiry from Ovid, here she speaks in order to correct an erroneous belief which the poet had held. This variation is characteristic of Ovid's technique for avoiding monotony in his interviews with divine informants (see Section 5.2).

The poet's attribution of false belief to himself is consistent with his admissions of perplexity elsewhere in the poem (see note on lines 445-446).

296. addidit et dictis altera verba suis: Flora is not content simply to correct Ovid's false belief, but launches into an explanation. The phrases *addidit* and *altera verba* produce a pleonasm, but this pleonasm

serves to indicate Flora's loquacity.

297-298. nos quoque tangit honor: festis gaudemus et aris, \ turbaque caelestes ambitiosa sumus: The words *quoque* and *et* indicate a comparison between gods and humans. The comparison shows the gods in unflattering light, motivated like men by *honor* to such an extent that they are called *ambitiosa* - an adjective commonly applied to the squalid electioneering of politicians. As Le Bonniec (1974, p.66) points out, the fact that it is a goddess who is describing the immortals in this way gives the observation added force and piquancy.

299-302. saepe deos aliquis peccando fecit iniquos...\ saepe Iovem vidi...: The statement of line 298 that the gods are a *turba ambitiosa* is supported by a series of examples. A general observation about the mercenary nature of the gods (lines 299-300) is followed by the particular example of Jupiter withholding his thunderbolts in return for incense (301-302). The anaphora *saepe... saepe...* binds the two couplets together.

301. vidi: By presenting her example in terms of an eyewitness account, Flora adds credibility to her words and, at the same time, stresses her personal connection

with the ruler of the gods.

305-310. respice Thestiaden...\ respice Tantaliden...\

Hippolyte infelix...: Flora illustrates her point about the gods' readiness to punish those who neglect them with three examples - Meleager, Agamemnon and Hippolytus - which occupy a couplet each. As at 263-266 and 299-302, anaphora (in lines 305-307) binds the examples together, and the parallel between the first two examples is further developed by the assonance of *respice Thestiaden... respice Tantaliden...*

Flora refers to the mythological precedents in concise, allusive language. She exploits the opportunities for paradox offered by the Meleager story. In line 305, the paradox *flammis absentibus arsit*, refers to the fact that Meleager was consumed as a result of the casting of a magic firebrand into the hearth by his mother (cf. the similar word-play at Propertius III.22.31). In the following line the goddess makes a pun by mentioning two different sorts of fire - the fire which consumed Meleager, and the fires on which sacrifices to the gods were burnt - to make the paradoxical statement that an absence of fire proved to be the source of a fire.

At line 309, the apostrophising of Hippolytus adds variety to the catalogue, and the mild *velles coluisse Dionen* is a humorous understatement, contrasting starkly with the brutal *diripereris* of line 310.

The three examples are directly relevant to Flora's own case. The goddesses who have been slighted are the virgin Diana, and Venus, goddess of love. The normally meek natures of these goddesses are not apparent when they are neglected, however, as Flora notes explicitly on line 308. The selection of the meekest goddesses in her examples sets a precedent for the reaction of Flora herself when her cult is neglected.

312. me quoque Romani praeteriere patres: Bömer (*ad loc.*) believes that it is not necessary to look for a historical basis for Flora's claim, but that the story should be seen as a literary *topos*, rooted in Ceres' famous neglect of the crops after the rape of Proserpina. Cels-St.Hilaire (1977, pp.260-272) outlines alternative reasons for the change from an occasional to an annual festival, seeing it as symptomatic of the increasing importance of the plebs in the second century BC.

However, Morgan (1990, pp.19-26) argues that there

is good reason in relating Flora's story about her neglect in Rome to the famine of 174 BC, mentioned by Livy (XLI.21.5-11).

313-314. quid facerem, per quod fierem manifesta doloris? \ exigerem nostrae qualia damna notae? Flora uses a series of rhetorical questions to appeal to the listener for support, claiming that she had no option other than to retaliate when her cult in Rome suffered neglect.

There is a strong rhetorical flavour to the whole of this portion of Flora's speech (compare the use of exempla in 305-310, anaphora at 299-301, 305-307 and 321-322, and tricolon at 317-318 and 321-324), as the goddess seeks to excuse her anti-social behaviour.

315. excidit officium tristi mihi: In describing her retaliatory abandoning of her duties, Flora presents herself as the passive party in this sentence. The suggestion that she does not exercise her anger willingly is reinforced by the epithet *tristi*, which characterises Flora as a meek figure, who is not naturally motivated by vengeance.

315-316. nulla tuebar \ rura, nec in pretio fertilis hortus erat: In describing her areas of responsibility,

Flora retains the dichotomy between the decorative (cf. 215-260) and the practical (cf. 261-272). Her failure to watch over flowers is described in lines 317-320, while her neglect of the crops is related in lines 321-324.

317-318. lilia deciderant, violas arere videres, \
filaque punicea languida facta croci: There is *variatio* in the vivid, pictorial descriptions of wilting flowers. The names of the flowers all occur in different cases; the second person verb *videres* contrasts with the third person *deciderant*; and there is an increasing concentration on precise botanical detail.

(See note on line 29 for the use of the imaginary second person singular.)

319-320. saepe mihi Zephyrus "dotes corrumpere noli \
ipse tuas" dixit: The inclusion of direct speech gives an informal tone to Flora's narrative, especially as the speaker is here the goddess' husband. There is a swift descent from the high epic theme of the wrath of the gods to the comic theme of marital discord.

320. dos mihi vilis erat: Flora's use of the word *dos* picks up on her husband's use of *dotes* in the previous line. The repetition produces a sarcastic tone (cf. similar repetitions at 237-238 and 370).

321-324. florebant oleae, venti nocuere protervi: \
florebant segetes, grandine laesa seges...: The
perishing of the crops is described - just as the
wilting of flowers at 317-318 - in an ascending
tricolon. The anaphora *florebant oleae... florebant*
segetes... is used to link the first two elements.

The three crops mentioned in the list are the
staples of Roman agriculture, olives, grain and grapes.
The list matches each crop to a different sort of bad
weather, thus displaying the effectiveness of Flora's
behaviour.

The list comes to a climax in line 324, where the
force of the storm is expressed by the vivid *decutiuntur*
and the helplessness of the farmer by *subita*.

These four lines describing the perishing of the
crops have the same structure and use the same examples
as lines 263-266, which describe the crops flourishing.
The similarity of form between the two passages throws
into relief the contrast in meanings.

322. florebant segetes, grandine laesa seges: *seges* is
the reading of the most reliable manuscripts U, G and M.
Although *seges* has the overwhelming support of the
manuscript tradition, however, the repetition *segetes...*

seges has caused Peter, Landi and Peeters (1939, p.356) to prefer the reading *Ceres*, found in manuscript N. This metonymy would correspond to *Bacchus* in the similar tricolon at 263-266.

AWC defends *seges*, citing several passages where Ovid does use a repetition of this sort, including the example of *dotes...dos* in the preceding couplet. The polyptoton has the function of emphasising the contrast between the early flourishing of the crops and their subsequent failure, and this contrast is strengthened by the placing of the repeated terms in the emphatic positions before the central diaeresis and at the end of the line.

Given the strength of manuscript support, and the rhetorical effectiveness of *seges*, the text should be allowed to stand as given in AWC.

325. nec volui fieri nec sum crudelis in ira: Flora again stresses her benevolent character. Even when she does not act in a generous manner, she claims that she would like to be able to do so (cf. 247-248).

327-329. si bene floreat annus, \ numinibus nostris annua festa vovent. \ adnuimus voto: The verbal link between *annus* and *annua* suggests a link between Flora's

guardianship of the yearly cycles and the annual occurrence of her games.

This word-play is then reinforced by *adnuimus*, which echoes the sound of *annus* and *annua* in order to drive home the point.

331-354. Ovid explains why the Floralia is characterised by licentious behaviour. He argues that light-hearted behaviour is fitting for a goddess like Flora (331-348), pointing out the connection between flowers and frivolous behaviour (335-346), and explains the presence of prostitutes by showing Flora's special concern for the common people (349-354).

331. lascivia maior: Moral laxity seems to be the aspect of the Floralia for which the festival was most famous in antiquity. Ovid mentions this aspect of the festival on both occasions when he introduces the subject of the Floralia (IV.946; V.183), and Martial (*Epigrams* I.preface) uses the *ludi Florae* as a byword for licence. Rose (1970) suggests that this feature may derive from the Greek cult of Aphrodite Antheia.

Lactantius (*Institutiones Divinae* I.20.8) says that the games were celebrated not in honour of the flower

goddess, but a prostitute of the same name who left money for the institution of a festival in her will. However, Porte (1985, p.364) argues that this story is a fabrication, based on a similar story told about Acca Larentia (see Plutarch *Quaestiones Romanae* 35), to which Lactantius attached the name of the courtesan Flora, who was the mistress of Pompey. Cels-St.Hilaire (1977, pp.260-272) offers a more plausible account for the nature of the Floralia, drawing a parallel with the nature of the Bacchanalia, and demonstrating the link between Flora and Bacchus as plebeian, agrarian deities.

333. sed mihi succurrit numen non esse severum: By answering his own question without divine aid, Ovid finds a way of varying the Callimachean model for dialogues between the *vates* and his informant (see Sections 5.2 and 16.2). The variation here serves the purpose of sparing Ovid from having to ask Flora a potentially embarrassing question (see Rutledge (1973) pp.118-119; Miller (1983) pp.177-178).

335-340. tempora sutilibus cinguntur pota coronis...:

Lines 335-340 consist of three couplets each demonstrating a different type of frivolity which is usually accompanied by flowers and wine: feasting,

dancing and singing. The anaphora *ebrius... ebrius...* links the last two of these couplets, and the enjambements of *saltat* and *cantat* reinforce the parallel structure.

Garlands of flowers have a prominent role in all three examples, with *sutilibus...coronis* (335) being matched by *incinctis philyra...capillis* (337) and *mollia sarta* (340).

The word *pota* in line 335 is a non-manuscript reading which was put forward by Heinsius in place of the banal *tota* of the manuscripts. AWC retains *tota*, but I believe that the logical structure of the passage demands a reference to wine at this point.

Lines 335-340 consist of three couplets each demonstrating that frivolous behaviour is accompanied by flowers and wine. The idea of drunkenness is present in the second and third couplets through the word *ebrius*, but is lacking from the first if we read *tota*.

The corruption in manuscripts from *potus* to the more common word *totus* is highly plausible, and an example of this corruption in the manuscripts of Ovid is found at *Ars Amatoria* III.753.

Merkel's *laeta* is a less plausible conjecture, as

it does not tie in with the theme of drunkenness, and would be less susceptible to correction to *tota*.

339-340. ebrius ad durum formosae limen amicae \ cantat:

The themes of flowers and drunken behaviour allow Ovid to return to a world of banquets and excluded lovers familiar from his early poetry. Typical of such elegiac verse is the juxtaposition of *durum* and *formosae* on line 339, which expresses the paradox of the life of the lover, containing as it does aspects that are painful alongside those which are pleasant.

341-344. nulla coronata peraguntur seria fronte...:

Flowers and wine, which have been established in lines 335-340 as the symbols of frivolity, are contrasted with water and the absence of flowers, which are seen as symbols of seriousness.

Ovid embellishes the point by apostrophising Achelous; using the river god as a familiar metonymic representation of water (cf. Virgil *Georgics* I.9, with Thomas *ad loc.*).

345-346. Baccho placuisse coronam \ ex Ariadnaeo sidere

nosse potes: The argument that flowers are a symbol of frivolity is concluded with an example from mythology.

The point that the god of wine turned Ariadne's

crown into the constellation of Corona Borealis provides only a tenuous link with flowers, but Ovid artfully contrives to make the legend fit his point (see Section 5.4).

347-348. non est, mihi credite, non est \ illa cothurnatas inter habenda deas: Ovid applies his observations about the association of flowers and frivolous behaviour to the festival of the flower goddess. His insistent tone is conveyed by the epanalepsis *non est... non est*, punctuated by direct address to the reader (cf. the similar repetition in line 351).

349. turba quidem cur hos celebret meretricia ludos: The presence of prostitutes at the Floralia was the principal instance of *lascivia maior*. Lines 349-354 thus act as a corollary to the explanation of 331-348, supporting the general point about Flora's accommodating nature with a specific example.

351. non est de tetricis, non est de magna professis: The repetition introducing litotes picks up the rhetorical tone of line 347 (see note on lines 347-348).

352. volt sua plebeio sacra patere choro: There is a pointed contrast between *plebeio* and the word *magna* in

the previous line. Ovid uses the emphatic contrast between Flora and the more serious goddesses mentioned at lines 348 and 351 to explain the idiosyncratic nature of Flora's festival.

353-354. et monet aetatis specie, dum floreat uti; \
contemni spinam, cum cecidere rosae: Ovid justifies Flora's approval of obscene behaviour by means of the *carpe diem* motif. This motif is common in Latin love poetry (cf. *Ars Amatoria* III.79-80; Horace *Carmina* I.11.8), and Ovid's formulation of the theme here has especially strong echoes of Tibullus I.8.47-48: *at tu, dum primi floret tibi temporis aetas, / utere!*

The message spelt out in the hexameter is underlined in the pentameter by an example culled appropriately from the world of flowers. The *turba meretricia* who worship Flora are compared to the rose which is favoured only as long as it is in bloom. The exemplum has the remarkable effect of explaining the obscenity of the festival through an image of pathos and beauty.

355-378. The entry on the Floralia is rounded off with miscellaneous details about the festival. The reasons

for wearing multicoloured clothing (355-360), the presence of lights (361-368) and the hunting of goats and hares (369-374) are explained. Having delivered her information, the goddess disappears, and Ovid directs a closing prayer to her (375-378).

355-358. "cur tamen, ut dantur vestes Cerialibus albae, \ sic haec est cultu versicolore decens?...": Ovid varies the procedure for presenting material by suggesting an answer to his own question (see Section 5.2). In lines 357-358 he echoes key words from the previous couplet: *albescit* picks up *albae*, and *color...omnis* picks up *versicolore*.

Only in the edition of Ehwald-Lenz are these lines placed inside quotation marks. Presumably the other editors refrain from doing so because of the absence of a verb of speaking. The response of the goddess at line 359, however, indicates that these questions are addressed to her in the context of a dialogue with the poet. I therefore favour treating these lines as a direct speech of the narrator.

Direct speech without an explanatory verb of speaking occurs also at I.277 and IV.7-14 in similar situations where it suits the poet to vary his method of

presentation.

355. Cerealibus: Ovid compares the festival of Flora with that of Ceres in April. The comparison is a natural one: both goddesses are agrarian deities; both had a temple on the Aventine, near the Circus Maximus (see Tacitus *Annales* II.49). The two are frequently grouped together (see Cels-St.Hilaire (1977) p.253).

356. haec est cultu versicolore decens: Porte (1985, p.477) explains that the multicoloured dress was the customary attire of prostitutes as opposed to the white of *matronae* (cf. Seneca *Naturales Quaestiones* VII.31.2), and had no religious significance.

358. et color et species floribus omnis inest: Ovid compliments Flora by echoing her own claims, made in lines 213-214, about the colourfulness of her flowers.

359. adnuit, et motis flores cecidere capillis: Although the divine nod of assent is a traditional gesture (see Miller (1983) p.175), it is cleverly exploited here for the poet's humorous purpose, as he imagines Flora's nod releasing flowers from her hair.

The appearance of flowers upon the motion of the Flora's head recalls the exhalation of flowers as she speaks at line 194, and underlines the magical nature of

the interview with the goddess (see Section 5.2).

362-368. sic errores abstulit illa meos...: Miller (1983, pp.176-177) sees the humour in the situation set up in these lines. Ovid states that Flora removed his uncertainty about this question, but rather than giving one definitive explanation - as might be expected from a divine informant - Flora appears to give three alternatives (linked by anaphora), using the conventions of the human aetiologist.

It is only after she has given her third suggestion - that night time is appropriate for the obscenity of her festival - that Flora reveals that this is in fact the true reason for the presence of lights. The goddess thus toys with the listener, making him question her ability to provide a satisfactory explanation before finally revealing the truth.

By presenting three different explanations, Flora is able to bring some poetic elements into the discussion. The two false explanations which Flora offers stress the connection between light and flowers. In line 363 the metaphorical use of *conluco* (cf. Columella *de Re Rustica* III.21.3; X.293) and the epithet *purpureus* make this connection; in lines 365-366 Ovid

seeks to establish connections between flowers and flame, and uses the repetition and alliteration of *nec flos... nec flamma* to reinforce the parallel he draws between the brightness of the two objects.

369-370. "est breve praeterea, de quo mihi quaerere restat, \ si liceat" dixi: dixit et illa "licet": Ovid's final request for additional information is couched in respectful language. *breve* shows that the question will not inconvenience Flora, while *si liceat* indicates the poet's subordination to divine authority (cf. III.167).

Flora answers the request by repeating the last word of Ovid's question. This produces a comic effect (although there is not the sarcasm of V.237-238 and V.319-320), which is reinforced by the similar repetition of *dixi: dixit*.

The answer "*licet*" is an appropriate one for a goddess who is noted for her *licentia* (see line 367). The pun on *licet* and *licentia* is also used by Plautus (*Rudens* 1212-1226).

371-374. "cur tibi pro Libycis clauduntur rete leaenis \ inbelles caprae sollicitusque lepus?"...: Ovid's question about the hunting of goats and hares, and Flora's response in lines 373-374, both take the form of

a contrast between what is not the case and what actually is the case. As at lines 347-348 and 351-352, the denial of the opposite is used to add rhetorical force to the explanation.

The question and response are further bound together by the correspondence of *tibi* (371) and *sibi* (373) occurring in the same metrical *sedes*.

The epithets *inbelles* and *sollicitus*, with which Ovid describes the animals hunted at the games, anticipate Flora's explanation that she is associated with domestic rather than wild animals.

Ogilvie (1969, p.83) stresses the notorious sexual appetites of these animals (cf. Horace *Carmina* III.15.12, *Satires* II.4.44) and sees the purpose of their sacrifice as being to promote fertility. Bayet (1971, p.97), however, believes that the hunting of these animals was deemed to have a magical effect upon the health of the crops. Riley (*ad loc.*) suggests that hares were killed because of the damage they cause by eating flowers (cf. Ceres' revenge on the animals who eat the crops at I.349-350).

375. *tenues secessit in auras*: Flora's departure is described in Virgilian language (cf. *Aeneid* II.791). The

use of the epic phrase emphasises the supernatural nature of the encounter (see Section 5.2).

376. mansit odor: Huxley (1956, p.391) notes the other examples of fragrance being attributed to a goddess in Roman poetry. The motif is also found in Greek poetry (see Paley and Bömer *ad loc.*). It is especially appropriate for Flora to leave a distinctive fragrance as she is associated with flowers.

The fragrance which lingers on after Flora's departure is the poet's proof that he has been speaking with a divinity, guaranteeing the authenticity of all that his informant has told him. Professor Fritz Graf (in a paper given to the Triennial Conference of the Hellenic and Roman Societies at Cambridge in July 1991) remarks that Ovid's technique for reporting interviews with the gods differs from that of his model Callimachus in that while Callimachus stresses the unreality of these encounters, Ovid is at pains to assert the reality of his meetings with his informants.

377-378. floreat ut toto carmen Nasonis in aevo, \
sparge, precor, donis pectora nostra tuis: In delivering a final prayer for the goddess' favour, the poet adapts the customary "progress" metaphor (in which the poem is

normally pictured as a ship or chariot - see Kenney (1958) p.205; Feeney (1991) p.318) to present his poem as a flowering plant, which blooms and withers according to the goddess' pleasure (see Harries (1989) p.170).

The word *floreat* gives the prayer special relevance to the addressee. Just as Callimachus (*Aetia* fr. 7 [Pfeiffer] 13-14) couches his prayer to the Muses in language appropriate to those goddesses, Ovid's use of *floreat* and his plea for her to "scatter" her gifts on him, make the prayer relate specifically to the flower-goddess. (Similarly, at I.613, Ovid's prayer about Augustus is made personal by the use of *augeat*.) Furthermore, Ovid adds his own cognomen, Naso, to the prayer in a sphragis. The literal meaning of the name is particularly appropriate to the situation, for as Flora is characterised by the fragrant *odor* which she leaves behind her, a man whose name means "nose" is ideally equipped to receive the bounty of the goddess.

The special relationship between the goddess and the poet is further emphasised by the juxtaposition of *nostra* and *tuis* at the end of line 378 (cf. the similar effect of this juxtaposition in the final words of *Amores* I.3).

5.2 The Dialogue Between Ovid and Flora

The meeting between Ovid and Flora is one of many occasions when Ovid uses informants to give him information for his poem¹.

Ovid's informants have roles of varying importance. Many are used to resolve a single question, but Flora - like Janus in Book I and Erato in Book IV - holds a detailed conversation with the poet.

The presentation of information about the Floralia through this imaginary dialogue offers the poet several advantages². Ovid's meeting with Flora adds a dramatic element to the section on the Floralia; the meeting of the two shows the characters of these figures in an interesting light; furthermore, the dialogue form also allows the diverse information about the festival to be included in a coherent yet varied manner.

The chief dramatic effects gained from the meeting with Flora come from the exploitation of Flora's association with flowers. Flora exhales roses as she speaks. When she nods her head, a stream of flowers falls from her hair. At the completion of the interview she vanishes into the air, yet her fragrance lingers on in the place where she has been. These touches remind

the reader that Ovid's interlocutor is a goddess, and also provide a series of striking images to adorn the narrative.

The meeting of Ovid and Flora also allows the poet to make some humorous observations by reporting the interplay between Flora and the narrator.

After Flora has completed a seventy-six line speech, Ovid observes *talia dicentem tacitus mirabar* (275). Ovid marvels at the divinity of his interlocutor, but also perhaps at her capacity for talking, as the contrast of *dicentem* and *tacitus* suggests. He then observes on line 278 the alacrity with which the goddess launches into her next speech almost before he has finished his enquiry. There is also a certain humour in the observation of the rapport between the two characters at line 370. The juxtaposition of *dixi: dixit* highlights the dialogue format. Furthermore, Flora's reply of *licet* echoes Ovid's *si liceat*, as she turns the speaker's question around to provide a concise answer³.

The dialogue form also allows Ovid to break up his report about the origins and nature of the Floralia, and to present his information in a variety of ways.

The sections concerning the history of the festival

are presented through sustained speeches by Flora. When discussing the nature of the festival, however, Ovid varies the length of the speeches, and even in lines 331-354 answers his own query without questioning Flora. The variety which the dialogue form offers is especially prominent in lines 355-374. In these lines there is a combination of direct and indirect speech, and the length of the speeches varies from six lines to a single word. Indeed, at line 359, Flora replies to Ovid without speaking at all, and in lines 361-368 Ovid's enquiry is answered without his question being stated.

The length of the entry on the Floralia means that the poet has to take steps to avoid being monotonous. By introducing a goddess who provides information about the festival, Ovid is able both to give an air of authority to his account, and to engage the attention of the reader for the full length of the passage.

5.3 The Characterisation of Flora

The characterisation of Flora is probably the most successful feature of this section of the poem. The vitality and humour of the character is evident throughout the encounter⁴.

A notable feature of Flora's character is her self-aggrandisement. Miller⁵ notes the way she boasts about her own beauty, and the way she relishes her importance in enabling Juno to become pregnant and give birth to Mars. Elsewhere, she is also keen to associate herself with gods of the highest rank.

At lines 297-304 she refers to the gods in the first person plural, implying that she enjoys equal status with the more famous deities of Olympus. In the examples of neglected goddesses which follow, she uses the precedents of Diana and Venus to justify her own vengeance on the Romans when they neglected her rites, as though she were of equal rank with those goddesses.

Flora's self-importance is also seen in the way she claims a wide sphere of influence. At lines 261-262, she is at pains to point out that her functions are not merely decorative, but also extend to agriculture. Furthermore, she adds to her agricultural function a role in the production of honey and wine. Flora's importance in the production of honey is clear enough, but her importance in wine production revolves around a loose interpretation of the word *flos*⁶. Flora, however, is keen to stake a claim for her influence over as many

areas as possible, even if the grounds for that claim may be somewhat tenuous.

At the same time, Flora retains a certain mildness and benevolence appropriate to a goddess who is associated with flowers. On two separate occasions when she reports her own anti-social behaviour she points out that she wishes to be generous but is forced to behave otherwise. At lines 247-248, it is her fearfulness of Jupiter that keeps her from helping Juno. Similarly, in lines 325-326 she claims that it is her depression which forces her to neglect the crops in spite of her generous nature.

Flora is also notably talkative. She illustrates her arguments with a large number of examples; she reports her encounter with Juno at some length, using direct speech to recreate a conversational atmosphere; and she takes the initiative in the interview, barely allowing the poet time in which to ask his questions.

Flora's loquacity and self-importance may be detected behind some of the characteristic patterns which can be found in the goddess' speech. The most obvious of these is her tendency to use anaphora. On no less than six occasions, Flora begins consecutive

couplets with the same word or phrase. As Miller has shown⁷, the concentration of this sort of anaphora is much greater in Flora's speech than in the rest of the poem.

Flora also favours the device of the tricolon. She tends to fill out the points she makes by giving examples, usually in groups of three. These may take the form of a simple list, as in line 272 when she cites the different sorts of flower from which bees collect pollen to make honey, but often there is more detailed description, and variation in the way the different items are presented. Like the device of anaphora, the tricolon gives a certain expansiveness to Flora's style of speaking. This is instrumental in creating the impression of loquacity which critics have detected in Flora⁸.

Another prominent feature of Flora's speech is her use of the first person possessive adjective. This occurs frequently, indicating Flora's selfish and acquisitive nature.

Finally, Flora uses legal imagery with some regularity. In seeking to mitigate Zephyrus' rape of her, she claims that he possessed *ius omne rapinae* (line

203). At line 276, she uses a similar expression, referring to Ovid's freedom to ask her for information as *ius discendi*. In line 311, Flora sees the worship of the gods in terms of a legal transaction - *correctus* and *damnum* are technical terms which portray the vengeance of the gods in terms of legal restitution for criminal offences⁹.

The effect of these legal images is to portray events in a serious light, and this is consistent with Flora's apparent estimation of her own importance.

Flora's interest in the law is seen in more concrete terms by the detail in which she relates the legal actions brought by the Publicii against usurpers of the *ager publicus*. She uses legal terms like *vindex* (285; 290), *perduco* (287), *res* (289) and *multa* (289; 291) to show that her champions were acting in accordance with the rule of law.

There is, therefore, a consistency in Ovid's presentation of Flora that makes the character believable and interesting. Both the content and style of her speeches reveal her to be proud and loquacious, always emphasising her own achievements and her importance in divine and human affairs.

5.4 The Persona of the Narrator

It is generally recognised that the narrator of the *Fasti* should be regarded as a literary creation. Ovid does not necessarily represent his own character - whatever that may have been - in the poem. The figure of the narrator is rather a convenient device for the poet, enabling him to inject humour and drama into the proceedings¹⁰.

In using the narrator as a distinctive character in the poem, Ovid is following Callimachus. The narrator of the *Aetia* plays a significant role in gathering information for the poem, and presents himself in conversation with several informants¹¹. The function of the narrator is to link together the different explanations which comprise the poem and so provide the narrative with continuity.

Although the role of the narrator in the *Fasti* is similar to the role which Callimachus adopts in the *Aetia*, there are ways in which Ovid develops and expands the role presented in the *Aetia* to create an original and interesting character¹².

The interview with Flora sees the narrator behaving in a polite and respectful fashion. He listens to Flora

in admiring silence (line 275) and addresses her using conventional hymnic forms, calling her *mater florum* (183) and *dea* (277). Before asking an additional question he first seeks the goddess' permission, using the polite *si liceat* (370) and assuring her that he will not inconvenience her for long, since his enquiry is *breve* (369).

On two occasions Ovid compliments Flora by echoing her own claims about herself. On line 277 he calls her *dea* - a title which Zephyrus had given Flora at line 212, but which Juno notably neglects to use. Then on line 358 he remarks on the infinite variety of colours and shapes among flowers, repeating the point made by Flora herself in lines 213-214.

Ovid's technique of dealing with the obscene nature of the Floralia without asking for information from the goddess may also be taken as a show of politeness on Ovid's part. Rutledge¹³ has observed that Ovid spares Flora from the embarrassment of asking her to account for the presence of prostitutes at her festival. Furthermore, the poet skilfully skirts round the question of immorality, using euphemistic epithets such as *levis* (347) and *plebeius* (352) to describe the

festival.

At times, Ovid's apparent desire to defend Flora leads him to adopt sophistic arguments. In order to establish the connection between flowers, wine and frivolity which justifies the obscenity of Flora's festival, Ovid makes a tenuous link between Bacchus and flowers, stating that Bacchus turned Ariadne's crown into the Corona Borealis. Earlier in the *Fasti*, however, Ovid had said that the crown was made not from flowers but of jewels. It seems that Ovid is manipulating the details of the story to suit his own ends. He seizes on the word *corona*, which has associations with flowers, and uses it to forge a connection, even though the *corona* which Bacchus created may not have consisted of flowers.

Again, at lines 355-358, Ovid suggests that the multi-coloured garments worn at the Floralia were meant to represent the different colours of flowers. In fact, these clothes were the traditional dress of prostitutes¹⁴. Ovid's version is, however, more flattering to Flora, and may be seen as indicative of his unwillingness to embarrass the goddess.

Although the narrator treats Flora with great

respect, he also displays a certain amount of initiative, and brings his own character into the poem, being seen to be an obliging interviewer and an ingenious researcher into questions of Roman cult.

5.5 Flora and Juno: The Goddess in Distress

The story that Juno wished to give birth *sine coniuge*, and was helped to do so by Flora is unique to Ovid. However, the story does belong to a distinctive literary tradition. Scenes in which Juno entreats a minor deity to provide her with help are part of the stock in trade of epic poetry.

In the fourteenth book of the *Iliad*¹⁵, Hera approaches Hypnos and persuades him to send Zeus to sleep so that Poseidon can help the Greeks in battle. This scene is imitated by Virgil in the first book of the *Aeneid*¹⁶, where Juno persuades Aeolus to unleash the winds on the Trojan fleet, and - in a modified form - in the seventh book of the *Aeneid*¹⁷, where Juno approaches the Fury Allecto¹⁸.

In each of these scenes, the queen of the gods approaches the minor god with a kletic address, and wins his services with a bribe and a solemn oath. The

encounter between Juno and Flora represents a scaled-down version of this characteristic scene, as the epic theme is transferred into the more homely context of Flora's world¹⁹.

Ovid's account varies from those of his epic predecessors in several ways.

Firstly, in the *Iliad*, Hera addresses Hypnos formally and respectfully as ὄνοξ πάντων τε θεῶν πάντων τ' ὀνθρώπων²⁰. This sort of formality is repeated in the lengthy kletic address with which Juno approaches Aeolus in the *Aeneid*²¹. In Ovid's version, however, Juno does not greet Flora, but is hailed first by the flower goddess. When Juno does address Flora, she calls her *nymphæ*, a term which fails to acknowledge Flora's divine status²².

Secondly, in the Homeric account, Hypnos gives a lengthy account of his reasons for fearing Zeus' anger, basing his reservations on past experience²³. Flora does not need to consider such precedents to be afraid of Jupiter. Her fearfulness is a natural attribute of a gentle flower goddess.

Thirdly, the manner of Juno's pleading in Ovid's account is different. In Homer, Hera gains what she

seeks through polite bargaining. In keeping with Virgil's portrayal of Juno as an aggressive figure, the goddess addresses Aeolus in authoritative fashion. She speaks as one who expects to be - and is - obeyed. But in the account which Flora gives, Juno is presented as a distraught suppliant. Her speech is self-pitying, with *precor* (line 249) striking a more pathetic tone than is found in the epic passages.

A final difference can be found in the means by which Juno is able to persuade the minor gods to offer their assistance. In Homer, Hypnos is promised a golden throne and footstool, before finally being won over by the promise of one of the Graces in marriage. Aeolus is also given a bride as a reward for his services. Flora, however, merely receives a promise that her role in the affair will be concealed from Jupiter.

The differences in the various accounts reflect the meekness of Flora's character: she is treated less formally, and is won over more easily than Hypnos or Aeolus.

It might also be suggested that the differences between the story in the *Fasti* and the stories from epic are dictated by generic considerations. Formal speech,

and the elaboration of descriptions with catalogues and exempla are characteristics of epic poetry, whereas Ovid's elegiac narrative tends to use more informal language. Heinze²⁴ distinguishes epic narrative as possessing τὸ δεινόν - the sort of formality and authoritative style adopted by Homer's Hera and Virgil's Juno - while elegiac narrative possesses τὸ ἑλεεινόν - the gentler emotions such as are found in the self-pitying Juno and the meek Flora of the *Fasti*.

It is not possible, however, to regard this distinction as a rigid one²⁵. It is certainly possible to detect "epic" elements in elegiac narrative, and vice versa, when Ovid wishes to gain certain effects. Genre is not the sole - or even the primary - factor determining the tone of Ovidian narrative. The difference in tone between Ovid's account of Juno's appeal for assistance and the epic analogues is due in no small measure to the fact that the passage is reported by the cheerful, mild and loquacious Flora.

5.6 The Magic Flower of V.251-252

According to Flora's anecdote, the birth of Mars was achieved after she touched Juno with a flower. This

flower, we are told in lines 251-252, is unique to Flora's garden, and was transplanted from the *arva Olenia*.

This description raises the questions of whether the flower is to be identified with any particular specimen and what the significance of the adjective *Olenius* may be.

Longpérier²⁶ identifies the magic flower which Flora offers to Juno with the *arum*. It is possible, he claims, to imagine a folk etymology linking the name *arum* with Ares. In addition, various aspects of the flower's appearance could lead to an identification with fertility²⁷.

If Ovid took his story from a Greek source, such a flower may indeed have been at the heart of the original myth. Frazer²⁸ gives examples of the acceptance among primitive peoples of the propensity for certain flowers to enable human reproduction.

However, there are literary precedents for the occurrence of flowers with magical properties. The *μῶλυ* mentioned by Homer in the *Odyssey*²⁹ and the Golden Bough described by Virgil in the *Aeneid*³⁰ cannot be definitely connected with any actual plants. Thus the

magic flower which Flora gives to Juno may be a literary or mythological invention.

Indeed, in line 255, the flower seems to have something in common with these literary magic flowers. The resistance it offers when plucked is noted through the word *haerentem*. This corresponds to Virgil's comment that the Golden Bough was resistant to being picked³¹. Flora seems to draw a parallel between her flower and the mysterious Golden Bough, which suggests that the flower she is describing is not a species found in Italy in the first century BC, but a literary invention.

The notion that the flower is not to be identified with any existing specimen is supported by Flora's description of it as *hortis unicus... meis* (252)³².

The second point raised by Flora's description - the significance of the *arva Olenia* - presents greater difficulties.

The adjective *Olenius* has mystified most commentators. Frazer, for example, says "It is not known to which town Ovid here refers, or why he does so"³³. Bömer³⁴ suggests that Ovid is referring to the town of Olenos in Achaëa, which contained a famous shrine of Asclepius³⁵, and can thus be linked with the therapeutic

properties which the flower displays.

A more direct allusion is sought by Porte³⁶. She cites the attribution by Pausanias - and possibly Callimachus - of a hymn concerning the birth of Ares and Hebe to the mythical poet Olen of Lycia³⁷, and attempts to show that the nymph Chloris can be connected with the mythology surrounding this story.

Porte's argument for the relevance of Chloris to the birth of Mars are convoluted, and unconvincing given the fact that the name Chloris has no prominence in the text at this point. The owner of the magic flower is not the nymph Chloris but the goddess Flora³⁸.

However, Porte does raise the interesting possibility that the description of the flower as coming from the *arva Olenia* has a literary rather than a botanical significance.

The poet Olen is a shadowy figure from the world of mythology, but it is perhaps possible that Ovid did know of a version of the birth of Ares in a text which claimed to derive from the mythical hymn composed by Olen.

If Olen's hymn had been - possibly through the medium of a Hellenistic text - a source for Ovid's

narrative, the word *Olenius* might contain an esoteric allusion along the lines of those which have been seen in the references to Parthenius in Virgil *Eclogues* 10.57 and Propertius I.1.11.

Both Virgil and Propertius refer to the geographical feature of Mount Parthenius in Arcadia (*Parthenios...saltus*; *Parthenius...antris*) in references which may be complimentary allusions to the literary figure Parthenius, who was an influential figure in Latin "Alexandrian" poetry³⁹.

Ovid may be making a similar *double entendre* through the reference to *Olenia arva*. On a literal level he refers to a place-name with overtones of medicinal properties⁴⁰ and connections with the birth of gods⁴¹ but there may also be an allusion to the mythical poet Olen. The shadowy status of Olen as a literary figure must leave the matter shrouded in doubt, but the above explanation would account for the presence of the adjective in the passage.

The interpretation I have offered does have a possible significance for the understanding of line 253. In this line Flora quotes the instructions of the person who had supplied her with the magic flower, but she is

not specific about naming her supplier. Maybe we are supposed to infer that the flower was given by Zephyrus when he stocked the garden, or maybe Ovid is deliberately vague in order to gloss over an implausible aspect of his story.

However, if line 251 contains an allusion to the poetry of Olen, then - in one sense at least - the supplier of the flower will be Olen, and the speech which Flora quotes will be taken from the literary account which provided the source for the story of the magic flower⁴².

Notes to Chapter 5

1. On Ovid's use of informants, see Section 16.2.
2. See the detailed discussion of Rutledge (1980a).
3. See note on lines 369-370.
4. Critics are in accord about the success of Ovid's creation - e.g. Frécaut (1972) p.279; Rutledge (1973) p.117; Johnson (1978) pp.7-8.
5. Miller (1983) p.175. See also Frécaut (1972) p.111 and Winniczuk (1974) p.103.
6. See note on lines 269-270.
7. Miller (1983) p.176.
8. E.g. Johnson (1978) p.7.
9. See OLD s.v. *corrigo* 4; id. s.v. *damnum* 4.a.

10. The role of the narrator is discussed in detail by Newlands (1992). See also Rutledge (1980a) pp.328-329; Mack (1988) pp.32-33; Parker (1990) pp.5-7.
11. E.g. Callimachus *Aetia* fr.2 and 178 [Pfeiffer].
12. See note on line 376. See also Rutledge (1980a); Miller (1982) pp.401-407.
13. Rutledge (1973) pp.118-119.
14. See note on line 356.
15. Homer *Iliad* XIV.225-279.
16. Virgil *Aeneid* I.50-80.
17. Virgil *Aeneid* VII.323-340.
18. Cf. also *Metamorphoses* IV.447-478.
19. See Santini (1973) p.52.
20. Homer *Iliad* XIV.233
21. Virgil *Aeneid* I.65-75.
22. See note on line 246.
23. Homer *Iliad* XIV.242-262.
24. Heinze (1960) pp.308-403.
25. Little (1970) has trenchantly attacked Heinze's distinction as being too simplistic. Hinds (1987, pp.115-134) suggests a more subtle approach to the question of genre in the *Fasti*.
26. Longpérier (1850). (I have not yet been able to read this article, and so am reliant on the summary given by Porte (1983, p.882).)
27. These features are listed by Porte (1983, p.882).
28. Frazer (1914) pp.97; 263.

29. Homer *Odyssey* X.302-306. On this plant, see Page (1973) pp.64-66.
30. Virgil *Aeneid* VI.140-144. On the significance of the Golden Bough, see West (1990) pp.225-237.
31. See note on line 255.
32. It is possible that by this phrase Flora means that the species is "unique to my garden", in which case there would be little point in looking for an identification with a real flower. But Flora might also be saying that the particular specimen which she picks for Juno is "the only one of its type in my garden".
33. Frazer on V.251.
34. Bömer on V.251.
35. See Strabo VIII.7.4.
36. Porte (1983) pp.883-884.
37. Pausanias II.13.3; Callimachus *Hymns* 4.305.
38. Further criticism of Porte's argument is made by Riedl (1989, p.9, note 22).
39. See Aulus Gellius IX.9.3; XIII.27.1. The argument that Virgil is making a literary allusion in his reference to Mount Parthenius is set out by Ross (1975, pp.62-64).
40. See Bömer on V.251.
41. Cf. Statius *Thebaid* IV.104-105.
42. There are precedents for this sort of quotation in Ovid. See Conte (1986) pp.57-62.

CHAPTER 6: CENTAURUS

6.1 Commentary on V.379-416

379-414. The constellation of Centaurus rises. The origin of the constellation is traced to the catasterism of the centaur Chiron.

The story of Chiron's mortal wounding has a symmetrical structure: after an introductory couplet on the rising of the constellation (379-380), sixteen lines (381-396) build up to the central action, tracing the arrival of Hercules at Chiron's cave; at the centre of the passage, two lines (397-398) report how Chiron dropped Hercules' poisoned arrow onto his foot; then a further sixteen lines (399-414) relate the vain attempts to heal Chiron, and the eventual catasterism of the centaur.

379-380. nocte minus quarta promet sua sidera Chiron \ semivir et flavi corpore mixtus equi: The opening two lines constitute an epigram giving information about the constellation. This sort of epigram is a familiar means of introducing an aetiological story into the poem (cf. V.111-114; V.493-494; V.603-604).

381-386. Pelion Haemoniae mons est obversus in Austros...: The narrative begins with an ecphrasis. The

survey of the whole mountain in lines 381-382 is followed by the close-up description of the actual cave inhabited by Chiron. The progressive change of focus produces suspense, as the narrative builds slowly and deliberately to the main setting for the action.

The preliminary description of the mountainside also contains references which prepare the reader for the entry into the world of mythology in which the story is located. The mention of the pine trees on the peak of Mount Pelion at line 382 reminds us that the Argo was built from pinewood from the summit of this mountain (cf. *Amores* II.11.2; Catullus 64.1). Furthermore, the trees of this mountain were used, according to tradition, as weapons in the legendary fight between the Lapiths and the Centaurs (a story told in *Metamorphoses* XII.327-523). The references in the ecphrasis encourage the reader to think of Mount Pelion as the abode of mythological heroes.

385-386. ille manus olim missuras Hectora leto \
creditur in lyricis detinuisse modis: The couplet contrasts the bellicose future awaiting Achilles and the peaceful present, the contrast being underlined by the alliteration of key words *leto* and *lyricis*.

This contrast emphasises Chiron's achievement in tutoring the young Achilles (see Section 6.2).

387. venerat Alcides exhausta parte laborum: Ovid gives the drama plausibility by setting it at a specific point in Hercules' life. His ninth labour would have taken him through Thessaly on his way to the Black Sea to seek the girdle of Hippolyte. Thus the character does not emerge from a vacuum, but has a history which is familiar to the reader and which provides a reason for his appearance in Thessaly at this time.

389. stare simul casu Troiae duo fata videres: Ovid brings off something of a coup merely in the cast of characters which he assembles for the Chiron episode. Achilles is traditionally known as the most illustrious of Chiron's pupils (see Bömer on V.379), and Hercules' role in the death of Chiron is recorded in one side of the tradition (Eratosthenes *Catasterisms* 40; Hyginus *de Astronomia* II.38; scholiast on Caesar Germanicus *Aratea* 417).

However, Achilles and Hercules are not normally associated *with each other* in mythology. The bringing of these two consummate heroes together is, therefore, unexpected. The effect is all the greater for the

situation being a domestic one, rather than a scene more traditionally associated with heroic deeds.

Ovid invites the reader's personal presence at the unique meeting of the two great heroes through the use of the second person verb *videres* (cf. note on line 29).

391. excipit hospitio iuvenem: The youthfulness of Hercules contrasts with the venerability of his host (noted at lines 384 and 397). The contrast in ages is a key motif in the passage and is significant in view of Chiron's subsequent failure to handle the weapons that are meant for the youthful Hercules.

392. hic rogat, ille docet: Chiron finds himself in a humorous reversal of his normal role. Although he is a *doctor* (410), he now finds himself asking questions, while Hercules is cast in the role of instructor (see Section 6.4).

393-397. respicit interea clavam spoliumque leonis...:

The arms of Hercules are described in terms that become progressively more foreboding as the calamity approaches. In line 393 they are mentioned without elaboration. In line 395 the observation of the lion-skin as *horrens...saetis* creates apprehension, but it is only when the arms are being handled by the individual

who will become their victim that the detail about the arrows being poisoned comes to light.

The increasingly sombre nature of the mood at this juncture is also conveyed by the change from a predominantly dactylic rhythm to repeated spondees in line 395.

394. "vir"que ait "his armis, armaque digna viro!": The references to *vir* and *arma* seems to constitute a literary allusion to the opening line of Virgil's *Aeneid*. The association of these two words is commonly used in Latin literature to introduce descriptions with epic connotations (see Ogilvie on Livy II.40.2).

Chiron's exclamation turns out to be ironically prophetic when one of the arrows falls onto his foot (see Section 6.4).

397-398. dumque senex tractat squalentia tela venenis, \
excidit et laevo fixa sagitta pede est: This couplet, which describes the central action of the narrative, is located at the centre of the story's structure (see Albrecht (1968a) p.458). The preceding sixteen lines (381-396) describe the events leading up to Chiron's handling of the weapons, while the succeeding sixteen lines (399-414) deal with the consequences of this act.

The key word *excidit* is highlighted by its position at the start of line 398. Albrecht (1968a, p.458) believes that *excidit* is the first true historic perfect in the narrative, and that this fact, combined with the location of the word at the centre of the narrative gives the verb extra weight.

401-406. ipse tamen lectas Pagasaeis collibus herbas \
temperat et varia volnera mulcet ope...: After the description of the wounding there is a change of tone, signalled by *tamen*, as the possibility of a remedy is mentioned. The therapeutic processes of line 402 are accompanied by predominantly soft consonants - notably "v" and "l".

This optimistic tone is short-lived, however. In the following couplet sibilant consonants take over with *virus edax superabat* (cf. also *ossibus* and *pestis* in line 404).

The change of tense from the present verbs of line 402 to imperfect and pluperfect tenses completes the contrast. The imperfects *superabat* (403) and *dabat* (406) emphasise the continuous, irreversible nature of the poison, and the pluperfect *recepta...erat* (403-404) indicates the extent of the damage already done, and the

futility of further action.

407. ut ante patrem: The simile introduces the theme of Achilles' *pietas* towards Chiron - a theme that will dominate the remainder of the narrative, increasing the pathos that we feel for Chiron and Achilles and heightening the sense of tragedy (see Section 6.2).

408. sic flendus Peleus, si moreretur, erat: The conditional nature of the sentence has the effect of reminding the reader that Peleus will never in fact be lamented by Achilles because of the latter's untimely death at Troy. The comparison thus introduces an additional note of pathos to the scene (cf. note on line 407).

409-412. saepe manus aegras manibus fingebat amicis...:

In the final part of the narrative, Achilles' affection for his tutor is evident in his increasing desperation as he seeks to comfort him. The repeated use of the word *saepe* in lines 409-411 and the juxtaposition of the verbs *dedit*, *dixit* with asyndeton in line 411 give the impression of frantic activity.

Especially notable is line 412. As at line 394, direct speech is used to break into the narrative with striking effect. The parenthetic *precor* and *care...pater*

break up the syntax of the sentence to achieve the staccato sound of sobbing: "*vive, precor, nec me, care, relinque, pater*" (cf. Cydippe's similarly disjointed speech at *Heroides* 21.58; the use of hyperbaton to suggest heightened emotion is discussed in [Longinus] 22).

The word *pater*, which closes the speech, brings about a transition from simile (line 407) to metaphor. This striking equation of his teacher with his father marks the full extent of Achilles' affection and *pietas* (see Section 6.2).

413-414. nona dies aderat, cum tu, iustissime Chiron, \
bis septem stellis corpora cinctus eras: The report of the catasterism brings the passage full circle, and integrates the narrative portion of the piece with the introductory epigram.

There are several verbal correspondences between the introductory and closing couplets. *bis septem stellis* on line 414 corresponds with *sua sidera* on line 379. *corpora* on line 414 picks up *corpore* on line 380. Also the name Chiron occurs at the end of both line 379 and line 413, and the temporal phrase *nona dies aderat* on line 413 picks up *nocte minus quarta* from line 379.

These similarities between 379-380 and 413-414 provide ring composition, as the opening and concluding couplets form a frame for the rest of the passage (see Santini (1976) p.53).

414. bis septem stellis: The discrepancy between the figure of fourteen stars quoted by Ovid and the higher figures quoted by other ancient sources (see Frazer on V.413) would appear to arise from a confusion of the constellation Centaurus with Sagittarius, which - according to Eratosthenes *Catasterisms* 28 - has fourteen stars (see Peter (1889) p.81).

415-416. The constellation of the Lyre appears on the night of the fifth of May.

415. hunc Lyra curva sequi cuperet: Ovid seizes on the fact that Chiron was a teacher of the lyre (cf. line 386) to make a connection between the constellations of Centaurus and Lyra. The poet suggests that the appearance of Lyra so soon after the rising of Centaurus is due to the desire of that constellation to associate itself with the sublime musician Chiron.

416. nox aptum tertia tempus erit: Ovid gives the date of the rising of Lyra as the third night (inclusive)

from the third - i.e. the fifth of May. This date does not accord with either the correct date or the consensus of ancient opinion (see Frazer and Bömer on V.415).

Ovid may have taken the liberty of inserting the entry at this point because of the effect to be gained from the juxtaposition with the story of Chiron. The criticism of Fantham (1983, p.212) that the entry is inappropriate at this point ignores the literary purpose of the couplet.

6.2 The Characterisation of Chiron

The Chiron episode has been studied in detail on two previous occasions. Albrecht¹ looks at the use of tenses in the passage as a way of investigating Ovid's elegiac technique, while Santini² looks for an underlying etymological purpose to Ovid's account. While both of these studies are valuable, especially in analysing the structural principles behind the passage, neither of them touches on what I believe to be the two most significant aspects of Ovid's story - his portrayal of character and his use of irony.

The primary character in the episode is, of course, Chiron. He first appears in the narrative proper at line

383 under the matronymic Phillyrides³. This title acts as a reminder of Chiron's distinguished parentage: his father was Cronos-Saturn and his mother the nymph Phillyra.

The mountainous lair in which we find Chiron shows us his hardness. Two details from the description of the mountain emphasise its bleak nature. The mountain faces toward the South Wind, which is specifically associated with wet weather by Ovid⁴. Also, the configuration of trees on the mountain shows that the upper reaches of Pelion are unsuitable for the growth of deciduous trees, but can only sustain evergreens. Thus Chiron's abode appears not only mountainous, but also rainy and inhospitable.

The first explicit detail referring to the character of Chiron occurs on line 384, where he is referred to in the words *iustum...senem*. The epithet is picked up in line 413 by *iustissime* and represents the traditional portrayal of Chiron. Homer, for example, had called him δικαιοτάτος Κενταύρων⁵.

Lines 385-386 go on to give an example of this quality, namely his suppression of the warlike instincts of Achilles. Of all the subjects which Chiron is

reported elsewhere to have taught Achilles - medicine, music, hunting, astronomy, prophecy and law⁶ - Ovid selects only the playing of the lyre for mention here. The stark contrast between the peaceful art of music which Achilles practises under Chiron's supervision and the savagery with which the boy will subsequently kill Hector invites our admiration for the achievement of Chiron. For it is clear from the word *detinuisse*, on line 386, that Chiron is engaging Achilles' hands in an act that is contrary to the boy's natural temperament⁷.

The extent of Chiron's success in his role of tutor is indicated towards the end of the passage by the piety which Achilles feels towards his teacher. In lines 407-408, Achilles' grief is compared to the sort of thing he might feel if his own father were dying. Then, as if this comparison were not proof enough of the strength of Achilles' feelings, the simile becomes a metaphor. Chiron is no longer compared to a parent, but on line 412 Achilles actually calls him *pater*.

Further evidence comes from the urgency with which Achilles acts when Chiron is wounded. The techniques which Ovid uses to express Achilles' frantic behaviour have been mentioned above⁸.

Ovid's Chiron, therefore, is a figure from the heroic past, of divine parentage, hardy, and a responsible teacher of the peaceful arts who inspires enormous affection in his charges. The characterisation has a dual function: firstly, it provides the justification for Chiron's elevation to the sky as a constellation⁹; secondly, it increases the pathos we feel as we observe the agonies that he suffers.

Indeed there is one particular device through which we are encouraged to sympathise with Chiron. Ovid suppresses the hybrid nature of the centaur in order to allow us to envisage him as a fellow human. He is described as *senex* (384; 397), *heros* (391), *doctor* (410) and *pater* (412) - all terms which would naturally suggest a human.

When the poisoned arrow falls, it strikes him *laevo pede* (398). The word *pes* is a general term, applicable to all species. Its use here, in preference to the word *ungula*, which specifically refers to a horse's hoof, plays down the centaur's hybrid nature. Moreover, the term *laevo pede* cannot usefully designate which hoof it was that the arrow struck, for, as a centaur, Chiron has four legs, and two left feet! The term is appropriate,

however, to the human form which the reader is encouraged to imagine.

It seems to me that a similar game is at work with the word *corpus* in the piece. When Ovid wishes to portray Chiron as the constellation Centaurus, he draws attention to the distinctive double form of the centaur. At line 414 the plural form *corpora* could be seen as a humorous allusion to the fact that - owing to his hybrid nature - Chiron's body is in fact composed of two bodies¹⁰. In the portion of the narrative where Ovid wishes to make us feel sympathy for Chiron there is no such use of the plural. The singular form *corpore* on lines 399 and 404 hints rather at a single, pure-bred, and - I would argue - human form.

6.3 The Characterisation of Achilles

Ovid also takes care to present the character of Achilles in an interesting fashion. Of particular significance is the relationship between the Achilles of Homer's *Iliad* and the child in the story.

Achilles' youth forms an explicit contrast with the maturity of Hercules and the senility of Chiron. He is *puer Aeacides* (390) and *Haemonius...puer* (400). His

youthful nature also exhibits itself in his inability to refrain from touching the lion-skin of Hercules¹¹.

But despite his youth, Achilles' heroic status is not in doubt. The genealogical and geographical terms *Aeacides* and *Haemonius* are characteristically epic ways of referring to an individual. Moreover, the first mention of Achilles in the passage is a reference to the killing of Hector. This detail immediately makes the reader conscious of the link between the Achilles we observe in this episode and the Achilles of Homer's *Iliad*.

Final confirmation of Achilles' heroic status can be found in the parallels between Achilles and Hercules. They are *Troiae duo fata* (389), Hercules because he sacked the city after Laomedon had refused to pay him for his services in slaying a sea-monster¹², and Achilles because he killed Hector and thus precipitated the end of the Trojan War. Their equivalence is stressed in line 390 by the balance in the line - *hinc puer Aeacides, hinc Iove natus erat* - and in the way that both heroes are referred to in terms of their genealogy. This equivalence is re-asserted at line 400 by the similarity of their reactions to Chiron's wounding:

adgemit Alcides Haemoniusque puer.

More interestingly, Ovid takes two memorable attributes of the Homeric Achilles and uses them to suggest that the child in the narrative already contains within him the germ of the great hero of the *Iliad*.

Firstly, there is the way in which Achilles' piety towards Chiron manifests itself in his thinking of the centaur as a father. In the scene in the twenty-fourth book of the *Iliad*, where Priam entreats Achilles to return the body of Hector, the trigger which causes Achilles to feel pity for the king is the comparison which Priam makes between himself and Peleus, Achilles' father¹³. Achilles observes the pitiful state of Priam, and is struck by a desire to weep for his own father, for he knows he is destined not to be able to care for Peleus in his old age¹⁴.

Ovid's remark on line 408, *sic flendus Peleus, si moreretur, erat* puts the reader in mind of the Homeric Achilles' weakness for the suffering of old men, and the cause of that weakness - namely that he identifies their sufferings with those which are in store for his own father. Achilles' show of devotion to Chiron - revealed in lines 407-412 - can be seen not just as an index of

the affection that he has for his tutor, but also as a surrogate act of piety to Peleus, in which Achilles acts out the scene which he will not be able to act out on his true father's death.

A second reminiscence of the Homeric Achilles occurs in the prominence given in the passage to the hero's hands.

At lines 385-386, Chiron is said to have taught not Achilles, but his hands, which will one day kill Hector. This striking usage is then repeated at lines 395-396, where it is said not that Achilles could not keep his hands from touching the lion-skin¹⁵, but that Achilles' hands could not keep themselves from touching it. The repetition of this unexpected usage places great emphasis on the hands, which seem to have a life of their own. Further emphasis is provided by line 409, in which the polyptoton *manus...manibus* highlights the contrast between Chiron's feeble hands and Achilles' comforting hands.

The prominence of the word *manus* has been explained by Santini¹⁶ as being a pointer to the derivation of the name Chiron from the Greek word χεῖρ, meaning "hand". However, this theory depends - rather implausibly

perhaps - on the reader imagining Chiron's hands mirroring the actions of Achilles' hands in playing the lyre and handling Hercules' lion-skin.

The word *manus* is associated with Achilles rather than with Chiron in Ovid's account, and the hands of Achilles have a direct resonance in referring to the hero of the *Iliad*. At two climactic moments of that poem - the death of Patroclus in Book XVIII¹⁷ and the meeting of Priam and Achilles in Book XXIV¹⁸ - Homer focuses on Achilles' hands, which are characterised as ἀνδροφόναι.

Priam's remarkable act of kissing the hands that killed so many of his sons endows the hands with a distinctive literary significance. This is exploited by Ovid in his emphasis of these hands at childish play - in strumming the lyre and touching the lion-skin - and in the comforting of the father-figure Chiron. Behind the innocent activities of the young Achilles' hands, there remains, however, the threat of future deeds. As is pointed out at line 385, they will one day send Hector to his death: *olim missuras Hectora leto*.

6.4 Irony in the Death of Chiron

Besides the attention devoted to the depiction of

the characters of Chiron and Achilles, Ovid also manages to enliven his narration of the death of Chiron by the use of irony.

This device can be seen, for example, in the reversal of roles which takes place when Hercules arrives at Chiron's home. Although he is a teacher - he is called *doctor* at line 410 - Chiron now finds himself asking questions, while Hercules is cast in the role of instructor: *ille docet* (392).

A similar reversal is found at line 409. Whereas Chiron had once supervised the movement of Achilles' hands (385-386), when Chiron is dying, Achilles moves the hands of his ailing master. The irony of the situation is explicitly pointed out by Ovid in the following line: *morum, quos fecit, praemia doctor habet*.

The major source of irony in the passage is, however, the incident of Chiron's wounding.

Chiron receives Hercules hospitably, unaware that this act will expedite his own death. When he first sees Hercules' arms, the centaur exclaims, "*vir...his armis, armaque digna viro!*" (394). This comment constitutes more than a mere verbal trick of the sort dear to Ovid¹⁹. The word *vir* contrasts with Chiron's own status

as *semivir* (380) and *senex* (384 and 397). Chiron is not a *vir*, and so he is unfit to handle the arms of Hercules²⁰. When the arrow falls onto his foot as he tries to handle the arms, Chiron's utterance that the arms are "worthy of a man" is seen to have been ironically prophetic.

Even at this stage, we are led to believe that Chiron's status as a healer might save him. He draws the arrow out of the wound, but he is unable to draw out the poison. At lines 401-402, he seeks to use herbs to effect a recovery. The word *tamen* indicates a change of mood after the groans of the previous line, but the famous healer is, in fact, unable to counteract the effect of the poison²¹. The irony is made clear by the polyptoton *ope...opem* in lines 402-403: although Chiron soothed the wound with various remedies, the poison defied remedy.

Some points of irony in the passage are, I believe, more subtle than the examples I have just considered. There are two places in particular where the irony depends on allusions to episodes outside the dramatic situation of Chiron's death.

At line 398, we are presented with the picture of a

foot pierced by an arrow: *laevo fixa sagitta pede est*. As I have already argued²², the description is more appropriate to a human form than to the semi-equine form of Chiron. In fact, the image of a human foot shot by an arrow is peculiarly appropriate to one of the bystanders, for Achilles is destined to perish in the Trojan War, shot in the heel by an arrow²³.

At this stage, it would be convenient if it could be shown that Achilles' left foot was traditionally thought of as being the one struck by Paris' arrow. However, there are no helpful literary sources²⁴, and the archaeological evidence²⁵ reveals no clear consensus on this point. But even if there was no precise distinction in the tradition about which foot was struck, it is still possible to appreciate the dramatic significance of the scene for the watching Achilles.

Furthermore, we find a similar allusive technique at work in lines 405-406. As the poison spreads through Chiron's body, we are told of the mingling of Chiron's blood with the poisonous blood of the Hydra: *sanguine Centauri Lernaee sanguis echidnae / mixtus*.

Now it is Hercules' turn to sense in Chiron's misfortune a foreshadowing of his own death. The garment

of Nessus, which Deianira sends to Hercules²⁶, is smeared with the centaur Nessus' blood, and this blood had been infected by the poisonous blood of the Hydra from one of Hercules' arrows. The liquid on the shirt causes Hercules intolerable suffering, to escape from which he has himself placed on a pyre on Mount Oeta. The description given on lines 405-406 of the blood of a centaur mingled with the blood of a Hydra could - if taken out of context - equally refer to the death of Chiron or Hercules, depending upon whether the word *Centaurei* refers to Chiron or Nessus. As at line 398, the description has a significance outside its role in the narrative, pointing to the future death of one of the onlookers. It is not surprising, therefore, to note the reaction of Hercules and Achilles when the arrow lodges in Chiron's foot: *adgemit Alcides Haemoniusque puer*.

Notes to Chapter 6

1. Albrecht (1968a).
2. Santini (1976).
3. On the matronymic, see West on Hesiod *Theogony* 1002.
4. Cf. V.323; *Metamorphoses* I.66; XIII.725.
5. Homer *Iliad* XI.832.

6. See Bömer on V.379.

7. According to one version of the myth, reported by Diodorus Siculus (III.67.2), Apollodorus (II.4.9) and Aelian (*Varia Historia* III.32), Hercules was taught the lyre by Linus but killed his tutor in a fit of rage. The contrast between this story and Chiron's success in restraining Achilles' instincts makes the centaur's achievement seem all the more remarkable.

8. See note on lines 409-412.

9. This is claimed explicitly by Hyginus *de Astronomia* II.38. See also Albrecht (1968a) p.455; Braun (1981) p.2365.

10. The poetic plural is, of course, common in the *Fasti* (cf. Frazer on V.1; Bömer on II.151). However, the idea that the device is used to make a humorous allusion to Chiron's hybrid shape gains support from the fact that it is used repeatedly in the description of the two-headed Janus (see I.66; I.255; VI.123).

11. Compare Icarus at *Ars Amatoria* II.49-50; *Metamorphoses* VIII.195-200.

12. See *Metamorphoses* XI.212-215.

13. Homer *Iliad* XXIV.486-487: μνήσαι πατρός σουτο, θεοῖς ἐπιείκελ' Ἀχιλλεῦ, \ τηλίκου ὥς περ ἐνών, ὀλοῶ ἐπὶ γήρως οὐδῶ.

14. Homer *Iliad* XXIV.540-541: ὅλλ' ἓνα παῖδός τέκεν πανσώριον· οὐδέ νυ τόν γε \ νηρῶσκοντα κομίζω.

15. The translations of Frazer and Bömer are misleading in this respect.

16. Santini (1976).

17. Homer *Iliad* XVIII.316-317: ἰοῖσι δὲ Πηλεΐδης ὀδίνου ἔξῃρχε γόοιο, \ χεῖρας ἐπ' ἀνδροφόνους θέμενος σιγήθεσιν ἐταίρου.

18. Homer *Iliad* XXIV.478-479: χερσὶν Ἀχιλλῆος λάβε
γοῖνάτα κοῖ κύσε χεῖρας \ δεινὰς ἀνδροφόνους, αἵ οἱ
πολέως κτάνον υἷας.
19. A close parallel for this line occurs at
Metamorphoses V.345. For Ovid's use of antimetabole, see
Bonner (1949) p.154; for his general predilection for
verbal trickery, see Frécaut (1972) pp.27-58; Booth
(1981).
20. See Albrecht (1968a) p.456, note 17.
21. The irony of the doctor who cannot heal himself is a
common motif - see Aeschylus *Eumenides* 62-63 (with
Sommerstein *ad loc.*); Euripides fr.1071 [Nauck]; Servius
Sulpicius apud Cicero *Epistulae ad Familiares* IV.5.5.
Ovid's use of the theme is mentioned by Albrecht (1968b,
pp.412; 422).
22. See Section 6.2.
23. Rabel (1991, p.130) sees a similar irony at Homer
Iliad XVII.288-303.
24. See Dilke on Statius *Achilleid* I.133f.
25. This has been collected by Kemp-Lindemann (1975,
pp.218-222).
26. The story is the subject of Sophocles *Trachiniae*
552-1278.

CHAPTER 7: THE LEMURIA

7.1 Commentary on V.417-492

417-418. The constellation of Scorpio appears on the sixth of May.

417-418. cum cras lucescere Nonas \ dicimus: The simple recording of dates with their events brings the danger of being prosaic (cf. the criticism of D'Elia (1959) p.347). However, Ovid does vary the method of indicating the date. The alliteration produces a poetic effect. Moreover, the use of *lucesco* as a personal verb is a poetic form which does not occur in classical prose (see TLL VII.2.p.1703).

Also, the poet uses the first person plural verb *dicimus* to involve himself and his readers in the scene (cf. the effect of *videres* at line 29 etc.).

419-444. The ancient ritual of the Lemuria, at which the dead were honoured, is described.

Ovid introduces his new subject in four lines (419-422), before going on to explain how the Lemuria came to be located in the month of May rather than in February (423-428) and giving a detailed description of the ritual (429-444).

419-420. hinc ubi protulerit formosa ter Hesperos ora, \
ter dederint Phoebos sidera victa locum: By noting the date of the Lemuria by means of its relation to the rising of the Scorpion, Ovid integrates lines 417-418 into the main framework of the poem.

The passage of three days between the appearance of Scorpio is described through a periphrasis. The repetition of *ter... ter...* belongs to the language of epic (see Döpp (1968) p.64), and the elevated style is sustained by the references to Hesperos and Phoebus, which are also typical of time indicators used in epic poetry.

The passage of time is conveyed by first mentioning the appearance of Hesperos, the evening star, and then in the following line recording the departure of the stars as the sun rises.

421-422. ritus erit veteris, nocturna Lemuria, sacri: \
inferias tacitis manibus illa dabunt: Ovid emphasises the name of the Lemuria in two ways. The device of inserted apposition (see Solodow (1986)) sets the word *nocturna Lemuria* apart from the rest of line 421, and this effect is further highlighted by the assonance of the two words.

The adjectives in this couplet help to set the tone for the ensuing narrative. The two distinctive features of the Lemuria - its archaic nature and the fact that it took place at night - are alluded to by *veteris* and *nocturna*, while *tacitis* anticipates the eerie atmosphere of the ritual.

423. annus erat brevior, nec adhuc pia februa norant:

The swift rhythm of the pentadactylic line is appropriate to the swifter passing of the ten-month year which existed before the calendar was regularised by Numa (cf. the similar effect achieved by this rhythm at lines 415 and 547).

426. compositique nepos busta piabat avi: By portraying the commemoration of the dead through the figures of the *nepos* and *avus*, the scene is made more personal. In particular, one is reminded of the piety shown by Romulus to his grandfather Numitor at lines 75-76.

427. mensis erat Maius, maiorum nomine dictus: The juxtaposition of *Maius* and *maiorum* emphasises the etymological link which the poet wishes to make between the two words.

Ovid is pragmatic in assuming (as he does at I.41 and VI.88) that *maiores* is the etymological root of

Maius, and ignoring the alternatives raised in the unresolved debate in lines 1-110.

429-430. nox ubi iam media est somnoque silentia
praebet, \ et canis et variaae conticuistis aves: This couplet makes use of the conventions of epic poetry to set the scene for the nocturnal rite. The prominent position of *nox* at the start of the passage echoes Virgil *Aeneid* IV.522 and Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* III.744; IV.1058. The silent animals are also a feature of the same epic topos (e.g. Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* III.749; Virgil *Aeneid* IV.525). The epic connotations help to create a sombre mood far removed from everyday Roman life.

The silence is further highlighted by the alliteration *somnoque silentia praebet*.

431-444. ille memor veteris ritus timidusque deorum \
surgit...: The ritual is described in precise detail. Each step of the correct procedure is set out, indicating the importance of the scrupulous observation of tradition.

The ritual contains many elements which are commonly associated with the supernatural. The bare feet of the celebrant, the purification in running water (cf.

II.250; IV.655), the *fabae* (which Pythagoras had associated with reincarnated souls), the bronze from Temesa, which was commonly used in magic (see Bömer on V.441), and the ninefold repetition of the chants all contribute to the atmosphere of the ritual.

432. surgit: This action, which is in marked contrast to the depiction of quiet in the previous couplet, is emphasised by the enjambement.

433. digitis medio cum pollice iunctis: The chiastic word order, with *medio cum pollice* surrounded by *digitis* and *iunctis*, imitates the placing of the thumb between the middle and ring fingers to produce an apotropaic sign.

Rose (1944, p.93) and Bömer (note on V.433) assume that the *signum* is the "fica", an obscene gesture made by placing the thumb between the fingers. However, line 434 seems to suggest that the point of the *signum* is to create a noise in order to ward off the Lemures. Therefore the celebrant is perhaps to be imagined snapping his fingers.

435. perluit: The intensifying prefix suggests a deliberateness appropriate to the ritual. This comparatively rare compound is also found in the context

of a ritual at IV.778.

437-438. "haec ego mitto, \ his" inquit "redimo meque meosque fabis": The authentic atmosphere of religious observance is furthered by the language which is put into the mouth of the celebrant. There is alliteration and repetition in *haec... his...* and *meque meosque* which is typical of the formulaic utterances of Roman ritual (see Appel (1909, pp.160-162) on alliteration in Roman prayers).

439-444. hoc novies dicit nec respicit...: There are close verbal similarities between line 439 and lines 443-444, indicative of the formulaic nature of the ritual. *hoc novies dicit* (439) is matched in line 443 by *cum dixit novies*; *nec respicit* (439), which records the prohibition on looking back while the rite is in progress, is picked up by *respicit* (444) when that prohibition is relaxed at the end of the ritual; also *putatur* (439) is echoed by *putat* (444).

441. rursus aquam tangit: *tangit* contrasts with *perluit* (435). Whereas at the start of the rite the celebrant had been scrupulous in ensuring that he was purified, the subsequent washing of the hands is a more cursory action, performed only to satisfy the requirements of

custom.

442. rogat: After the discordant clamour produced by the striking of bronze utensils, the politeness implied by *rogat* is calculated to produce ironic humour. This tone is also perhaps present in the phrase "*manes exite paterni*" (see note on line 443).

443. "manes exite paterni": There is disagreement about the authenticity of the phrase. Rose (1944) regards the mention of the *manes paterni* as irrelevant to the Lemuria, and explains it as an error of Ovid or his source; Bömer (1957, p.128) explains the reference as mere *dichterische Erfindung*, influenced by Greek ritual language; Ferri (1955, p.291), on the other hand, sees the phrase as a transposition of an authentic religious formula, spoken at the Lemuria.

Ovid does not seem to have made a clear distinction between the Manes and the Lemures. The apparent ignorance of Varro on the point (see Arnobius III.41) points to a widespread lack of certainty about it.

Ovid's approach is characteristically pragmatic, and he uses details as they suit his current purpose. Thus there are elements of Roman attitudes to the dead which occur in both the description of the family

festival of the Feralia (II.533-570) and the account of the exorcism in the Lemuria. These similarities are probably due to Ovid's eclectic approach as much as to real equivalences between the two festivals. Danka (1976) is perhaps too uncritical of the evidence offered by Ovid in stressing the similarities between the two festivals.

444. pure sacra peracta putat: The alliteration in this phrase, and the assonance in *sacra peracta* produce an effect of harmony which is appropriate to the restoration of calm after the satisfactory completion of the rite.

445-484. Ovid explains the origin of the name Lemuria. He learns the derivation of the word from the god Mercury (445-450). Following Mercury's explanation, he tells how, after his funeral, Remus' ghost appeared to his foster-parents (451-458). The ghost makes an emotional speech bewailing his misfortune and asking to be commemorated at a festival (459-474). Romulus accordingly names the festival of the dead the "Remuria" (475-480), a name which subsequently became changed to "Lemuria" (481-484).

445-446. dicta sit unde dies, quae nominis exstet origo

\ me fugit: Ovid prepares for the invocation of the god by adopting the familiar pose of the perplexed student (cf. I.89-92; IV.189-190; V.1-6; VI.11-12).

447-448. Pliade nate, mone, virga venerande potenti: \ saepe tibi est Stygii regia visa Iovis: The invocation of the god follows the form of a hymn: the god is addressed with reference to his lineage, and his aretalogy is added to the appellation. There is also hymnic alliteration.

Mercury's function as the conductor of souls to the underworld provides the justification for his appearance to explain the origin of the name *Lemuria*. Thus Ovid focuses attention on the *caduceus* and his visits to the underworld.

449-450. venit adoratus Caducifer. accipe causam \ nominis: ex ipso est cognita causa deo: The epiphany of the god follows from the invocation in the previous couplet. However, Ovid surprises the reader by passing over the interview with the god and proceeding straight to a report of the information with which Mercury has provided him. This is a novel variation on Ovid's usual technique of questioning his divine interlocutors (see

Miller (1983) p.192).

After the meeting with the god, the narrator's tone is transformed. This transformation is shown by the contrast with lines 445-446, where Ovid expressed his ignorance of the subject. The two couplets have striking similarities: *causam | nominis* echoes *nominis...origo* (445); *ex ipso...deo* picks up *ex aliquo...deo* (446); *cognita* corresponds to *invenienda* (446). However, the emphasis in 449-450 is on the certainty of the poet in contrast to his previous ignorance.

452. male veloci iusta soluta Remo: The description of Remus as *male velox* is highly ironic. Ovid points out the paradox that Remus' athleticism, demonstrated in his leaping over the walls of Romulus' city, was not the source of good fortune, but led to his death. (For the use of *velox* to refer to jumping rather than running, cf. *Metamorphoses* VII.767).

Moreover, the phrase is particularly ironic in view of the fact that the name Remus is traditionally linked with the word *Remores*, meaning "slow" (see Wiseman (1991) p.117), while his killer bears the name of Celer, meaning "swift". The phrase *male velox* is thus a humorous reversal of the conventional associations of

Remus with slowness.

453. Faustulus infelix: As in the previous line, there is an etymological joke on the meaning of the name of the character. The name Faustulus appears to be derived from *faustus*, meaning "lucky", but following the death of his foster-son, this name seems most inappropriate. This irony is pointed out by the epithet *infelix*, which provides a pointed contrast with the literal meaning of Faustulus' name.

454. spargebant lacrimis ossa perusta suis: At Roman funerals, the remains were traditionally extinguished with wine (see Bömer on V.425). In this line, Ovid substitutes the tears of Remus' family for the wine, thus economically combining two acts associated with funerals into a single action, and hinting at the simplicity in which the early Romans lived.

456. utque erat, in duro procubuerunt toro: It is unclear what the phrase *utque erat* signifies. It may mean that the bed has no luxurious coverings (see Gierig *ad loc.*), or it may mean *ut erat illis non nisi durus torus* (as Paley suggests *ad loc.*). In either case, the point would be to evoke the frugal living of Faustulus and Acca.

However, Peter (*ad loc.*) interprets the phrase as a

reference to the grief of Remus' foster parents. They are so numbed by their loss that they are unable to think of arranging the coverings on the bed, and lie down on it *ut erat*.

On the other occasions when Ovid uses this phrase (I.503; *Metamorphoses* IV.474; VI.237; IX.113) it indicates an immediate response, meaning "without further ado". Peter's interpretation is, therefore, in line with Ovidian usage.

457. umbra cruenta: The appearance of a figure returned from the dead - especially one still bearing the physical signs of his murder - is a vivid dramatic device. The bloody state of Remus' ghost resembles the image of Hector at Virgil *Aeneid* II.272-273 (*aterque cruento | pulvere*), and also Dido's ghost at *Fasti* III.640 (*squalenti Dido sanguinolenta coma*).

On the contrast between Remus' ghost and Romulus' image in Book II, see Section 7.2.

458. exiguo murmure: Despite the attempt of Bömer (1957, pp.128-130) to show that the dead are not usually represented as having a different mode of speech from the living, the *exiguum murmur* in which Remus speaks is clearly related to the fact that he is an *inanis imago*

(463). The model is again Virgil (*Aeneid* VI.492-493).

The feebleness of Remus' voice is consistent with his pitiful state, and adds to the pathos of the scene.

459-474. "en ego dimidium vestri parsque altera voti...": Remus' speech maintains a highly declamatory style. He employs antithesis, irony, apostrophe and other rhetorical devices to make the case for having a festival named in his honour more persuasive.

The beginning of the speech establishes this declamatory style, with the exclamation *en* (459) and the imperative *cernite* (460) immediately demanding the listeners' attention.

Remus' rhetorical technique is particularly in evidence in lines 460-464. In these lines, the contrast between current misfortune and recently stifled happiness is presented in the form of a chiasmus: a statement of the actual situation is contrasted with a statement of the past situation (460); then an elaboration of Remus' past situation (461-462) is contrasted with an elaboration of the actual situation (463-464). Within this structure there are further rhetorical devices. The antithesis between present and past in line 460 is highlighted by the chiasmus *sim*

qualis...qualis eram. Also, the repetition of *qui modo* from line 460 into line 461 continues the train of thought from one couplet to the next, giving the impression of a great outpouring of emotion.

Further rhetorical devices used by Remus include the rhetorical question in lines 465-466, antithesis in lines 467-468 (see note *ad loc.*), exclamation in line 468, apostrophe in line 469, and anaphora in line 473.

461. si volucres habuissem regna iubentes: On the significance of Remus abandoning any claim that the birds he saw from the Aventine were an omen that he should be the rightful ruler of Rome, see Section 7.3.

462. in populo potui maximus esse meo: The alliteration draws attention to the pre-eminence which Remus nearly achieved, and the grandeur hinted at in this line contrasts starkly with *inanis imago* (463) and *forma relictæ* (464).

465-466. heu ubi Mars pater est - si vos modo vera locuti, \ uberaque expositis ille ferina dedit?: The conditional clauses after *si...modo* constitute a sceptical afterthought about the implication that Mars really is Remus' father - for if he were, Remus doubts that he would have allowed his son to suffer in this

way. (For the meaning of *si modo*, see OLD s.v. *modo* 3.a.)

These clauses do not constitute a sentence in their own right, and so ought to be included within the rhetorical question. The punctuation of AWC inappropriately turns these clauses into a wish.

467-468. quem lupa servavit, manus hunc temeraria civis
\ perdidit: The antithesis is based around two contrasts: *lupa* stands in opposition to *civis*, and *servavit* to *perdidit*.

The great irony comes from the fact that the word *civis* implies a high degree of civilisation, and yet in the case of Remus, the *civis* is the agent of barbarism, and wild beast behaves in a civilised manner.

468. o quanto mitior illa fuit!: The exclamation is in keeping with the style of the speech (cf. *en* on line 459 and *heu* on line 465), and underlines the rhetorical point made in the previous sentence.

469. saeve Celer: Remus' curse is dramatised by the use of apostrophe. Celer is addressed in the vocative even though he is not present. The aim of the address is to impress his emotions on Faustulus and Acca, rather than to communicate with Celer.

471. noluit hoc frater: The political purpose of Remus' exculpation of his brother is discussed in Section 7.3.

pietas aequalis: All of the manuscripts read *pietas aequalis*, but Heinsius suggested an emendation to *pietas, a, qualis....*

Given the rhetorical nature of the speech, with exclamations at lines 459, 465 and 468, *a, qualis* would indeed fit in with the general tone. Heinsius' reading, however, suggests that Remus credits his brother with an exceptional degree of piety, whereas the reading of the manuscripts implies that Romulus had the sort of piety that might be expected of a brother (*pietas aequalis* might be translated either as "an equal degree of piety [as I have towards him]" or "the piety of one born at the same time"). Line 472 (*quod potuit, lacrimas in mea fata dedit*) does not seem to imply the exceptional feelings of compassion that would be implied by *pietas, a, qualis in illo est!*, and so I favour retaining the reading of the manuscript tradition.

475-476. mandantem amplecti cupiunt et bracchia tendunt:

\ lubrica prensantes effugit umbra manus: Ovid uses a topos familiar from epic poetry, where pathos is achieved through the inability of the living to touch

the *imago* of their loved one (cf. Homer *Odyssey* XI.204-208; Virgil *Aeneid* II.791-794; VI.700-702).

479. lucemque Remuria dicit: There is universal agreement among scholars that the etymology which Ovid presents here is quite implausible: Bömer (*ad loc.*) calls it *nicht haltbar*; Frécaut (1972, p.41) talks of *fantaisie...surprenante*. In fact, the word *Lemuria* is probably derived from *lemures*, and ultimately from the Greek word *λομυρὸς* (see Paley on V.481 and Bömer on V.419).

The factual truth of the etymology is less important than the literary effect gained from the ghost story which it justifies. As Wilkinson (1955, p.266) has remarked, "Ovid was interested primarily in rhetorical or literary effect, and only secondarily in truth".

Harries (1989, p.177) argues that the implausible nature of the etymology can be explained by the fact that Ovid's source at this point is the god Mercury, who is subsequently (691-692) shown to be the patron of deceivers. However, Ovid is perfectly capable of producing transparently false etymologies (e.g. the one given in line 195 - see note *ad loc.*), without there having to be a complex explanation.

481-482. aspera mutata est in lenem tempore longo \
littera, quae toto nomine prima fuit: As in lines 195-196, the philological change is described explicitly. It is a commonplace that rough things become smooth in the course of time (cf. *Ars Amatoria* I.471-476; Lucretius *de Rerum Natura* I.311-318). Ovid seems to be implying that words are subject to the same process, and that harsh sounds are naturally changed into soft ones.

This argument is supported by the sound of the verse. The alliteration of initial "l" sounds comes to predominate as line 481 reaches its close: *lenem tempore longo \ littera*.

483. mox etiam lemures animas dixere silentum: This subsidiary etymological point is essential to the logic of Ovid's argument. In presenting the theory that *Lemuria* is derived from Romulus' *Remuria*, he is, in effect, denying that the word is derived from *lemures* (see note on 479). Thus he is forced to conclude that *lemures* is derived from *Lemuria*, and not vice versa.

484. hic sensus verbi, vis ea vocis erat: The pleonasm provides an emphatic ending, suggesting confidence in the derivation that has just been given. This emphatic conclusion is furthered by the alliteration.

485-492. The entry on the Lemuria is concluded with a series of miscellaneous points. Ovid notes the obsolete custom of closing the temples at the time of the festival (485-486), the superstition prohibiting marriage at this time (487-490), and the days on which the ritual was performed (491-492).

485-486. fana tamen veteres illis clausere diebus, \ ut nunc ferali tempore operta vides: Ovid's claim that there was an ancient practice of closing the temples at the Lemuria is corroborated by the comparison with contemporary custom.

The object of comparison is introduced as something that is clearly known through the evidence of the reader's eyes (*vides*). This appeal to what can be seen as a way of arguing for the existence of what cannot be seen is reminiscent of the philosophical arguments of Lucretius (see Long (1974) p.29).

487-488. nec viduae taedis eadem nec virginis apta \ tempora: quae nupsit, non diuturna fuit: Restrictions on marriage are also mentioned at II.559-562 and VI.219-234 (where the phrase *tempora taedis apta* recurs). Peeters (1939, p.43) sees the prominence of the theme as evidence of autobiographical content, which is brought

out explicitly in the passage from Book VI.

The alliteration and balance in *nec viduae...nec virginis* provide an elegant expression of the comprehensive nature of the taboo, while the two "gnomic" perfects *nupsit* and *fuit* give an air of authority to Ovid's warning.

489. hac quoque de causa, si te proverbia tangunt, \
mense malas Maio nubere volgus ait: Ovid appears sceptical about the validity of proverbs, thus creating the impression that his work is usually based on scientific principles.

The proverb *mense malas Maio nubere* is probably not meant to be taken over-literally, but is simply way of warning women not to marry at this time of year. The debate (reported by Bömer on V.490) about whether *malas* refers to prostitutes, ugly women, or women of evil character is beside the point. The formulation of the proverb probably owes more to alliteration (as Bömer suggests) and rhythm (as Porte (1985, p.288) suggests) than to literal meaning.

491-492. sed tamen haec tria sunt sub eodem tempore
festa \ inter se nulla continuata die: Ovid demonstrates his ingenuity and metrical skill by finding a way to

express in verse the complicated schedule of the Lemuria, whereby the rite was performed three times with an interval of two days between each performance, so that the celebrations fell on the propitious odd-numbered days of the month (see Frazer on V.421; Introduction to Bömer, p.35).

7.2 The Romulus and Remus Saga in the Fasti

As the legendary founders of Rome, the twins Romulus and Remus have a large part to play in the mythology concerning the city's festivals and customs. Elements in the Romulus and Remus story are used to explain details of the Lupercalia (II.359-422), the rites of Quirinus (II.475-512), the naming of the month of March (III.11-78), the Matronalia (III.187-234) and the Parilia (IV.807-862), as well as the name of the Lemuria.

Other rituals are also explained by reference to legendary figures from Rome's past. Hercules, Evander and Numa all have a prominent role in the *Fasti* as originators of Roman cults¹.

The six different occasions when Romulus and Remus enter the poem are notable for the way in which the

entries complement one another. There is no duplication of material, and the six entries cover the critical points of the story of the twins - their exposure and survival as infants, their early life as shepherds, the foundation of Rome, the killing of Remus and the apotheosis of Romulus. Thus the episodes build up - although not in chronological order - a composite picture of the careers of the founders of Rome.

The episode concerning the appearance of Remus' ghost can therefore be seen to operate on two levels. It can be read as a self-contained piece, which makes use of the supernatural element to produce a memorable scene². In addition the passage can be seen as one of a series of stories concerning the twins.

The passage is particularly relevant to two of the other stories in the Romulus and Remus cycle. It acts to counterpoint the appearance of Romulus' deified image to Julius Proculus (related at II.475-512), and also forms a sequel to the passage about Remus' death at IV.807-862.

The appearance of Remus' ghost has several points of similarity to the appearance of the deified Romulus in Book II. Both appear at night time, both make a

speech demanding that a festival may be established in their honour, and both disappear miraculously. These similarities suggest that the two passages are meant to be seen as complementary pieces.

As well as having several similarities, however, the passages also have several points of contrast. The subdued atmosphere of the *prima crepuscula*, when Remus appears, differs markedly from the bright moonlight in which his brother is seen. The most notable point of contrast is the difference in the appearance of the two figures. Remus' ghost is a pathetic wraith, who draws attention to his wretched state as an *inanis imago*³. Romulus-Quirinus on the other hand is *pulcher et humano maior trabeaque decorus* (II.503). A further distinction between the two epiphanies can be found in the tone of the messages they give. Remus appeals for sympathy and asks Faustus and Acca to appeal to Romulus *per lacrimas*. His brother, however, has precisely the opposite message. He tells the Romans to put aside their tears and cease mourning.

The differences between the two accounts emphasise the contrasting fates of the twins. Remus' pitiful state is shown to be even more unfortunate when compared with

the future that awaits his brother.

The appearance of Remus ghost also operates as a foot-note to the entry on Remus' death in Book IV. The story in Book V begins with a summary of the funeral of Remus. All of the details - the presence of the brothers' foster-parents, Acca's ritually unbound hair, and the tears shed for Remus⁴ - recall the scene from the previous book, and establish a continuity between the two entries.

Furthermore, in the course of his speech the ghost of Remus makes further allusions to the description of Book IV. He confirms the version of events offered in that passage by cursing Celer as his murderer and exculpating Romulus of all blame⁵, and at line 470 he describes himself as *sanguinolentus*, the same word which was used to describe his corpse at IV.844.

A final point of correspondence comes in the observation of Romulus' piety in both passages. Remus commends his brother for his piety at line 471, and this praise is justified by Romulus' action in acceding to his foster-parents' request and naming the festival of the dead after Remus. This character portrayal is consistent with the emphasis in Book IV on Romulus'

fraternal piety, which reveals itself at Remus' funeral in spite of his best efforts to restrain his grief⁶.

7.3 The Remus Legend and Augustan Politics

The version of the death of Remus which Ovid presents in this passage and in Book IV differs from the accounts of Livy⁷, Dionysius of Halicarnassus⁸ and Plutarch⁹ in a highly significant respect. While the other writers who relate the story report that Romulus was - whether directly or indirectly - involved in the killing of his brother, Ovid's Remus not only names Celer as his killer but energetically exculpates Romulus from any involvement in the incident.

Indeed Remus' support of his brother goes further than this, for he makes it clear that he has no claim on Romulus' throne. Livy, Dionysius and Plutarch all maintain that Remus disputed his brother's claim to the throne on the grounds that an augury had appeared to him on the Aventine hill before Romulus had seen his augury on the Palatine, and that this dispute led to Remus' death.

In the *Fasti*, however, a different version of events - one which plays down the notion of fraternal

strife - is presented. At IV.817-818, Romulus' augury is shown to be conclusive: *sex Remus, hic volucres bis sex videt ordine; pacto \ statur, et arbitrium Romulus urbis habet*. Remus makes no claim for himself on the grounds of priority - even though it is clear from the word *ordine* that he saw his omen first - but he accepts Romulus' right to the kingdom.

Romulus' claim is presented in an even more favourable light in Book V. At V.151-152, Remus is said to have waited on the Aventine *frustra*, and his brother is said to have received *prima signa*. This version of events does not even allow for the possibility of Remus disputing Romulus' right to sole authority in the new city.

In lines 461-462, Remus' ghost seems to uphold this version of the story. In remarking that he might have held supreme power in Rome, he adds an unfulfilled condition: *si volucres habuissem regna iubentes*. There is no suggestion that he actually did receive an authentic omen which might justify a claim to Romulus' throne.

The novel variation which Ovid presents in the *Fasti* removes the motivation which is ascribed to

Romulus in those versions of the myth in which Romulus is instrumental in his brother's murder. Without a conflict concerning the auguries, there is no dissent between the twins, and Remus' death can be depicted as a genuine accident.

The notion that Romulus had no part in Remus' death - and indeed that he deeply regretted and lamented his brother's killing - has a special significance in view of the way in which the theme of fratricide was used in contemporary literature¹⁰.

The civil discord which had plagued Rome through the first century BC had come to be regarded as an inescapable part of Rome's destiny, caused by the strife which had existed between Romulus and Remus at the time of the city's foundation. This idea is spelt out clearly by Horace in the *Epodes*¹¹.

However, with the ending of the civil wars and the establishment of the *pax Augusta*, the notion that Rome was destined to endure repeated civil wars came to be revised¹². Therefore the relations between Romulus and Remus were seen in a different light. In Augustan literature, the theme of discord between the twins is replaced by one of reconciliation¹³.

Moreover, it is common in Augustan literature to compare Augustus with Romulus. In 27 BC there had been a debate about whether Octavian should assume the title of Romulus¹⁴. Although this title was rejected in favour of Augustus, the rule of the *princeps* was perceived as a new age in the history of Rome, and Augustus was seen as a new founder of the city¹⁵.

Augustus thus claimed a political function analogous with that of Romulus, and also claimed membership of the same Julian family.

Ovid's presentation of the death of Remus is notably complimentary to Romulus. It plays down the idea of any dispute between the twins, exculpates Romulus from the charge of murder, and indeed stresses the piety which Romulus felt towards Remus. Romulus is shown shedding tears for his dead brother, and commemorating Remus by naming the festival of the "Remuria" after him. The piety which Romulus shows is something of a family trait, originating in Aeneas, and evident in Augustus' behaviour to his adopted father, Julius Caesar¹⁶.

By presenting a sympathetic Romulus figure - in contrast to the accounts of the historians - Ovid removes the stigma of fratricide from the city's

foundation myth, thus presenting a story which is in harmony with contemporary ideas about a new golden age, and presents Romulus as a satisfactory predecessor for the emperor Augustus¹⁷.

Notes to Chapter 7

1. On the role of Hercules in the *Fasti*, see Parker (1990, pp.178-234); on Evander, see Fantham (1992); on Numa see Hinds (1992, pp.118-124).
2. See Hinds (1992, p.145): "In what has some claims to be the poem's most chilling moment, the bloodstained ghost of Remus makes an extraordinary epiphany".
3. Drossart (1972, p.199) is perhaps guilty of over-interpretation when he sees the epithet *lubrica* as evoking the chthonic nature of Remus, in contrast to Romulus' celestial appearance, but the general point about the contrast between the two is clearly valid.
4. Especially notable are the correspondences between V.451 and IV.849-852, V.453 and IV.854, and V.454 and IV.855-856.
5. See Section 7.3.
6. See IV.845-852.
7. Livy I.7.
8. Dionysius of Halicarnassus I.86-87.
9. Plutarch *Romulus* 9-10.
10. See Wagenvoort (1956) pp.169-183; Jal (1963) pp.407-410.
11. Horace *Epodes* 7.17-20.

12. See Schilling (1960) pp.188-193; Jal (1963) pp.407-410.
13. E.g. Virgil *Aeneid* I.291-293.
14. See Suetonius *Augustus* 7.2; Dio LIII.16.7; Florus IV.12.66.
15. The comparison of political leaders with the city's founder was a standard practice - see Weinstock (1971) pp.175-199. On the identification of Augustus with Romulus, see Scott (1925).
16. See III.709-710; V.569-570.
17. A radically different interpretation of Ovid's treatment of the death of Remus is offered by Hinds (1992, pp.142-149).

CHAPTER 8: ORION

8.1 Commentary on V.493-544

493-544. Ovid discusses the constellation of Orion, which disappears from view on the eleventh night of May.

After an introductory couplet introducing the new subject (493-494), Ovid tells how Hyrieus offered hospitality to Jupiter, Mercury and Neptune (495-504), and presented the gods with a feast in his humble cottage (505-522). When offered a wish in return, he asked to become a father (523-530), and the gods rewarded him with a son, Orion (531-536). After this detailed story of Orion's birth, his life and death are summarised in the final eight lines of the passage (537-544).

493-494. quorum si mediis Boeotum Oriona quaeres, \
falsus eris: It is curious that Ovid chooses to include an entry on Orion on a date when the constellation is not visible.

Ovid's usual practice is to write about stars at the time of their rising. The setting of a constellation is used as the justification for telling a catasterism story on only one other occasion in the *Fasti* (the Dolphin at II.79-118). These departures from Ovid's

normal practice would indicate that the ordering of the material in the *Fasti* is not pre-ordained by the calendar. On the contrary, Ovid allows himself some latitude in placing astronomical entries where they will be most effective (cf. note on line 416). The catasterism of Orion could have been related in Book IV (the "apparent", as opposed to the "true", setting of the constellation is recorded at IV.387-388) or Book VI (the rising of the star is noted at VI.785-788), but Ovid chooses to tell the story at length in Book V.

Phillips (1992, pp.67-68) believes that the insertion of the story at this point makes a theological point about the difference between Roman religion - which Ovid shows in the previous entry to be based on equality and fairness - and Greek mythology, in which favoured individuals acquire special privileges. However, this judgement overstates the extent to which the rewards which are made in the Greek myth are undeserved. It is by no means obvious that Hyrieus and Orion are not deserving of their fates and that Remus is deserving of his. Indeed, Orion is said to achieve *meriti praemia* (544), and Hyrieus is shown as a pious individual who deserves the gift he is given by the

gods.

A more plausible explanation for the insertion of the Orion story at this point is that it allows the structure of the book, in which Roman pieces alternate with Greek myths, to be maintained (see Section 14.1).

495. lato qui regnat in aequore frater: Neptune is identified by an ornate description which throws emphasis onto the character who will be instrumental in the crucial revelation of the gods' identity.

The scope of Neptune's domain will form a contrast with the description of Hyrieus as *angusti cultor agelli* (499). *latus* is the opposite of *angustus*; *qui regnat* contrasts with *cultor*; and the epic term *aequor* is far removed from the diminutive *agellus*.

497-498. tempus erat quo versa iugo referuntur aratra, \
et pronus saturae lac bibit agnus ovis: The motif of oxen returning from the plough has associations with epic poetry. It is used by Homer to indicate the approach of evening at *Iliad* XVI.779 and *Odyssey* IX.58. However, the description also evokes the world of pastoral, bearing a close resemblance to Virgil *Eclogues* 2.66: *aratra iugo referunt suspensa iuveni*. The image is also found at Horace *Epodes* 2.63 in an idyllic

portrayal of country life. The closely observed picture of the lamb straining forward to receive its mother's milk adds to the pastoral setting.

499. forte: Chance plays a significant role in the mythological stories which Ovid relates, both in the *Fasti* and in the *Metamorphoses*. The apparently random meetings of characters who just happen to be in the same vicinity (cf. II.305-306; III.508; *Metamorphoses* XI.162) are structurally necessary for the unfolding of the narrative.

senex Hyrieus, angusti cultor agelli: Heinze (1960, p.348) and Bömer (note on V.493) point out that no other source envisages Hyrieus as a poor farmer - he is a king according to Hyginus (*Fabulae* 195). In converting the character into a pious rustic Ovid is able to exploit the great contrast between him and the visiting gods (see, for example, the note on line 495).

500. exiguum stabat ut ante casam: The word *casa* has strong associations with the earliest history of Rome (see I.199; V.94; Hollis on *Metamorphoses* VIII.633). Even though the setting is Boeotia in the Golden Age when the gods used to walk among mortals, Ovid brings in elements of Italy in olden times in order to strike a

chord with his Roman audience (see also note on lines 509-510).

501. "longa via est nec tempora longa supersunt": The contrast between *longa via* and *nec tempora longa* is highlighted by the chiastic word order and the repetition of *longa*. The antithetical nature of the phrase gives the impression of a rustic proverb.

503. addidit et voltum verbis: It is standard practice amongst teachers of rhetoric to stress the primary importance of facial expression in pleading a convincing case (see Cicero *de Oratore* III.221; Quintilian XI.3.72).

504. parent promissis dissimulantque deos: The double alliteration is striking, and contributes to the balanced structure of the line. Ovid succinctly rounds off the introductory passage and moves swiftly to the scene inside the *casa*.

505. nigro deformia fumo: The blackened ceiling of the cottage is a realistic detail. Although there are elements of pastoral in the setting (see note on lines 497-498), the poet concentrates in the main on observing everyday details which express the incongruity of the presence of gods in the home of a poor farmer.

506-508. ignis in hesterno stipite parvus erat...: The task of lighting the fire is commonly used as an example of the drudgery which is involved in simple country living (cf. Baucis at *Metamorphoses* VIII.641-645; Simulus at [Virgil] *Moratum* 8-12). The toil inherent in the task is brought out by *genu nixus* and *exsuscitatus* on line 507.

509-510. stant calices; minor inde fabas, holus alter habebat, \ et spumat testo pressus uterque suo: The domestic scene is described in terms which would be familiar to Ovid's Roman audience as a reminiscence of rural life in the Italy of their ancestors.

The diet of vegetables is a feature of old-fashioned country living (cf. Juvenal *Satires* 11.77-79), and the earthenware tiles which cover the cooking pots are also associated with Italian country living (cf. Hollis (1990) p.349).

512. accipit aequoreus pocula prima deus: Neptune is again adverted to by means of antonomasia (as at line 495). Perhaps it is appropriate that the *aequoreus deus* should be the recipient of wine (see Section 8.4).

513-514. "da nunc bibat ordine" dixit \ "Iuppiter." audito palluit ille Iove: *Iuppiter*, which is the word

which reveals to Hyrieus that his visitors are gods, is emphasised both by its separation from the remainder of Neptune's speech and by the enjambement.

The polyptoton *Iuppiter...Iove* further underlines the significance of the word in revealing the gods' true identity (cf. the similar use of the device at II.167-168).

515-516. cultorem pauperis agri \ immolat et magno torret in igne bovem: The phrase *cultor pauperis agri* bears a close similarity to *angusti cultor agelli* (499), and so at first sight would seem to be a natural way of describing Hyrieus. It is, therefore, surprising when the phrase turns out to be the object of the verb *immolat*, and at the end of the couplet it is revealed that the *cultor pauperis agri* is, in this case, Hyrieus' ox.

The sacrifice of the ox is seen by Heinze (1960, p.348), Bömer (note on V.493) and D'Elia (1959, p.354) as being incongruous. Baucis and Philemon prepare to sacrifice a goose, but they are forbidden to kill it by their divine guests (*Metamorphoses* VIII.684-688). The sacrifice of so large an animal as an ox would appear to be a relic from a different version of the myth, in

which Hyrieus was a rich man and offered sumptuous hospitality to the gods (see note on line 499).

The presence of the sacrifice in Ovid's narrative does, however, fulfil an important structural function, for the hide of the animal is used in the procreation miracle at line 531. (See also Section 8.2.)

519-522. flumineam lino celantibus ulvam, \ sic quoque non altis, incubuere toris...: Although Hyrieus goes to excessive lengths in entertaining his guests, his aspirations to sophistication are undercut by reminders of his limited means (see Section 8.3).

523-524. verba fuere Iovis: "si quid fert impetus, opta: \ omne feres." placidi verba fuere senis: The opening two and a half feet of the hexameter are echoed at the end of the pentameter. This type of "circular" couplet is a favourite rhetorical device of Ovid (see McKeown on *Amores* I.9.1-2).

On this occasion, the repetition does not perform the customary function of underlining the importance of a phrase. The two half-lines are not precisely equivalent here: *senis* in line 524 replaces *Iovis* in the previous line, and rather than rounding the couplet off in emphatic style, the final half-line looks forward to

the next six lines.

The effect of the repetition of the formula *verba fuere* is to equate the speech of Hyrieus with the speech of Jupiter. Like Numa at III.339-346 (compare also the parallel between III.331-333 and V.514-515), Hyrieus is not overwhelmed by the status of his interlocutor, but is able to bandy words with the king of the gods.

525-526. primae mihi tvere† iuventae \ cognita: The text is very uncertain at this point. The main surviving manuscripts give the following readings:

U: *carae mihi prima iuventae \ cognita*

G: *primae mihi cura iuventae \ condita*

M: *cara mihi prima iuventa \ cognita*

M¹: *primae mihi cara iuventae \ condita*

M²: *primae mihi cura iuventae \ cognita*

Some editors have adopted one or another of these readings, while some have introduced new variants. Bentley suggested *primae mihi flore iuventae*; Baehrens changed Bentley's *flore* to *vere* to produce the text adopted by AWC.

The sense of the passage is plain enough: Hyrieus once had a beloved wife, but she died when they were young - *primae... iuventae* forms a contrast with *senis*

on line 524.

One part of the problem presents little difficulty: *cognita* is rightly preferred to *condita* by the editors. *condita* would remove the effect of *urna tegit* at the end of the couplet; its presence can be explained by the subject matter (just as *cognita* is corrupted to *condita* because of the influence of *tego* here, so *lego* is corrupted to *tego* in the manuscripts at *Amores* III.6.73-74 because of the influence of *condita*).

The word *cognita* would seem to require that the last four words of the hexameter constitute an adverbial phrase with an ablative dependent on the participle, rather than an appositional phrase with a nominative dependent on *coniunx*. Most closely parallel is *Metamorphoses* XII.180-181: *cuius certamine pugnae | cognitus*. None of the manuscript readings seem to fit with this verbal pattern.

There must be some doubt about the correctness of *cara* and *cura* because of the presence of *cara* earlier in line 525, and so Bentley's *primae mihi flore iuventae* and Baehrens' *primae mihi vere iuventae* are attractive.

There is little evidence on which to make a choice between these two readings, however. Neither *flos*

iuventae nor *ver iuventae* are unusual phrases (see Baehrens on Catullus 68.16), and as neither has any manuscript support the place should perhaps be marked as a *locus desperandus*.

526. nunc ubi sit quaeritis?: Hyrieus imagines the gods asking him where his wife is now. But since he made a vow to them after her death that he would not remarry, the gods should be aware of the situation. The gods are wittily shown to be unaware of their own business.

527. vobis in verba vocatis: As Frécaut (1972, p.297) observes, there is humour in the idea that the gods on whom Hyrieus swore are actually present as the old man informs them about the oath. Again, he should not have to tell the gods this information.

530. nec coniunx et pater esse volo: Hyrieus' request is expressed in the form of a paradox, in keeping with his taste for epigram and humour (see Section 8.3).

The construction *nec... sed...* is more familiar than *nec... et...* (see Bömer *ad loc.*), and some editors prefer that reading. However, *et* gives a more precise meaning than *sed* in this case. It is clear from lines 527-529 that refraining from re-marriage is most important to Hyrieus. Thus his request is specifically

"I want to be a father and at the same time I want not be a husband". This request is more precise than saying "I do not want to be a husband but I want to be a father".

531-532. adnuerant omnes. omnes ad terga iuveni \
constiterant - pudor est ulteriora loqui: The sudden change from the perfect tense to the pluperfect is characteristic of Ovid's technique in the *Fasti*. The reader awaits a development in the plot - in this case, the response to Hyrieus' request - but when this comes it is reported as already having taken place. The technique (which is discussed by Albrecht (1968a) pp.463-465) is particularly convenient here, as it allows the detail of the gods urinating over the ox-hide to be passed over in a *praeteritio*.

The passing over of material that might be shocking or offensive is a device that can be traced back to Callimachus (*Aetia* fr.75 [Pfeiffer] 4-5). It is common in Ovid. Explicit descriptions are avoided in favour of phrases such as *cetera quis nescit?* (*Amores* I.5.25) or *ulteriora pudet docuisse* (*Ars Amatoria* III.769).

533. superiniecta texere madentia terra: The word *madentia* makes it clear that the gods have urinated on

the hide, despite the claim of Bömer (note on V.535) that Orion was created not from urine but from semen (*urina genitalis*).

Since Homer (*Odyssey* XI.310) Orion was famous for his gigantic form (cf. line 537). There may be a connection between his size and the fact that he arose out of the earth, like the race of Giants (see line 35).

534. iamque decem menses, et puer ortus erat: The time-lapse between the conception of the child and his birth is handled in a similar fashion at line 257, where *iamque* is also used to bridge the gap between the two events.

The difference in scale between the detailed description of lines 495-533 and the matter-of-fact account of Orion's birth - *et puer ortus erat* - is characteristic of Hellenistic poetry (see Section 16.1).

535. Uriona: The spondaic fifth foot is used rarely in the *Fasti*, and always with a Greek or archaic word (see Section 15.3). This archaism is appropriate to the name of Urion - a form which possesses its *antiquum...sonum* (536).

536. perdidit antiquum littera prima sonum: Ovid often seeks to justify etymologies by appealing to a sound

change at the start of a word (cf. lines 195-196; 481-482).

The derivation of the name of Orion from οὐρανός is - unlike some of Ovid's unusual etymologies - attested in earlier literature (see Frazer on V.494; Bömer on V.493).

537-544. creverat immensum: comitem sibi Delia sumpsit...: Having devoted forty-two lines (495-536) to describing the circumstances of Orion's birth, Ovid compresses his life, death and catasterism into a mere eight lines. The pluperfect tense is again used to bypass action (see note on lines 531-532), and lengthy description is avoided in favour of curt sentences such as *creverat immensum* (537) and *obstitit Orion* (543).

Thus the death and catasterism - details which are necessary to justify the presence of the the story in the collection - do not detract from the description of Hyrieus' entertainment of the gods, which Ovid has identified as the primary poetic concern of the passage.

538. ille deae custos, ille satelles erat: The rhetorical structure of this line, with the repetition of *ille... ille...* and the parallelism of *custos* and *satelles*, is especially striking in the context of a

section of narrative in which brevity is the hallmark.

The heaping up of synonyms - *comitem*, *custos*, *satelles* - quickly establishes the closeness of the relationship between Orion and Diana. This is important to Ovid, as he is establishing which version of the myth he is following. He denies the tradition that Orion was *integrae \ temptator...Dianae* (Horace *Carmina* III.4.70-71) in favour of a version which portrays him in a more favourable light.

541-543. fuit impetus illi \ curva gemelliparae spicula ferre deae; \ obstitit Orion: According to other versions of the myth, Orion was either shot - in one version unwittingly - by Diana, or stung by the scorpion as a punishment (see Frazer and Bömer both on V.537; Graves (1960, vol.I) p.152). Ovid uses the idea of the scorpion, but converts Orion's death from a punishment into an act of self-sacrifice. His version becomes more favourable to Orion than any other version of the myth.

This change provides a reason for the catasterism that fits in with the idea that creatures are turned into constellations as a reward for good deeds (see Braun (1981) p.2365).

The sacrifice of Orion is all the more remarkable

because it is done to save not Diana but Latona. Orion does not confront the scorpion in order to protect his patron goddess, but to protect that goddess' mother (the words *Delia* (537) and *gemelliparae* (542) draw attention to the relationship between Delia and Latona). Orion's devotion to Diana appears all the greater as it extends to members of her family.

8.2 The Genre of the Hospitality Story

The story of how Hyrieus entertained the gods as they travelled through the countryside stands in a distinctive poetic tradition. The theme of the poor man who offers hospitality to an unknown stranger can be traced back to the fourteenth book of the *Odyssey*, where Eumaeus entertains the disguised Odysseus in his hut.

This sort of scene offers certain poetic advantages. There is the opportunity to contrast high-born and humble characters, and the chance to observe how characters react in an alien environment. The hospitality theme was used by Callimachus in his *Hecale*. Ovid exploits it in the story of Baucis and Philemon in the *Metamorphoses*¹ as well as in this episode. The history and nature of the genre has been discussed at

length by Bömer² and Hollis³.

The story which Ovid tells in this passage contains several features which are standard elements in the genre of the hospitality story. For example, Hyrieus is an old man - a fact which makes his homespun wisdom and rustic piety more credible⁴. His generous character is manifested in the door that is left permanently open to strangers⁵. The simple life-style of the host is evident in the diet of vegetables which he offers to his guests⁶. Another motif which is found in other hospitality stories is the hero's bereavement⁷. This allows the reader to sympathise with the misfortune of the character, and increases the desire to see the poor rustic rewarded for his assiduous hospitality.

A further traditional element is the disguise which the visitors adopt when they enter the dwelling of their host⁸. This act is essential for the moral point of the story, for the generosity of the host must be a natural response if it is to be deserving of reward. When the gods disguise themselves upon entering Hyrieus' hut, therefore, the story seems to be following the traditional course.

However, the tradition that the gods travel

incognito is violated by Neptune's premature revelation of Jupiter's identity. At this point the Hyrieus story diverges from other examples of the hospitality myth. Hyrieus' actions after he realises the true identity of his guests are very different from his initial preparations to entertain the travellers. Once he knows that he is entertaining gods, he kills his ox to provide them with meat rather than vegetables. The *ignis...parvus* (506) now becomes *magnus* (516). Instead of everyday *vina rubentia* (511), Hyrieus opens a prize vintage, whose extreme age and sentimental value are emphasised in line 517: *quaeque puer quondam primis diffuderat annis*. Perhaps also *nec mora* (519) contrasts with *dumque mora est* (511) to indicate the increased effort which Hyrieus puts into his preparations. Thus the old man opportunistically goes to extreme lengths to ensure the favour of the gods. This departure sets the Hyrieus story apart from the other versions of the hospitality myth.

Scholars who have compared the various treatments of the hospitality myth have generally found the story of Hyrieus to be inferior to the analogues⁹. While it is not within the scope of this discussion to undertake a

comparative analysis of the different versions of the myth, it is possible to offer a defence of the episode by showing that its peculiar features are meant to provide humour by undermining the seriousness and pathos of the traditional version.

One criticism has been that Hyrieus' reaction in sacrificing his ox and offering vintage wine to the gods is out of keeping with his status as *angusti cultor agelli*¹⁰. But this criticism does not take into account the humour of the old man's opportunism. The traditional secrecy surrounding the identity of the gods is removed, allowing Ovid to make a mischievous observation about human nature by showing how much greater Hyrieus' generosity becomes once he knows who his guests are.

A second criticism is that the means by which the gods reveal their identity is unsatisfactory¹¹. Again, however, the criticism underestimates the humour of Ovid's portrayal of the gods - a subject that will be considered at greater length in Section 8.4.

8.3 The Characterisation of Hyrieus

One of the features of Ovid's literary achievement in the *Fasti* is his attention to detail in the

presentation of characters¹².

The character of Hyrieus, as has been mentioned above, is in some ways a stereotype. He represents a type of hard-working, pious countryman, in the same mould as Eumaeus in the *Odyssey*, Molorchus in Callimachus' *Actia*¹³, and Philemon in the *Metamorphoses*. However, the characterisation is sharpened in certain places by observation of details and by variations from the normal presentation of such characters.

The senility of the countryman is a standard feature in stories of this genre¹⁴, and Ovid notes Hyrieus' age on lines 499, 505 and 524. However, the point is embellished by the observation of the *tremula dextra* (511) with which the old man pours the wine for his guests, and by the reminiscences of his distant youth (517; 525).

Another typical characteristic is Hyrieus' poverty. He is *angusti cultor agelli* (499) and lives in an *exigua casa* (500). But the man's poverty is not just stated as a fact. It is evident in every detail of the preparations that he makes. The singular form *stipite* (506) reveals that there is only one log on his fire, thus showing the frugality of the old man's life-style.

This is also evident in the drudgery involved in his task of lighting the fire¹⁵. The poverty of the old man is further brought home by the observation of the two pots in which he cooks his vegetables. In noting their comparative size, Ovid describes the pots not as *minor* and *maior*, but as *minor* and *alter* - thus giving the impression that neither is large. The diet of vegetables itself is further evidence of Hyrieus' poverty.

Moreover, even when Hyrieus discovers the identity of his guests and goes to great extremes in his hospitality, there are still reminders of his limited means. In line 520 it is noted that the couches that he hastily arranges, although stuffed with sedge, are *sic quoque non altis*¹⁶. Similarly, in the following couplet the gleaming vessels with which the table is covered are made not of precious metals, but of earthenware and beechwood¹⁷. Thus the poverty of the man is seen even when he is aiming to be extravagant in his generosity.

Another two traditional features - the bereavement of the host and his pious nature - are neatly combined in the devotion and loyalty which Hyrieus exhibits towards his dead wife. He still thinks of her as *cara* (525), and his devotion to her is such that when she

died he made a vow never to remarry - a vow which he has kept for many years.

Given Hyrieus' abiding devotion to his dead wife, it is possible to consider *nostra* on line 502 not as a royal plural, but as an expression of Hyrieus' continuing devotion. Although he lives alone, he talks as though his wife were still the co-owner of the home, and refers to the doors of his house as *ianua nostra*.

Ovid also invests the figure of Hyrieus with individuality. As D'Elia observes¹⁸, there are differences between the portrayals of Hyrieus and Philemon. D'Elia characterises Hyrieus as being more sad and less easily impressed by the miracle the gods perform. Hyrieus is certainly a phlegmatic character. After the initial shock of learning that the king of the gods is sitting at his dining table, he recovers to take advantage of the situation. When Jupiter allows him a request, he delivers his reply calmly (*placida verba...senis* (524)¹⁹) and with a touch of humour²⁰.

Finally, like other characters in the poem²¹, Hyrieus speaks in a distinctive style. As befits a straightforward countryman, he uses terse, epigrammatic sentences.

The phrase with which he greets the travellers, *longa via est. nec tempora longa supersunt*, has the tone of a rustic proverb²², and the following line, *et hospitibus ianua nostra patet*, is certainly proverbial²³. The old man's style becomes clearly detectable in lines 525-530. The use of indirect (526) and direct speech (528) gives a conversational tone to his words. His epigrammatic style is evident in such balanced phrases as *et dixi et servo* (529) and *nec coniunx et pater esse* (530).

While conforming to a recognisable type, Hyrieus also comes across as an individual in his own right. His poverty and senility are typical characteristics that might also apply to Molorchus, Hecale or Philemon, but his devotion to his dead wife, his phlegmatic nature, and his idiosyncratic manner of speaking are distinctive features which set Hyrieus apart from other creations within the same genre.

8.4 The Role of the Gods in the Story

The gods who are entertained by Hyrieus are not presented in as much detail as their host. Nevertheless, they have a significant role to play in Ovid's

narrative, for they are used to supply much of the humour of the episode.

Mercury, who travels with Jupiter and Neptune, plays no individual role in the story, but the two brothers each make personal contributions to the proceedings. Jupiter, the ruler of the gods, is naturally the leader of the group, and it is fitting that he acts as spokesman when the gods offer Hyrieus a reward for his hospitality²⁴. Jupiter does not reveal the gods' true identity, however. That revelation is made by Neptune in lines 513-514, and is clearly meant to be understood as an unintentional slip. The gods had concealed their true identities at line 504, and in the analogues, the revelation is deferred until the end of the meal.

The importance of Neptune in the narrative as the agent of the revelation is highlighted by the antonomastic descriptions of him as *qui regnat in aequore frater* (495) and *aequoreus...deus* (512)²⁵. It is notable that before his slip of the tongue he has been drinking wine. His bibulousness is indicated by the emphatic verb *exhausit* (513). A large capacity for drink might be considered natural for the god of the sea²⁶ but

after swallowing only the *pocula prima*, he gives away the secret of the travellers' true identity. There is surely a connection between the slip of the tongue and the fact that Neptune has been drinking.

Neptune's comment "*da nunc bibat ordine... | Iuppiter*" is meant to be a joke at his brother's expense. By receiving the first cups of wine, Neptune has been put in the position of *magister bibendi* and relishes the authority that this gives him over Jupiter. He stresses the reversal of the normal roles by asking wine to be given to Jupiter *ordine*. In the course of this fraternal exchange, however, he names his brother as Jupiter, and Hyrieus is alerted to the situation.

The fact that the gods have been drinking is also used to humorous effect in the miracle of Orion's birth in lines 531-533. After the *pocula prima* (512) and the vintage wine served at the banquet (518; 521), the fact that the gods urinated over the ox hide can be seen as an observation of the effects of wine on the metabolism. The large quantity of urine they produce is indicated by *madentia* on line 533.

The gods are also the butt of humour when Hyrieus informs them of the vow he made upon his wife's death.

Firstly, there is humour in the fact that the very gods on whom Hyrieus swore are present when he informs them about the oath. Secondly, the gods clearly have no knowledge of the oath they are supposed to have heard.

The gods in this episode are, therefore, presented in a humorous light. They are not immune from the effects of alcohol, they are prone to petty jealousies, and they are ignorant of the prayers of a pious man like Hyrieus. The scene in the hut ends with the comic scenario of them urinating over an ox hide.

In spite of this, I do not see the episode as an attempt to demonstrate the inadequacies of Greek theology²⁷. The gods retain their function as rewarders of piety. Hyrieus does enough before Neptune's premature revelation to assure the reader that he deserves his reward, and Orion too is punished for his presumptuousness, then rewarded for his piety in lines 539-544. Ovid accepts the basic theological framework of traditional mythology, but exploits details of the myth for his own comic purposes.

Notes to Chapter 8

1. *Metamorphoses* VIII.624-694.

2. Bömer on *Metamorphoses* VIII.616-724.
3. Hollis (1990) pp.341-354.
4. See Hollis (1990) p.342.
5. Cf. Callimachus *Hecale* fr.2 [Hollis], with Hollis *ad loc.*. Ovid's phrase *hospitibus ianua nostra patet* is particularly reminiscent of Pindar *Nemean* 9.2: ὄνοηπτομένοι ξείνων νενίκανται θύραι.
6. Cf. Callimachus *Hecale* fr.35-39 [Hollis]; Silius Italicus *Punica* VII.182-183. See Hollis on *Metamorphoses* VIII.664f.
7. See Hollis (1990) p.344.
8. See Burnett (1970) pp.24-25; Hollis (1990) p.341.
9. E.g. D'Elia (1959) p.354; Hollis on *Metamorphoses* VIII.679f.
10. See Heinze (1960) p.348; Bömer on V.493; D'Elia (1959) p.354.
11. See Hollis on *Metamorphoses* VIII.679f. Heinze (1960, pp.321-322) sees some of the humour behind the unintentional revelation.
12. See Sections 5.3, 6.2, 6.3 and 11.3.
13. Callimachus *Aetia* fr.54-59 [Pfeiffer].
14. See Section 8.2.
15. See note on lines 506-508.
16. The most obvious contrast is with the couches in Dido's palace from which Aeneas recalls the sack of Troy: *inde toro pater Aeneas sic orsus ab alto* (Virgil *Aeneid* II.2).
17. For the rusticity of earthenware, see, for example, Pliny *Naturalis Historia* XXXIII.142; for the rustic associations of beechwood, see *Metamorphoses* VIII.669; Tibullus I.10.8.

18. D'Elia (1959) p.354.

19. In the Baucis and Philemon story, it is Jupiter who speaks *placido ore* (*Metamorphoses* VIII.703).

20. See notes on lines 526 and 527.

21. E.g. Flora (see Section 5.3); Calliope (see Section 1.5).

22. See note on line 501.

23. See Hollis on Callimachus *Hecale* fr.2.2.

24. Jupiter is also the spokesman at *Metamorphoses* VIII.703-705.

25. Perhaps it is significant that Neptune, the god of the sea, is not a regular visitor to mortals. He does not accompany Jupiter and Mercury on their journey in the Baucis and Philemon episode.

26. Cf. [Virgil] *Dirae* 60.

27. This is the view of the passage taken by Phillips (1992, pp.67-68).

CHAPTER 9: MARS ULTOR

9.1 Commentary on V.545-598

545-598. The god Mars Ultor is honoured in Rome with a temple and games in the Circus.

Ovid imagines the god himself coming down from the sky (545-552) and inspecting his temple in the Forum Augusti (553-568). Mars had assisted Augustus at the battle of Philippi (569-578) and in the emperor's Parthian campaign (579-594), and so earned the new temple and the cognomen Ultor (595-596). The twelfth of May is celebrated with solemn games in honour of the god (597-598).

545-548. sed quid et Orion et cetera sidera mundo \
cedere festinant?...: The idea of the day breaking earlier than usual is a rhetorical conceit which seems to originate in erotic poetry. The arrival of dawn is considered premature by lovers at *Anthologia Palatina* V.3, V.172 and V.173, and the idea is developed by Ovid in *Amores* I.13.

In this context, however, - as at IV.673-676 - the conceit is manipulated to suit Ovid's encomiastic purpose. The sun and the stars are seen to conspire to expedite an occasion of national celebration.

The use of two questions at the start of a new section is a departure from Ovid's usual technique. The poet creates suspense, indicating that a significant date is at hand, but not immediately stating what the occasion is (see Section 9.2).

By mentioning Orion in line 545, Ovid makes a smooth transition between the entry on that constellation and the piece on Mars Ultor (see Section 14.2).

549. fallor, an arma sonant? non fallimur, arma sonabant: The line is highly rhetorical in form, with the question posed in the first half of the line being answered in words which echo the form of the original question. Thus *fallor* is picked up by *non fallimur*, and *arma sonant* by *arma sonabant*. The tentative suggestion in the question is confirmed by the authoritative statement that follows. In this way, the poet represents the sound accompanying Mars' advent as being indistinct at first, and then - as it gets closer - clearly recognisable.

The question and answer form maintains the suspense created in lines 545-548 (see note *ad loc.*). Ovid provides a hint that the cause of excitement is the war

god without actually naming him at this stage.

550-551. Mars venit et veniens bellica signa dedit. \

Ultor ad ipse suos caelo descendit honores: When Mars is finally named, it is in the emphatic position at the start of the line. The effect is then repeated by the appearance of his cognomen *Ultor* at the start of the following line.

The emphasis is increased by the unusual word order in line 551. The separation of a monosyllabic preposition from its adjective and noun by a word other than an enclitic, is very rare (see Marouzeau (1947) p.305). Great emphasis is thus thrown on the intrusive pronoun *ipse*, which splits *ad* and *suos...honores*.

552. templaque in Augusto conspicienda foro: The location of the temple establishes the building's political significance. It was a major feature of Augustus' programme for stamping his own personality on the city of Rome (see Augustus *Res Gestae* 21.1).

557-558. seu quis ab Eoo nos impius orbe lacesset, \ seu quis ab occiduo sole domandus erit: Anaphora is used to create a symmetrical structure: on line 557 the phrase *seu quis* introduces the idea of enemies arising in the East, and on line 558 it introduces enemies in the West.

The symmetry is enhanced by the repeated use of the preposition *ab* to introduce the terms for East and West.

Within this structure there is *variatio*, with the East being represented by the proper noun *Eos*, and the West by the descriptive phrase *occiduus sol*. Furthermore, the action of the Eastern enemy is described by the active subjunctive *lacetset*, while the Western enemy is the subject of a passive gerundive of obligation *domandus erit*.

The Eastern enemies of Rome are characterised by the epithet *impius*. This could be taken as a comment on the recent threat to Rome from Cleopatra, for one of the elements of propaganda used against her was the idea that she represented a danger to the traditional Roman gods (cf. Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.698-700).

559-568. perspicit Armipotens operis fastigia summi...:

The temple and its surroundings are described through the eyes of Mars. Each of the five couplets devoted to the description begins with a verb of seeing (*perspicit... perspicit... hinc videt... hinc videt... spectat...*). These verbs emphasise that the temple is a work of art that is meant to be visually appreciated.

The visual nature of works of art is frequently

accentuated in poetic descriptions of them. In [Hesiod] *Scutum* 140 and 224, the shield of Heracles is described as $\theta\omicron\upsilon\mu\alpha \iota\delta\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$, and at 318 it is $\theta\omicron\upsilon\mu\alpha \iota\delta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ (cf. Homer *Iliad* XVIII.466-467). Virgil in his description of Aeneas' shield at *Aeneid* VIII.630-728 uses phrases such as *aspiceres* (650) and *cernere erat* (676), amongst other devices, to keep the idea of the shield as a visual object in the reader's mind.

The fact that the first item seen by Mars is the *fastigia* provides a realistic touch. Mars descends (551) from the sky to look at his temple, and so it is natural that the first thing to catch his attention is the roof.

Having approached the temple, observing first the roof and then the doors (561-562), Mars now looks around at the area surrounding the temple. This allows a description of the statues which were placed by the emperor in the Forum Augusti to be included in the poem.

Mars finally gets close enough to the temple to read the words inscribed on it (567). Thus there is a logical coherence to the order in which the god observes the various details of his temple. This gives realism to the passage.

561. in foribus diversae tela figurae: It is possible to

imagine this couplet as referring to either the artistic depiction of captured weapons on the doors or to the actual decoration of the temple with the spoils of war. Bömer (*ad loc.*) asserts that the latter interpretation is correct, but the phrase *in foribus* is used by Virgil (*Georgics* III.26; *Aeneid* VI.20) as a formula for introducing a description of artwork on temple doors. The decoration of doors with material objects is described in other ways: *super ianuam* (Augustus *Res Gestae* 34.2); *ante fores* (Tibullus I.1.16); *super limina* (Ovid *Amores* I.6.68). I therefore suspect that Ovid is referring to artistic representations rather than actual weapons at this point.

563-566. hinc videt Aenean... \ hinc videt Iliaden...:

The description of the temple itself is interrupted to mention the statues of famous Romans which adorned the area outside the building (see Suetonius *Augustus* 31.5).

Ovid highlights two figures from these statues, those of Aeneas and Romulus. Ovid's use of anaphora produces a structure in which the two figures are described in parallel couplets. There is a further structural similarity in that, in both couplets, the observation of the single figure in the hexameter is

followed in the pentameter by a move to the more general observation of a whole set of figures.

The symmetry of the two couplets may reflect the fact that the statues described were a matching pair - possibly placed in prominent positions in the series as a whole. Both Aeneas and Romulus carry something on their back (*oneratum* (563) corresponds to *umeris... ferentem* (565)). Furthermore, *Aenean* (563) occupies the same position in the line as *Iliaden* (565).

Aeneas and Romulus are presented in similar poses in a matching pair of wall paintings from Pompeii (see Hardie (1986) Plate 7, with explanatory comments on pp.375-376; Zanker (1988) pp.201-203. In the light of the correspondence between these paintings and Ovid's descriptions, it is likely that the paintings were based on the statues in the Forum Augusti.

563. oneratum pondere caro: The oxymoron, as Döpp (1968, p.119) has shown, exploits the words of Virgil in *Aeneid* II.707-729. Anchises, whom Aeneas carries on his back through Troy, is both *carus* (707) and an *onus* (723, 729). By juxtaposing these two separate ideas, Ovid condenses the familiar story into a neat paradox.

571-577. ille manus tendens, hinc stanti milite iusto, \

hinc coniuratis, talia dicta dedit...: Octavian addresses Mars using the appropriate formula for a prayer.

Swoboda (1978, p.86) identifies five elements of the classic prayer, all of which are found here. Firstly, there is the *praeparatio* in the form of adopting the correct posture with hands stretched in supplication. When Octavian speaks, he starts with the *hypomnesis*, giving a recapitulation of the reasons for his request (573-574); then comes the *allocutio* as Mars is addressed personally (575). The *preces* follow (575-576), and then the prayer concludes with the *vota* (577) which Octavian promises will be paid to the god on fulfilment of his request.

By observing this detailed procedure in full, Octavian demonstrates his pious respect for the gods (see Section 9.2).

571-572. hinc stanti milite iusto, \ hinc coniuratis:

The repetition creates a symmetrical structure which is appropriate to the description of two battle lines facing one another. Within this symmetrical framework, there is a contrast between the *miles iustus* of Octavian's army and the *coniurati* of the Republican

side. The distinction is sharpened by the fact that the words *iustus* and *coniuratus* are etymologically cognate.

The lines of soldiers drawn up for battle provide a striking dramatic background to Octavian's prayer.

575. satia scelerato sanguine: Alliteration is a device associated with prayers, which retain archaic formulae in which alliteration plays a significant part (see Appel (1909, pp.160-162)).

The alliteration is especially fitting in this case, for - in combination with the personification of the sword as sated with blood - it helps to convey the heightened emotion of the situation.

Paley (*ad loc.*) explains that the conspirators' blood is *sceleratus* because it is shed in civil war. However, given the way that Octavian sets himself up as a defender of the state religion, it is probable that the blood of the conspirators is seen as tainted with the guilt attached to the sacrilegious murder of Caesar (cf. the use of the epithet at VI.609 and at *Ars Amatoria* I.199).

577. vocaberis Ultor: The prayer is concluded with an aetiological point. The cognomen Ultor is shown to be a fitting one for the avenger of the murder of Julius

Caesar. The word picks up *ulcisci* (574), and this verbal correspondence spells out the reason for the god's new title.

578. voverat: The word is repeated from line 569 (where it also occurs at the beginning of the line). The repetition provides ring composition, enclosing the section concerned with Philippi.

580. Parthi signa retenta manu: The diplomatic triumph over the Parthians in 20 BC was a central event in the imperial propaganda. It is recorded by Augustus at *Res Gestae* 29.2. Augustus' Parthian campaigns were used for patriotic purposes by Virgil (*Georgics* III.31; IV.561; *Aeneid* VII.606; VIII.726) and Horace (e.g. *Carmina* I.2; I.21; II.9; *Epistles* I.12.27-28). The triumph over Parthia is also the subject of artistic representations, such as the corselet of the statue of Augustus at Prima Porta (see note on line 593).

The extension of the significance of the cult of Mars Ultor to cover a national triumph gives the cult a broader appeal (see Section 9.2).

582. circumfusus invia fluminibus: The quadrisyllabic pentameter ending occurs only twice in Ovid's pre-exile poetry, but more frequently in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae*

ex Ponto. It is possible that this metrical licence provides evidence that this section of the poem was revised during the period of Ovid's exile (see Appendix).

584. miles signaque duxque: The items destroyed in the battle of Carrhae in 53 BC are listed in a tricolon in ascending order of importance. The common soldier is likely to be lost in any battle; the loss of standards is a more remarkable and opprobrious event; but the loss of the commanding officer - especially such a figure as the triumvir Crassus - caps the list.

586. Romanaeque aquilae signifer hostis erat: The paradox that the bearer of a Roman standard should be an enemy of Rome is a typical example of Ovid's fondness for apparent contradiction (see Frécaut (1972) p.45; Porte (1985) pp.52-63).

587-588. nisi fortibus armis \ Caesaris Ausoniae protegerentur opes: The phrase suggests a defensive campaign on the part of Augustus, despite the fact that the Parthians posed no military threat to the West.

Ovid's statement fits in with the imperial propaganda, which accentuated the achievements of Augustus in bringing peace, and claimed that wars were

fought only when necessary, and never for personal glory (cf. Suetonius *AUGUSTUS* 21.2).

590. agnorunt signa recepta suos: The standards are personified as people meeting long lost relations - a situation familiar from Roman comedy.

There is irony in the fact that the *signa* recognise their owners, for *signa* are normally the things by which an owner recognises his property (cf. Plautus *Epidicus* 597; *Menaechmi* 1124).

593. Parthe, refers aquilas, victos quoque porrigis arcus: There are two separate features of the diplomatic settlement. Firstly the restoration of the standards cancels out the disgrace of Carrhae. Secondly, Rome secures the humiliation of a powerful enemy.

The image of the defeated Parthian stretching out his hands in supplication resembles the images on the statue of Augustus at Prima Porta and on coins of the period (see Mattingly (1923) Plate 2, Nos 2, 11 and 12; Zanker (1988) pp.187-192), and may reflect contemporary artistic representations of the Parthian triumph.

595-596. rite deo templumque datum nomenque bis ulto, \
et meritus voti debita solvit honor: The couplet acts as a conclusion, bringing together the narratives of 569-

578 and 579-594. The phrase *bis ulto* builds on the linking phrase at line 579, *nec satis est meruisse semel...* to stress the twofold cause for the building of the temple.

At line 577, Octavian promised Mars: *templa feres et...vocaberis Ultor*. The two parts of this promise are picked up now, as Ovid records the discharging of the vow.

597-598. sollemnes ludos Circo celebrate, Quirites: \
non visa est fortem scaena decere deum: The serious nature of the games is emphasised by the spondaic rhythm of the first half of the line, and by the formal word *Quirites*.

The games of Mars in the Circus are contrasted with the games of Flora at the start of the month. Whereas Flora is *ludis celebranda iocosis* (183), Mars has a sterner character, and his games are accordingly of a more solemn nature than the *ludi scaenici* of the Floralia.

9.2 The Panegyric of Augustus

The entry on Mars Ultor is the most politically significant episode in the fifth book of the *Fasti*. In a

book which is dominated by Greek myths about constellations¹ and descriptions of ancient Roman rituals, the building of the temple of Mars Ultor stands out as the only contemporary event to command its own entry².

Ovid takes the opportunity offered by the anniversary of the dedication of the temple to present what appears to be a panegyric of the emperor. He outlines the achievements of Augustus which the temple commemorates: the victory over the assassins of Julius Caesar, and the campaign against Parthia which secured the restoration of Roman standards lost at the battle of Carrhae. The poet does not, however, rehearse the emperor's propaganda in a perfunctory manner, but applies his ingenuity to the task of praising Augustus.

At the very start of the passage, Ovid refrains from his usual practice of stating the date and the subject of the new entry. Instead he creates suspense by beginning with two questions asking why the heavens conspire to make this day break earlier than usual. The idea of a cosmic conspiracy and the use of questions to build up suspense³ are both ploys which indicate that this entry is to be one of special significance.

Another ingenious method of praising the emperor is found in the description of the temple itself in lines 559-568. The temple and its precinct are described through the eyes of Mars in five couplets. After Mars has surveyed the roof and doors, and the statues of the famous Romans, including Aeneas and Romulus, in the forum, the climax of the description comes in reading the name of Augustus on the building's dedicatory inscription. Augustus' name is placed on line 567 in the same metrical position as the names of Aeneas on line 563 and Romulus (given the matronymic *Iliades*) on line 565. Augustus thus appears as the natural conclusion of a list containing the originator of the Roman people and the founder of the city. Moreover, whereas Romulus and Aeneas are given one line each, Augustus has a full couplet devoted to him, and Mars is particularly gratified to be associated with the emperor (*et visum lecto Caesare maius opus* (568)). Augustus, coming in this privileged position in the description, is shown as surpassing all of the other Romans mentioned⁴.

The main features of Ovid's panegyric are to be found in the reports of Augustus' campaigns against the assassins of Caesar and against the Parthians. The

praise of the emperor has two strands: praise for his piety, and praise for his defence of the state.

Augustus' piety is apparent in his decision to build a temple to Mars Ultor. Not only does Augustus honour the god with a temple, but it is designed on a grand scale, such as befits a god of Mars' stature. Mars himself gives his approval to the finished work on line 560.

The main example of the *princeps'* piety is found in his revenge of the murderers of Julius Caesar. It is easy to imagine personal and political motivations behind the young Octavian's pursuit of the conspirators and his defeat of them at the battle of Philippi. Yet in Ovid's account it is the religious motivation which is given emphasis. Octavian raises *pia...arma* (569)⁵ against his enemies. His forces are represented by the *miles iustus* of line 571, as opposed to the *coniurati* on the other side⁶. The religious grounds for taking up arms are spelt out in lines 573-574, where Octavian tells Mars his reasons for seeking his help. The murder of Caesar is presented as a double sacrilege, as not only was he the priest of Vesta, but he is now a god in his own right. Octavian thus seeks to avenge *numen*

UTRUMQUE.

Not only are Octavian's motives pious, but so are his actions. As the battle of Philippi is about to commence, he makes a vow to Mars. The prayer is noteworthy for the scrupulous observation of correct procedure⁷, which demonstrates the respect Octavian has for the gods⁸.

The avenging of Caesar's death thus demonstrates Augustus' piety. The Parthian campaign, on the other hand, reveals Augustus to be the protector of the Roman state.

The diplomatic triumph over Parthia in 20 BC represents a less controversial subject than the battle of Philippi. Being a national triumph, rather than the triumph of a faction in civil conflict, the Parthian campaign could be expected to appeal to all of the Roman people. Thus this triumph was associated with the cult of Mars Ultor in addition to the Philippi campaign in order to broaden the appeal of the cult.

Ovid presents Augustus as saving Rome from great danger by his success against Parthia. In order to magnify the achievements of the emperor, the enemy are presented as a powerful and threatening force. In lines

581-584 Ovid sets out the advantages enjoyed by Parthia. In particular, the tricolon *et campis et equis et tuta sagittis* (581) lists the factors which make the Parthians a formidable adversary. Then, in lines 591-592, in another tricolon, these factors are shown one by one to be of no avail against Augustus.

A second strategy of the poet's for magnifying the achievements of Augustus against the Parthians is the concentration on the ineffectual attempts of Romans before Augustus to overcome the Parthians. After Crassus had been defeated at Carrhae in 53 BC, Rome had been unable to recover her lost standards. In particular, the campaigns of Antony in 36-34 BC had not been successful in avenging the defeat of Crassus⁹.

The disgrace to which Rome had been subjected under previous generals by the Parthians makes Augustus' successes seem more significant. A stream of pejorative words (*pudor* (587, 594); *notae* (589); *dedecus* (589)) portrays the sense of national disgrace felt at the loss of the standards, and in line 589 the length of time for which the score had been left unsettled is demonstrated by the pleonasm *notas veteres et longi dedecus aevi*. This stress on the long-standing nature of Rome's

disgrace points to two facts: firstly, it was no fault of Augustus; and secondly, no-one but Augustus had been able to settle the score.

In conclusion, Ovid's panegyric of Augustus does not appear to be grudging or half-hearted. The poet employs his rhetorical skills to construct ingenious methods of praising the emperor: Augustus is favourably compared with Romulus and Aeneas; he is shown as being in tune with the wishes of the gods; and his military exploits are portrayed as a unique achievement against a formidable enemy¹⁰.

9.3 The Date of the Dedication of the Temple

The entry on Mars Ultor is placed by Ovid on the day after the middle of the Lemuria - that is, the twelfth of May. This accords with the evidence of the ancient calendars¹¹, which record the celebration of games in honour of Mars on that date.

However, the idea that the games of the twelfth of May were inaugurated to commemorate the dedication of the temple of Mars Ultor in the Forum Augusti in 2 BC - which would appear to be the natural conclusion to draw from this passage - is contradicted by Dio¹², who states

that the temple of Mars Ultor was dedicated on the Calends of August, and games were celebrated to commemorate the event.

This contradiction was apparently resolved by Mommsen¹³, who argued that the festival on the first of August did indeed commemorate the dedication of the temple in the Forum Augusti, and that the games in May celebrated the dedication of an *aedicula*, built on the Capitol¹⁴ as a short term measure until the temple in the Forum Augusti could be completed. The existence of such an *aedicula* is supported by images of a small round temple of Mars Ultor on coins minted around 19 BC¹⁵.

Mommsen's conclusion implies that the detailed description of the temple of Mars in the Forum Augusti in lines 559-568 of Ovid's account is misplaced, and the poet has taken the opportunity offered by the games of Mars in May to celebrate the temple prematurely¹⁶. However, there is good reason to doubt whether the Capitoline *aedicula* which is supposed by Mommsen to have been dedicated in May ever existed.

Simpson¹⁷ points out that it is probable that the standards which the temporary *aedicula* on the Capitol is meant to have housed were in fact kept in a temple of

Jupiter, for Horace talks of the standards being restored not to Mars, but to Jupiter¹⁸. It is likely, therefore, that Dio, or his source, confused the temple of Mars Ultor in the Forum Augusti with the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol, and that the mention of a temple of Mars Ultor on the Capitol is mistaken.

Moreover, the evidence in Ovid's account of the temple points to there being only ^{one} temple dedicated to Mars Ultor in Rome. Ovid makes a point of stressing the appropriateness of the temple's design. He argues in line 553 that the scale of the temple is comparable to the importance of the god, implying that a *deus ingens* deserves a huge temple. The poet then goes on to say *debebat in urbe | non aliter nati Mars habitare sui* (553-554), suggesting that anything other than a magnificent temple would not be fitting for the worship of Mars. It would be very strange if this statement was made by Ovid in the full knowledge that Augustus himself had recently dedicated a more modest building to the worship of the god. The phrase *non aliter* clearly points to a single temple of Mars Ultor in Rome - that in the Forum Augusti - and none of the ancient sources alludes to two temples of the god¹⁹.

Once the existence of a temple of Mars on the Capitol is doubted, another reason must be found for the existence of games in honour of Mars in the month of May. Given the fact that the games of Mars on the first of August can be plausibly explained as a celebration instituted to commemorate Claudius' birthday²⁰, it is likely that games in May commemorate the true date of the dedication of the temple in the Forum Augusti in 2 BC.

Although Ovid is certainly capable of manipulating historical information for literary effect, and is not the most reliable source for historians, on this occasion at least, the date which he supplies is more plausible than that given by Dio.

Notes to Chapter 9

1. See Rutledge (1973) p.127.
2. The restoration of religious monuments by Augustus and Livia is mentioned in passing in lines 145-146 and 157-158 (see Section 3.2). Fantham (1983, p.212) believes that Ovid would have included a piece about Germanicus' birthday in a full revision of the book.
3. A long introduction is also used to build up suspense in advance of the praise of the emperor at II.119-126 - see Riedl (1989) p.27.
4. This technique bears some similarity to the panegyric in I.593-608 (see Riedl (1989) p.26).

5. Cf. III.709-710: *hoc opus, haec pietas, haec prima elementa fuerunt | Caesaris, ulcisci iusta per arma patrem*; also Suetonius *Augustus* 10.1. See Allen (1922) p.255.
6. On the contrast, see note on lines 571-572.
7. See note on lines 571-577.
8. The vow was probably based on Caesar's vow to Mars and Venus before Pharsalus - see Riedl (1989) p.48.
9. See Velleius Paterculus II.82; Dio IL.24-31.
10. On the question of the sincerity of Ovid's praise of Augustus, see the discussion in Section 17.3.
11. See CIL I², pp.224; 229; 264.
12. Dio LX.5.3.
13. CIL I², p.318.
14. Dio (LIV.8.3) mentions that the standards recovered from the Parthians were housed in a temple of Mars on the Capitol.
15. See Marbach (1930) p.1924. As Simpson (1977, p.93) points out, such coins demonstrate only an intention to build, and are not proof of the existence of such a temple.
16. Riedl (1989, pp.83-85) points out that the taking of such a liberty would not be without precedent in the composition of the *Fasti*. It might be considered advantageous to the structure of the poem to move the description of the temple from the crowded position of the beginning of August (cf. V.147) to fill out the threadbare fifth book (cf. note on lines 184-190).
17. Simpson (1977). Riedl (1989, p.79) also believes this to be the probable solution.
18. Horace *Carmina* IV.15.6-8.

19. See Augustus *Res Gestae* 21; Velleius Paterculus II.100.2; Suetonius *AUGUSTUS* 29.1; Dio LX.5.3.

20. See Simpson (1977) pp.93-94.

CHAPTER 10: TAURUS

10.1 Commentary on V.599-620

599-602. On the thirteenth the Pliades are visible (599-600). Summer begins at the same date (601-602).

599-600. Pliadas aspicias omnes totumque sororum \
agmen: The stress on the fact that all of the stars of the constellation are present refers back to the discussion at IV.169-178, where it is revealed that one of the Pliades is usually invisible. The supplementing of *omnes* with *totum...agmen* is, therefore, not mere tautology, but makes the point that - unusually - all seven Pliades are visible at this time.

601. non dubiis auctoribus incipit aestas, \ et tepidi
finem tempora veris habent: The rising of the Pliades is commonly considered to mark the beginning of Summer - and especially the sailing season - (see Varro *Res Rusticae* I.28; Propertius I.8.10; Pliny *Naturalis Historia* XVIII.222).

The use of the stars as indicators of the weather recalls the first book of Virgil's *Georgics*. Just as Virgil refers to the sun as *certissimus auctor* (*Georgics* I.432), so Ovid refers to the Pliades as infallible indicators of the weather with the phrase *non dubiis*

ductoribus.

The contrast between *aestas* and *tepidi...tempora veris* makes use of both senses of the word *aestas*. As the name of the season, *aestas* is opposed to *ver*; as the description of the climate at that time of year, it is opposed to *tepidus*. Thus Ovid makes the implied point that the season of Summer (*aestas*) is so called because it is the time of hot weather (*aestas*).

603-620. The Hyades, in the face of the constellation of Taurus, rise on the fourteenth.

After noting the rising of the Hyades (603-604), Ovid explains the origin of the constellation in which they stand, telling how Jupiter, in the shape of a bull, carried Europa across the sea to Crete (605-616), whereupon the bull was transformed into a star (617-618). Ovid then offers the alternative explanation that the constellation is in fact the heifer Io (619-620).

603-604. Idibus ora prior stellantia tollere Taurum \
indicat: The word *indicat* (604) suggests that Ovid is talking about entries in the calendar at this point. The phrase *Idibus prior* would therefore seem to refer to the

last entry in the calendar before the Ides - that is, the fourteenth of May - and not specifically to the night, when the stars of the Hyades become visible. The precise meaning of this phrase has significant implications for the dating of the festival of the Argei, which Harmon (1978, pp.1448-1449) and Radke (1990, p.9) date to the fifteenth of May, on the assumption that *Idibus prior* means the night between the fourteenth and the fifteenth (see note on lines 621-622).

The constellation is represented as performing an action that might be performed by a real bull. This portrayal of constellations in terms of the creatures they are supposed to represent is a commonplace (e.g. II.153-154; III.793-794) dating back to Aratus (see Pendergraft (1990) p.105).

605-606. praebuit ut taurus Tyriae sua terga puellae \ Iuppiter et falsa cornua fronte tulit: The couplet sketches briefly the background information (assuming knowledge of the more detailed account of this encounter in the second book of the *Metamorphoses*) and allows the poet to move swiftly to the emotive scene in mid-ocean which dominates the passage.

Ovid draws attention to the paradox that the bull and Jupiter are the same and yet are also different. The bull's back is given the epithet *sua*, which contrasts with the epithet *falsa*, which is applied to the horns. Because the bull both is and is not Jupiter, the parts of the bull's body may be described both as belonging to the god and not belonging to him.

608. timor ipse novi causa decoris erat: The idea that beauty is increased by fear and panic is a favourite one of Ovid (cf. II.757-758; *Ars Amatoria* I.126; I.531-534; *Metamorphoses* I.527-530; IV.230).

610. sic fueras aspicienda Iovi: It appears to be a proverbial expression to say that a girl is worthy of Jupiter (cf. *Metamorphoses* I.589; [Virgil] *Lydia* 26; Propertius I.13.29-32). The use of the proverb gains an additional frisson in this passage, however, because Jupiter is actually present.

611-614. saepe puellares subduxit ab aequore plantas...
\ saepe deus prudens tergum demisit in undas...: These four lines introduce a novel and characteristically Ovidian twist to the familiar picture of Europa and the bull. The key to the humour lies in the calculating way in which Jupiter repeatedly exploits Europa's fear and

insecurity in order to make her hold on more tightly to him. The cynical behaviour of the god is underlined by the epithet *prudens*.

615-616. stabat sine cornibus ullis \ Iuppiter inque deum de bove versus erat: The couplet describing Jupiter's return to human form picks up elements in the couplet describing his assumption of bovine form (605-606). *de bove* picks up *taurus* (605); *Iuppiter* occurs in both couplets in the same position; and *sine cornibus* picks up *cornua* (606). Thus there is ring composition.

The transformation back to his own shape is described by referring to the loss of the bull's horns. The horns are the most distinctive mark of bovinity (cf. *Metamorphoses* VIII.882; Euripides *Bacchae* 743; Virgil *Georgics* III.232; *Aeneid* XII.104), and so act as a metonymic reference to the state of being a bull.

617. taurus init caelum: The actual event which justifies the inclusion of the story at this point is related in just three words. Ovid's main preoccupation is clearly with Europa's plight and the erotic tension of the situation, rather than simply explaining how the constellation came into being.

618. parsque tuum terrae tertia nomen habet: The

alliteration and the etymological statement about the derivation of the name of Europe rounds off the story of Europa in typical fashion.

619. hoc alii signum Phariam dixere iuvencam: The debate about whether the constellation of Taurus represents the catasterised bull from the Europa story or Io has been mentioned at IV.717-720. At that point, the two alternative explanations are presented as being equally likely (*vacca sit an taurus non est cognoscere promptum*) in order to set up the joke that the problem would be solved if the hind quarters of the constellation were visible.

However, the attention given to the Europa episode in lines 605-618 contrasts with the mere two lines on Io, leaving the impression that the second explanation is not to be taken as seriously as the first. The story connecting Taurus with the Europa episode accounts for the fact that the constellation is thought of as masculine, and so this has greater credibility.

620. quae bos ex homine est, ex bove facta dea: The line is, with the exception of the first word, a direct repetition of *Heroides* 14.86. Self-quotation is found elsewhere in the *Fasti* (e.g. III.549-550 = *Heroides*

7.195-196; IV.642 = *Amores* III.10.34; IV.649 = *Metamorphoses* III.28).

It is likely that this line appealed to Ovid by virtue of its symmetry. We know from an anecdote related by the elder Seneca (*Controversiae* II.2.12) that Ovid expressed a fondness for lines which possess a similar rhetorical balance (e.g. *Amores* II.11.10: *et gelidum Sorean egelidumque Notum; Ars Amatoria* II.24: *semibovemque virum semivirumque bovem*), and so the self-quotation from the earlier work may be an endorsement of the poet's own verse.

10.2 The Europa Story in Literature and Art

The tale of how Europa was carried off by Jupiter in the guise of a bull is, as Ovid remarks on line 604, a *fabula nota*¹. The story had been told before Ovid by Eratosthenes², and was the subject of poetic treatments by Moschus³ and Horace⁴. Moreover, the scene of Europa holding onto the bull in mid-ocean, which occupies more than half of Ovid's account of the myth, is found frequently in artistic representations⁵.

By lingering over this particular scene, Ovid invites comparison between his description and the

familiar depictions of the scene in art. Yet Ovid's account does not restrict itself to conveying a single, static pose. The movement of Europa's hair (line 609), and the repeated actions of the maiden and the bull (lines 611-614) indicate a progression in the narrative that cannot be shown in a picture.

There are several differences between Ovid's description and the other representations of the scene in ancient literature and art.

Firstly, Europa is traditionally presented as holding onto the bull's horn⁶. Ovid, however, has Europa clinging to the bull's mane. Thus the element of danger is increased, as the grip on the mane is less secure than a grip on the horn. This sets up the situation of lines 611-614, where Jupiter exploits Europa's insecurity in order to make her hold on to him more tightly.

Secondly, while Europa's other hand is shown by Moschus and Lucian as holding on to her clothing⁷, other versions have the girl's hand resting on the bull's back or tail⁸. By choosing to follow the version which has Europa holding her cloak, Ovid stresses the danger to the girl's chastity which is inherent in the situation,

and prepares for the rape which will take place once the bull reaches land.

In addition, Ovid differs from all of the other literary accounts, except for his own in the *Metamorphoses*, in saying that Europa held onto the bull's head with her right hand rather than her left. The other accounts envisage Europa as riding side-saddle, with her feet over the bull's right flank, and holding the horn with her left hand⁹.

By making a point of the fact that Europa used her right hand to hold on to the bull, Ovid seems to be making a comment on the difference between Europa and another mythological figure - Helle, in the legend of the Golden Fleece.

Ovid's tells the story of Helle at III.853-876. The similarities between that story and the Europa legend are striking. On both occasions a girl is carried across the sea by an animal who is then turned into a constellation in the zodiac. Ovid seems to underline the parallel by using the phrase *litoribus tactis* in both episodes¹⁰. However, whereas Helle falls into the sea, Europa survives the voyage. Ovid explains this difference by remarking that Helle held onto the ram

which carried her with her left hand¹¹, whereas Europa held onto the bull with her right hand.

Ovid also differs from other authors in showing the sea as being rough. In Moschus and Lucian¹², the sea is becalmed to allow the serene passage of the god to Crete. By adding the idea of *asiliens aqua*, Ovid again stresses the danger which Europa faced.

Ovid's presentation of the Europa legend is, therefore, subtly different from other versions of the story. By diverging from the usual versions in certain points of detail, Ovid repeatedly stresses the physical danger with which Europa is faced when perched precariously on the bull's back. The parallel with the story of Helle demonstrates the potential danger of the situation, and this element adds a dramatic force to the story.

10.3 Sexual Language in the Europa Story

The scene which Ovid is describing in this passage is a rape. Europa is a *puella intacta* who is being carried off to Jupiter's bed. Although the actual rape is described without adornment¹³, the theme of sexual conquest is kept alive throughout the passage by the

presence of words which can refer to the sexual act used in their non-sexual meanings. Thus Ovid frequently teases the reader into anticipating sexual activity before the rape actually takes place.

In line 609, the phrase *sinus implet* has a non-sexual meaning, referring to the breeze causing the fold of Europa's dress to billow. However, the use of such vocabulary in the context of a rape scene keeps the idea of sexual activity in the background¹⁴.

Further examples appear in line 612. The sexual advances of Jupiter remain in the background even though it is the sea which is the source of Europa's fear. The words *tactus* and *adsiliens* are both used in a non-sexual meaning, although both are capable of bearing a sexual meaning¹⁵.

The hints of sexual activity that are present in the earlier part of the narrative are finally substantiated in line 617. Even here, however, the poet teases the reader by playing with sexual vocabulary. The first two words of the line (*taurus init*) seem to introduce the description of the sexual act, but this expectation is then frustrated as the word *caelum* makes it clear that *init* is being used in a non-sexual way.

Then the description of the rape is finally given, using the word *implet*, which had been used on line 609 without its sexual meaning.

Thus Ovid exploits the ambiguity inherent in words such as *impleo*, *inco*, *tango* and *adscilio* which have both sexual and non-sexual meanings. In the context of a rape scene, these words promise to carry their sexual meanings, but Ovid consistently surprises the reader by employing them in non-sexual ways. Only when the reader has become accustomed to understanding these words in their non-sexual senses does he describe the actual rape of Europa.

Notes to Chapter 10

1. The fame which this story enjoys is due not least to Ovid's own treatment of it at *Metamorphoses* II.833-875 (with a reprise at VI.103-107). It may be that Ovid is alluding to the familiarity of his own version of the myth, just as his introduction to the Proserpina myth at IV.418 is believed to refer to the treatment of that story in the *Metamorphoses* (see Hinds (1987) p.40).

2. Eratosthenes *Catasterisms* 14.

3. Moschus *Europa*.

4. Horace *Carmina* III.27.

5. This scene is depicted on reliefs on the Sicyonian treasury at Delphi (shown in Gardner (1929) fig.23) and the temple at Selinus (shown in Richter (1949) fig.200); it is also described as being the subject of a painting

in a temple at Sidon (Achilles Tatius *Leucippe et Clitophon* I.1), and was used as a motif on coins minted at Sidon (see Hill (1910) pp.139-199, plates XVII-XXV).

The handling of the rape of Europa in ancient art is discussed by Jahn (1870).

6. Moschus *Europa* 126; Ovid *Amores* I.3.24; *Metamorphoses* II.874; Manilius II.490; Lucian *Marinorum Dialogi* 326; Achilles Tatius *Leucippe et Clitophon* I.1.

7. Moschus *Europa* 126-127; Lucian *Marinorum Dialogi* 326.

8. Ovid (at *Metamorphoses* II.874) and Manilius show it resting on the bull's back, and Achilles Tatius as gripping the tail.

9. See Achilles Tatius *Leucippe et Clitophon* I.1; Richter (1949) fig. 200).

10. III.875 and V.615.

11. III.869-870: *dicatur infirma cornu tenuisse sinistra*
| *femina*.

12. Moschus *Europa* 115-119; Lucian *Marinorum Dialogi* 326.

13. Line 617: *te. Sidone. Iuppiter implet*. This brevity is typical - cf. *Metamorphoses* II.437-438; V.395.

14. The sexual connotations behind the phrase *aura sinus implet* are developed by Nonnus (*Dionysiaca* I.69-71), who describes the breeze making sexual advances at Europa as she is carried across the ocean.

15. See OLD s.v. *tango* 4.b.; id. s.v. *assilio* 1.b. Adams (1982, p.206) notes that *assilio* is used specifically of copulating animals. The word would therefore be appropriate for the sexual activity of a bull.

CHAPTER 11: THE ARGEI

11.1 Commentary on V.621-662

621-662. Every year, on the fourteenth - or possibly fifteenth - of May, rush puppets called "Argei" were thrown from the ancient Pons Sublicius into the river Tiber in a religious ceremony. The possible origins and meaning of this festival are discussed in Section 11.2.

Ovid describes the ritual (621-622) and offers a series of unsatisfactory explanations of it: the suggestion that the rite commemorates the systematic execution of the over-sixties (623-624), the story that the ceremony is a surrogate human sacrifice (625-632), and the idea that it represents the disenfranchisement of the older generation (633-634). Finally, Ovid turns to the god of the river Tiber (635-638). The god explains, in lines 639-660, how the rush effigies are in fact substitutes for the bodies of Argive exiles who wanted their corpses to be thrown into the Tiber so that they might eventually be carried back to their homeland of Argos. After telling his story the god returns to his river (661-662).

621-622. tum quoque priscorum Virgo simulacra virorum \
mittere roboreo scirpea ponte solet: The phrase *tum*

Argei provides a temporal link between the description of Taurus and the rite of the Argei, placing them on the same day - i.e. the day before the Ides of May (see note on lines 603-604). Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I.38.3) gives the date of the ritual as being the Ides (May 15th), which would fit in with the tendency of Roman festivals to fall on odd-numbered days (see note on lines 491-492).

Harmon (1978, pp.1448-1449) and Radke (1990, p.9) argue that Ovid really refers to the Ides at this point, on the grounds that lines 603-604 refer to the night between the fourteenth and the fifteenth. However, the arguments that they put forward do not take into account the fact that the phrase *prior Idibus indicat* refers to the calendar entry for the fourteenth rather than to the night before the Ides. It is not unprecedented that Ovid should deal with the events of the evening before the events of the day itself when recording the events of a particular day (see Braun (1981) pp.2366-2367).

The atmosphere of this festival is established by the adjectives in this couplet. *priscorum* relates the ritual to the distant past. The mood of antiquity is sustained by *roboreo*, referring to the Sublician Bridge

- a structure dated by Livy (I.33.6), Dionysius of Halicarnassus (III.45.2) and Plutarch (*Numa* 9.3) to the reign of Ancus Marcius. The fact that the bridge was made of wood establishes both its antiquity and its sanctity, as a primitive religious taboo forbade the use of metal in its construction (see Frazer on V.621, p.94). Finally, the fact that the effigies thrown into the river were *scirpea* implies that the ceremony has its basis in the agricultural society of primitive Rome.

623-624. corpora post decies senos qui credidit annos \ missa neci, sceleris crimine damnat avos: In presenting the theory that men over the age of sixty were originally thrown from the bridge, Ovid uses the emotive words *sceleris* and *damnat* to stress the enormity of the charge. He then, in contrast, calls the early Romans *avos*, emphasising the family relationship which they have with the people of his own day, to make the theory seem all the more absurd.

625-632. fama vetus, tum cum Saturnia terra vocata est...: The phrase *fama vetus* introduces oratio obliqua that runs until the end of line 632. The reporting of the legend in indirect speech and the stress on the antiquity of the story combine to distance the poet from

the tale which tells, thus reinforcing the scepticism displayed in lines 623-624 (see note *ad loc.*).

The idea of antiquity is sustained by the language in these lines. The phrase *Saturnia terra* is Ennian (cf. *Annales* 25 [Vahlen]), and so has an archaising effect. Furthermore, the two compound adjectives *fatidici* (626) and *falcifero* (627) contribute to the evocation of antiquity and solemnity. Although compound words are not found in the very earliest Latin, they are nevertheless a part of the archaic literary style of the age of Ennius (see Coulter (1916) pp.164-165). The word *falcifer* is therefore an anachronism when put into the mouth of the oracle, but it has the effect of suggesting the tone which Ovid's contemporary readership would expect in an ancient religious utterance.

626. talia fatidici dicta fuisse Iovis. This reading is found in the codex Gottingensis (with *Iovis* corrected to *senis*), but the major manuscripts have other readings at the end of the line: G and M end with *fuisse senis*, and U closes with *fuere senis*.

There are two separate textual issues. Firstly, the word *senis*, which appears in the manuscripts of highest rank, appears to have been taken from the succeeding

line. Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I.19.3) and Macrobius (*Saturnalia* I.7.28) quote an oracle of Zeus from Dodona which corresponds to the substance of lines 627-628, and seems to be the thing to which Ovid is referring. *Iovis* is therefore preferable to *senis*. Secondly, the indirect speech in lines 631-632 is only explained on the grounds that the entire description of the introduction of surrogate victims is given in oratio obliqua after *fama vetus* (625). Thus the infinitive *fuisse* is required.

The alternative reading *fuere* is plausibly explained by AWC as deriving from the similarity of the phrase *verba fuere senis* (found at line 524 and IV.524) to *dicta fuisse senis* which the copyist probably found in the manuscript.

627. duo corpora: There is a discrepancy between the figure of two bodies given by Ovid and the number of effigies cast into the Tiber at the festival (Varro (*de Lingua Latina*) VII.44 gives the number as twenty-seven, while Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I.38.3) mentions thirty). This discrepancy further suggests that the *fama vetus* cannot be a truthful explanation of the origin of the rite.

629. donec in haec venit Tirynthius arva: Hercules is

widely associated with the rite of the Argei (e.g. Dionysius of Halicarnassus I.38.2-4; Plutarch *Quaestiones Romanae* 32; Macrobius *Saturnalia* I.11.47). The legend that the Greek hero journeyed through Italy as he drove the herds of Geryon provides a link between early Rome and Greece which was used to explain several aetiological questions concerning the customs of primitive Rome (cf. I.543-582; VI.519-526).

The association of Hercules with the Argei is made more plausible by the possibility of an etymological connection between *Argei* and *Argos*. The cities of Argos and Tiryns were neighbours, and so the Tirynthian hero Hercules provides a possible link between early Rome and Argos, which could account for the derivation of the name of the Argei.

631. illum stramineos in aquam misisse Quirites: The word *Quirites* was only given to the people of Rome after the union with the Sabines in the time of Romulus, and so here it is an anachronism. However, the word produces a telling effect, as it represents the victims as Roman citizens, and thus increases the sympathy felt towards them and the gratitude felt towards Hercules for saving them from being killed.

633-634. pars putat, ut ferrent iuvenes suffragia soli,
\ pontibus infirmos praecipitasse senes: The formula
pars putat is another device of the poet's which enables
him to distance himself from the explanation he is about
to present (cf. note on 167-168).

The explanation that old men were thrown from the
bridges that led to voting pens in order to
disenfranchise them would not appear to lend itself to
detailed poetic treatment and is discreditable to the
Romans. Accordingly it is passed over in a concise
couplet.

As Paley and Peter both explain (see their notes on
V.634), the *pontes* were passages by which voters were
admitted to voting pens. Men over the age of sixty, who
lost the right to vote in the *comitia centuriata*, were
thus known as *depontani* according to Varro (*Saturae*
Menippeae 494). In addition, Festus (p.450 [Lindsay])
records the expression *sexagenarios de ponte* as
referring to the disenfranchisement of the over-sixties.

635-636. Thybri, doce verum: tua ripa vetustior Urbe
est; \ principium ritus tu bene nosse potes: The final
explanation of the ritual which Ovid offers is supported
by an appeal to divine authority. In contrast to the

technique of distancing himself from the explanation he reports, which the poet had used when giving the alternative aetiologies, Ovid now appears confident that the god will give the true explanation. *doce verum* stands in marked contrast to the uncertainty indicated by *fama vetus* and *pars putat* (see notes on lines 625-632 and 633-634).

The summoning up of a figure who has observed the remote past serves two purposes. His antiquity adds authority to the story he tells, and the presence of such a character also creates a dramatic impact.

637. Thybris harundiferum medio caput extulit alveo:

Ovid transports the scene to the bank of the Tiber. Most of Ovid's interviews with divine informants are imagined as taking place in the poet's study (cf. especially I.93-94). The poet invokes the various gods, asking them to appear to him with the word *ades* (e.g. V.183, V.663). By setting this interview at the riverside, Ovid provides a vivid backdrop to the encounter, and adds variety to the poem.

639-642. haec loca desertas vidi sine moenibus

herbas...: The topos of the contrast between early Rome and the city of Ovid's day is a recurrent theme in

Augustan poetry (see note on lines 93-94).

The topos is given fresh life by its relevance to the speaker, who actually has first hand experience of both old and new Rome. The river god stresses the difference between the reputation which he now enjoys (*noruntque timentque*) and his previous humility (*despiciendus eram*). The contrast gains further effect from the fact that the subject of *noruntque timentque* is *gentes*, whereas the agent of *despiciendus* is *pecori*.

642. tunc etiam pecori despiciendus eram: As Paley observes (*ad loc.*), the word *despiciendus* has a double meaning. In contrast with *noruntque timentque* in the hexameter, it implies the humble status of the river in antiquity. However, the Tiber was also *pecori despiciendus* in the sense that cattle grazing along the bank would literally look down onto its waters.

645. venit et Alcides, turba comitatus Achiva: The presence of a group of companions of Hercules is suggested by Varro (*de Lingua Latina* V.45) and by the first century BC grammarian Epicadus (*apud Macrobius Saturnalia* I.11.47), although Epicadus says that Hercules' companions had been lost before his arrival in Italy. There is no mention of Hercules' entourage in the

versions of the Hercules and Cacus myth told by Virgil and Livy. By introducing the Greeks into the story, Ovid is able to establish a link between Greece and primitive Rome which accounts for the derivation of *Argei* from *Argivus*.

649. victor abit: Hercules is referred to as *victor* in several analogous passages (I.580; Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.203; Epicadus apud Macrobius *Saturnalia* I.11.47). In the second century BC a temple had been dedicated to Hercules Victor on the banks of the Tiber (see Coarelli (1981) p.313), and so it is natural that the river god should refer to Hercules by this title.

Hercules' exit confounds the reader's expectations. The hero is introduced by Thybris, creating the expectation that he will be instrumental in the origin of the festival of the Argei (as he is at 629-632). However, he then leaves the scene with the origin of the festival still unexplained, and it turns out to be his companions who are significant in the aetiological story.

651. magnaue pars horum desertis venerat Argis: The fact that the men came from Argos explains the fact that the effigies thrown into the Tiber were called Argei.

Ovid does not state this etymology explicitly, but allows the reader to make his own conclusions.

652. montibus his ponunt spemque laremque suum: The deictic *his* keeps the dramatic setting of the encounter in the reader's mind. Ovid imagines himself at the bank of the river (see note on line 637) as the god indicates the seven hills of Rome in a proud, proprietorial manner.

The syllepsis *ponunt spemque laremque* is an example of Ovid's penchant for word-play. Ovid's use of this figure of speech is discussed by Frécaut (1969).

653-656. saepe tamen patriae dulci tanguntur amore...: A story of the throwing of surrogate bodies into the river was told by Epicadus (apud Macrobius *Saturnalia* I.11.47) in an explanation of a custom at the feast of the Sigillares.

Ovid's use of the story in this context owes more to the poetic opportunities it offers than the likelihood of the Greek exiles actually believing that they might eventually be carried back to Greece. The story allows Ovid to exploit the pathos of exile, and the nostalgia for home felt by those who die in a foreign land. (The possibility that this story might

reflect Ovid's state of mind in his own exile is discussed in the Appendix.)

655. Tiberin: It is noticeable that Ovid uses the form *Thybris* when referring to the god of the river (635; 637), and *Tiber* when referring to the river itself (cf. 659, where the god refers to the river in the third person, making the distinction between the two clear). This distinction between the river and the god is maintained throughout the narrative. Eggers (1984, p.192) observes that Ovid refrains from exploiting the paradox that the river and the god may have the same identity, whereas often the poet gains humorous effects from that sort of paradox (see *Metamorphoses* II.302-303; XI.621).

Bömer (1957, pp.134-135) makes, with some reservations, a distinction between the forms *Tiberis* and *Thybris*. *Tiberis* is not found in the *Metamorphoses* but occurs in the *Fasti* seven times. This is explained by Bömer as being due to its Roman feel (cf. Norden on Virgil *Aeneid* VI.87), whereas *Thybris* has associations with Greek and suggests mystery and religion.

In this passage, however, the poet's usage seems to be dependent upon whether he is referring to the river

or the god.

656. litus ad Inachium pulvis inanis eam: It is natural for Thybris when reporting the wishes of the dying Argives to refer to their city by the name of his fellow river-god Inachus, who resided there.

658. mortuus Ausonia conditur hospes humo: Festus (p.18 [Lindsay]) records a belief that the buildings in Rome called *Argae* were so called after the famous Greeks who lay buried underneath them. Thybris may be making a subtle allusion to that etymology by mentioning here that the Greeks were buried in Italy.

660. ut repetat Graias per freta longa domos: Thybris' speech closes on a note of sympathy, as he remarks on the great expanse of water between the exiles and their homes. This builds on the sympathetic presentation of the exiles from Argos, which is seen through their weariness with travel (650: *longius ire negant*); nostalgic yearning for their homeland (653); and pity for their fate (656: *pulvis inanis*).

661-662. hactenus, et subiit vivo rorantia saxo \ antra; leves cursum sustinuistis aquae: The vivid description of the location reminds the reader of the dramatic setting (see notes on lines 637 and 652). The setting is

used to provide a frame for the speech, with the exit, marked by *subiit*, corresponding to the entrance in line 637, marked by *caput extulit*.

As at the end of the poet's encounter with Flora, a reminder of the deity remains after the informant has disappeared. Thus the reality of the interview is stressed.

11.2 The Origin and Meaning of the Festival

The basic facts of the ritual which Ovid describes in this passage are clear enough. In March, bundles of rushes in the shape of human bodies were carried in a procession through the streets of Rome to the shrines called *Argea*¹. Then, on the fourteenth, or possibly fifteenth, of May², the same rush puppets were thrown from the Pons Sublicius into the river Tiber.

The subject of the meaning of this festival has generated a vast literature. The ancient sources do not agree as to the origin of the festival³, and there is still great doubt about its significance. Harmon⁴ categorises the theories about the Argei into three main groups: some scholars have seen the ritual as a surrogate human sacrifice in which the rush bundles are

thrown into the river in place of human bodies⁵; others see the casting of rushes into the river as a means of disposing of materials used in religious acts⁶; a third group imagines the purpose of the ritual as being to appease the river for the bridge which was built across its waters⁷.

None of these theories has secured the status of orthodoxy, however⁸. Harmon rejects all of the theories and sees the purpose of the festival as being to expel evil spirits from the city⁹. In the most recent treatment of the subject, Radke¹⁰ argues that the festival commemorates the new year in the Umbrian calendar, and that the rush figures represent the first fruits offered in expectation of an abundant harvest.

The very number of explanations that have been advanced seems to indicate the difficulties involved in ascertaining the significance of festival. The obscurity of the word *Argei* leaves the matter in some doubt. The tendency of the ancient sources to see the word as referring to the Greeks is probably a folk etymology, with no basis in fact¹¹. Radke¹² argues that *Argei* is connected with the Greek ἄργω, but Harmon¹³ points to the analogy with the effigies called *cerei* and *laneeae* to

show that *Argei* was probably a material adjective. While there is doubt about the meaning of the name, the meaning of the festival will remain uncertain.

However, it is not necessary to understand the origins of the festival to appreciate Ovid's treatment of it. Ovid does not attempt a scientific enquiry into the true meaning of the ritual. He uses the uncertainty which surrounded the festival even in his own day to allow him to present a number of different explanations and focus on material which is suitable for his dramatic and poetic purpose. By introducing the god of the river, who tells a story which dates the festival to the time of Hercules and Evander, the poet achieves dramatic effects - through the appearance of a speaker with a distinctive character¹⁴ - and adds Virgilian colour to the passage¹⁵.

11.3 The Characterisation of the River God

The appearance of the god of the river recalls the epiphany of Tiberinus in the eighth book of the *Aeneid*¹⁶. As Rutledge has remarked¹⁷, Ovid has taken the solemn divinity of Virgil's poem, and transformed him into a light-hearted figure. Rutledge calls Ovid's

creation "a chatty, likeable, but not too keen character"¹⁸. However, I believe that this character sketch overlooks a key element to the portrayal of the river god - that is, his great age.

Thybris - as Ovid calls the river god - is introduced as *vetustior Urbe* (635). He thus has the authority which is given to the elderly, who speak with the advantage of great experience. It is tempting to see his *rauca ora* (638) as not just imitating the sound of rushing water, but also the cracked tones of an old man¹⁹.

The idea of Thybris' great age, which is thus highlighted in Ovid's introduction of the speaker, is sustained by both the style and content of his speech.

The contrast of modern times with the early history of Rome is a common theme in Augustan poetry, but its occurrence in lines 639-642 is coloured by the speaker's personal involvement. The first person verb *vidi* (639) captures the tendency of old men in ancient poetry to view the past through their own experience²⁰. The images of early Rome thus become not a literary cliché, but an exercise in nostalgia.

The idea of nostalgia is supported by the inclusion

in the narrative of the names of famous individuals. In line 643, the god mentions Evander, remarking how famous he is, and at line 645, Hercules is mentioned (under the patronymic *Alcides*). Neither of these characters is, strictly speaking, essential to the aetiological explanation of the Argei, and I would suggest that their presence is attributable to the fact that the speaker is reminiscing nostalgically about the "good old days" of his youth.

When telling of Evander's arrival in Italy, the god characteristically alights on a detail that refers to himself personally - the act of rowing up the river - and underlines his personal involvement with the words *meas...aquas* (644).

The speaker's age may also perhaps be detected in a certain tendency to ramble. Having been summoned to explain the origin of the Argei, he spends four lines talking about the landscape of early Italy - with himself at the fore - and then a further seven lines discussing Evander and Hercules - again putting himself into the story - before eventually coming to the point. Indeed, line 646, when the river god breaks into his narrative with a remark about his former name (*Albulas*,

si meminī, tunc mihi nomen erat) is something of a non-sequitur, but makes sense if it is understood as the sort of egocentric remark with which a brooding old man might punctuate his speech.

This line also contains a more direct allusion to the speaker's senility. The phrase *si meminī* (as Rutledge has pointed out²¹) indicates that the river god's memory, even about his own name, cannot be relied upon concerning the events of so long ago. This idea of failing memory clearly picks up the notion of old age, which is the hallmark of Ovid's presentation of the god of the Tiber.

11.4 The Influence of Virgil's Aeneid

As has been mentioned above, the very appearance of the river-god is enough to recall the passage in the eighth book of the *Aeneid* in which Tiberinus, the god of the river, appears to Aeneas. In this section, I wish to show how Ovid goes on to elaborate the connection between his poem and Virgil's in a number of different ways, and so gives a distinctively Virgilian flavour to his poem in this episode.

In the first place, there are a number of details

in common with the *Aeneid*. The age of the god (line 635), his appearance from the river (637) and his reed-crowned head (637) all correspond to details from the description of Tiberinus in the *Aeneid*²². Similarly, the comment that Rome was inhabited only by cattle recalls the famous scene where Aeneas sees the future site of the Forum Romanum filled with cows²³, while the mention of the Tiber's old name being the Albula is also common to both passages²⁴. A further reminiscence of the *Aeneid* can be found in the mention of the hospitality given by Evander to Hercules²⁵.

This repetition of detail is perhaps the most obvious way in which the poet incorporates the tone of the *Aeneid* into this passage. However, reference to the *Aeneid* is also made through pointed contrasts.

The Rome of *Aeneid* VIII contains the scattered buildings of Evander's settlement²⁶, but Tiber, at line 639, recalls a time when there were no buildings at all on the site. By going even further into the past than Virgil had done, Ovid demonstrates the extreme old age of his speaker²⁷.

The device of *oppositio in imitando* is also used when the river god recalls the arrival of Evander in

Rome. The fact that Evander had to row upstream (644) recalls the episode in the *Aeneid* where the river miraculously checks its current to allow Aeneas and his men to make their way more easily up the river²⁸. The difference between Evander's arrival and that of Aeneas is underlined by the metaphor *torsit aquas*, which indicates the toil involved on Evander's part, whereas Aeneas' crew did not have to strain at the oars.

A third point of juncture between Ovid and Virgil comes in the echoing of Virgil's metrical technique. Twice in passages describing the river Tiber, Virgil uses synizesis in order to scan the word *alveo* as a spondee²⁹. Ovid's use of the same technique in line 637 may be seen as contributing to the Virgilian tone.

In addition to these methods of allusion, it is also possible to detect more subtle and ambiguous references to the *Aeneid* in Tiber's speech.

For example, at line 643 the river god refers to the fame which Evander enjoys: *Arcadis Evandri nomen tibi saepe refertur*. It may be that Ovid is making a literary allusion here, and that the reason why the name of Evander is so familiar to the reader is that he is a prominent figure in Virgil's poem. If this is so, the

word *saecula* might refer either to the frequency with which the name Evander is mentioned in the *Aeneid*³⁰, or to the number of recitations of Virgil's celebrated poem which the reader may be expected to have heard.

The influence of the *Aeneid* may also be detected behind line 647: *excipit hospitio iuvenem Pallantius heros*. This line refers to Evander's reception of Hercules. However, there are also echoes of the hospitality which Evander extends to Aeneas in Virgil's poem. In particular, the use of the word *iuvenem* reminds the reader of Evander's son Pallas' address to the Trojans as *iuvenes*³¹. Line 647 is phrased in such a way as to remind the reader of another literary meeting between a *iuvenis* and a *Pallantius heros*. Indeed, in view of the river god's failing memory, there may even be a suggestion that the two events have become confused in the mind of the Tiber.

The possibility of seeing in this line an allusion to the reception of Aeneas is significant, for it allows the whole couplet to be read as a *précis* of the first part of *Aeneid* VIII. The hexameter refers to the reception of a young man by Evander. This is the subject matter of *Aeneid* VIII.102-183. Hercules' punishment of

the semi-human monster Cacus (which is reported in line 648) is the subject of *Aeneid* VIII.184-279. If the couplet is read as a conscious summary of that part of the *Aeneid*, then some of the details take on additional piquancy. The word *tandem* might refer to the length of time for which Cacus had terrorised the populace³², or to the difficulty which Hercules had in overcoming him³³, or may even be a comment on the excessive length at which Virgil relates the story³⁴.

The influence of Virgil is most clearly detected in the appearance of the god of the Tiber and the reminiscences of Hercules and Evander, but it is not solely confined to that part of the passage. It is also present in the way in which, at lines 653-654, the Argive exiles are touched at the point of death by nostalgia for their homeland.

The affection which they feel for their former home seems to have its origin in the death of Antores in the tenth book of the *Aeneid*³⁵. Antores, according to Virgil, had been a companion of Hercules, just like the Argives in Ovid's account. Also like them, he had left Argos and eventually settled in Italy with Evander, and the similarity extends further to their dying thoughts

of Argos. In addition to these details, there is a verbal similarity, with the words *dulcis* and *moriens* common to both accounts³⁶. This verbal similarity confirms the Virgilian influence.

From the time when the river god first appears it is apparent that Ovid is using Virgil as a model in this part of the poem. However, the *Aeneid* is alluded to with great variety and subtlety in lines 635-660. Some of the borrowings from the *Aeneid* work simply to produce a poetic resonance, while at other times the poet uses Virgil more subtly to give an ambiguous and allusive quality to the text.

Notes to Chapter 11

1. See III.791-792. On the Argea, see Festus p.18 [Lindsay].
2. For the problem of the actual date of the ceremony, see the note on lines 621-622.
3. Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I.38) and Lactantius (*Institutiones Divinae* I.21) relate the ritual to human sacrifice, while Varro (*de Lingua Latina* V.45) and Festus (p.450 [Lindsay]) believe the Argei represent dead Argives. Ovid mentions both versions.
4. Harmon (1978) pp.1448-1455.
5. E.g. Wissowa (1896); Clerici (1942).
6. E.g. Holland (1961) pp.313-331; Palmer (1970) pp.84-97.

7. E.g. Jordan (1871, vol.I) p.398; Frazer (note on V.621) pp.91-109; Hallett (1970).
8. Objections to each of these theories have been collected by Harmon (1978, pp.1449-1455).
9. Harmon (1978) pp.1455-1459. See also Porte (1986) p.196.
10. Radke (1990).
11. See Harmon (1978) p.1450.
12. Radke (1990) pp.16-18.
13. Harmon (1978) p.1450.
14. See Section 11.3.
15. See Section 11.4.
16. Bömer (note on V.635) notes certain correspondences. The influence of Virgil on this passage is discussed more fully in Section 11.4.
17. Rutledge (1980b) pp.301-302.
18. Rutledge (1980b) p.302.
19. The epithet *raucus* is frequently used of river gods (cf. *Amores* III.6.52; *Metamorphoses* V.600). But *raucus* may also indicate a failing human voice (cf. Plautus *Epidicus* 200; Cicero *Epistulae ad Familiares* IX.2.5). The deterioration of the voice in old age is mentioned by Cicero (*de Senectute* 28) and Juvenal (*Satires* 10.198), although neither uses the word *raucus*.
20. The most notable example is probably Nestor (see the study of Austin (1966)). Virgil's Evander shows a similar tendency to reminisce (see *Aeneid* VIII.154-168; 558-584).

The word *vidi* also has the function of guaranteeing the truth of the story which is about to be told (cf. *Metamorphoses* VIII.622: *ipse locum vidi*; Virgil *Aeneid* II.5: *quaeque ipse miserrima vidi* - see Bömer on *Metamorphoses* IX.46).

21. Rutledge (1980b) p.302.
22. Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.31-34.
23. Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.359-361.
24. Cf. Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.332: *amisit verum vetus Albula nomen.*
25. Cf. Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.362-363: "*haec*" *inquit "limina victor \ Alcides subiit, haec illum regia cepit."*
26. See Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.97-100.
27. See Section 11.3.
28. Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.86-89.
29. Virgil *Aeneid* VII.33; VII.303. The technique is not exclusively Virgilian, but Ovid's use of it in the context of the river Tiber seems to be drawing attention to the role of the *Aeneid* as an influence on this passage.
30. The name occurs twenty-eight times in the *Aeneid*.
31. Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.112.
32. See Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.200-201: *attulit et nobis aliquando optantibus aetas \ auxilium adventumque dei.*
33. See Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.230-232.
34. The story occupies eighty-six lines in Virgil - *Aeneid* VIII.190-275.
35. Virgil *Aeneid* X.776-782.
36. Bonjour (1975, pp.424-429) points out that the theme of *dulcis patria* is characteristically Virgilian - cf. *Eclogues* 1.3; *Aeneid* IV.340-344, in addition to *Aeneid* X.782.

CHAPTER 12: MERCURY

12.1 Commentary on V.663-720

663-694. Ovid calls upon the god Mercury and asks him about the constellation of Gemini.

Lines 663-672 have the form of a hymnic invocation to the god: there is the initial address (663), followed by the god's birth legend (663-664) and a list of Mercury's various functions (665-668). In lines 669-672, Ovid mentions the duties performed in honour of the god. The poet then inserts a passage describing the prayers offered to Mercury by a merchant at the *aqua Mercurii* (673-692), before making his own request to the god to tell him when the sun enters Gemini (693-694).

663. clare nepos Atlantis, ades: The opening words of the address recall the opening of Horace *Carmina* I.10, a poem which is imitated extensively in the poet's address to the god (see Section 12.2). Ovid shows his metrical virtuosity by adapting the words written by Horace in the Sapphic metre to his elegiac couplet.

665-668. pacis et armorum superis imisque deorum \
arbiter, alato qui pede carpis iter...: In listing the god's functions, Ovid uses a variety of different hymnic forms. Relative clauses, which are typical of the hymnic

genre (see Norden (1913) pp.168-176), are used in lines 666 and 668, whereas anaphora (see Bömer on I.65; Williams on Callimachus *Hymns* 2.69; Norden (1913) pp.149-166) is used to connect two of the god's functions on line 667 (*laeto...laeto...*).

Another device which is typical of the hymnic form is the alliteration found in lines 667-668: *laeto lyrae...laeto... lingua...loqui* (see Appel (1909) pp.160-162).

671. quicumque suas profitentur vendere merces: The word *merces* - placed emphatically at the end of the line - suggests an etymological connection between the traders, who sell *merces*, and their patron god *Mercurius*.

672. ture dato tribuas ut sibi lucra rogant: There is a balanced structure to this line, with the two verbs *dato* and *tribuas* juxtaposed, and the nouns *ture* and *lucra* framing the request. The effect of this balance is to portray the merchant's sacrifice as an exchange, in which the commodities given and received are weighed up one against the other. The merchant trades his incense for the *lucra* which the god can offer in return.

673. est aqua Mercurii portae vicina Capenae: *Hymns*

frequently refer to the deity's cult place (cf. [Homer] *Hymns* 2.490-495; 3.143-164; 5.292; 6.2-3 etc.). As in the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* (*Hymns* 3.143-164), Ovid elaborates on the mention of the cult place with a description of the worship carried out there. Thus he is able to insert the description of the merchant's prayer into his own hymn to Mercury.

675-680. huc venit incinctus tunica mercator et urna \
purus suffita, quam ferat, haurit aquam...: The bustle of activity as the merchant carries out the ritual is brought out by the sentence structure. In lines 675-676 there are three finite verbs (two of them juxtaposed) and two participial phrases, giving the impression of a hurried series of actions.

In addition, the repetitions *laurus, lauro... lauro* and *sparguntur... spargit* suggest the formulaic nature of the ceremony. *omnia* (678) conveys the thoroughness with which the merchant performs the rite, and this is humorously observed when the celebrant continues the purification process (on himself) even after he has applied it to all of his merchandise. Thoroughness is also suggested by the intensifying prefix in *peragit* in line 680 (cf. *perluit* (435) and *peracta* (444) in the

description of the ritual of the Lemuria).

675-676. urna \ purus suffita, quam ferat, haurit aquam:

Line 676 has been restored to the accepted reading by Heinsius. Manuscript U reads *suffitam quam ferit*; G and M have *suffit aquam suffit et*; many other manuscripts offer *suffusa quam ferat*.

The presence of *aquam* at the end of the line is probably responsible for the readings of U, G and M. The desire to produce internal rhyme, which will have led to U's *suffitam...aquam*, is a frequent cause of aberration (see Willis (1972) pp.102-110; Thomas (1991) pp.42-43). The reading of GM seems to have been influenced by the recurrence of the letters *-AQUAM-* in the middle and at the end of the line, leading to an error of word division (see Peeters (1939) p.299).

Heinsius' emendation makes sense of the line and offers a plausible account of how the readings of the manuscripts came about.

677. uda fit hinc laurus, lauro sparguntur ab uda: The chiastic word order highlights the key instrument in the ritual - the laurel branch. The enclosing of the line with *uda...uda* and the repetition at the centre of the line of *laurus, lauro* have a striking effect.

680. peragit solita fallere voce preces: The serious tone, which has been built up through religious vocabulary (e.g. *numen* (674); *supplicata* (676)) and the detailed description of the ritual (675-679), is humorously undermined by the reminder of the devious nature of the celebrant. The incongruity between the ostensibly religious behaviour of the merchant and the dubious morality which he exhibits is the source of the passage's humorous appeal.

681-690. "abluere praeteriti periuria temporis", inquit \
"abluere praeteritae perfida verba die...": Taking up the hint from line 680 (see note *ad loc.*), the hymn derives its humour from its incongruity. The traditional language of a Roman prayer is followed, but this only serves to highlight the contrast with the content of the speech.

The precatory form is established at the outset by the repetition (*abluere praeteriti... abluere praeteritae* (681-682)), alliteration (*praeteriti periuria... praeteritae perfida* (681-682)) and anaphora (*sive... sive... (683-685); da... da... (689)*). This is reminiscent of the prayer of the farmer at Cato *de Agricultura* 141.2. The imperatives (*abluere* (681, 682); *da*

(689); *fac* (690)) and precatory subjunctives (*absulerint* (686); *patiant* (687); *curent* (688)) also contribute to the tone (see Swoboda (1978) p.80).

Especially notable is device of covering all gods and goddesses in the catch-all phrase *sive deum...alium divamve* (685). This sort of formula is frequently used in Roman prayers to ensure that the appropriate divinity is addressed (see Appel (1909) p.80). The formula is used here, however, not to ensure that the appropriate god is mentioned, but to make it clear that the speaker has deceived so many gods and goddesses that he cannot count them all.

The merchant's delight in his trickery is built up through the course of the prayer. Initially he prays for absolution from past wrongdoing - although phrases such as *non audituri* (684) and *prudens* (685) suggest that he feels no real contrition. There is a change in position from wishing his guilt to be removed (*abluo... abluo...* (681-682)) to wishing that his perjury will be ignored (683-686). The full extent of the merchant's effrontery is only revealed in the last four lines of his prayer as he appeals for *carte blanche* to perjure himself in the future, culminating in line 689: *de modo lucra mihi. de*

facto laucia luero, where the repetitions *da...da...* and *luera...luero* plainly reveal the man's acquisitive nature.

Throughout the prayer, there is a string of vocabulary associated with deceit (*periuria*, *perfida*, *falso*, *fefelli*, *periuria*, *verba dedisse*) which is alien to the context of prayer, and keeps the absurdity of the situation before the reader.

682. ablue praeteritae perfida verba die: Manuscript U reads *praeterita*; G and M have *praeterea*. Scaliger emended the text to *praeteritae*.

Most editors have accepted Scaliger's emendation, taking *die* as a genitive. Le Bonniec (1960, p.214), however, argues that *die* must be an ablative, and therefore the manuscript reading *praeterita* is to be preferred.

The use of *die* as a genitive is rare (see TLL V.1.p.1022) and does not occur elsewhere in Ovid (although Ovid does use *fide* as genitive - see Bömer *ad loc.*), but it is difficult to see how the word could be an ablative in this context. Kraus (1965, p.202) points out that the structural parallel with the previous line demands a genitive and that the false correction of

praeterita to *praeterita* in the manuscripts is readily understandable since *die* is usually an ablative form.

684. numina magna Iovis: *magna* is found in manuscripts G and M; U offers *vana*. Le Bonniec (1960, p.214) prefers *vana* to *magna* on the grounds that it is the *lectio difficilior*, and that *numina vana* produces better sense than the banal *numina magna*.

However, Le Bonniec's argument is not persuasive. As Hall (1982, p.75) has pointed out, the point of the line is not that Jupiter is ineffectual, but that he may choose not to take notice of perjuries. The parallel of *Metamorphoses* III.559, offered by AWC in support of *vana*, does not refer to Jupiter, but to ^agod whom the speaker regards as being counterfeit. The merchant, however, is not claiming that Jupiter is impotent, but that he is indulgent. Indeed, the force of the remark comes from the contrast between the authority implied in *numina magna Iovis* and the failure to exercise that authority (*non audituri*).

685. sive deum prudens alium divamve fefelli: As at line 613, the word *prudens* is used humorously to reveal the calculating nature of the speaker. The word is unexpected in the context of the merchant's admission of

perjury, and provides an indication of the merchant's pride in his deceit. This revelation undermines the sincerity of the prayer.

686. abstulerint celeres improba dicta Noti: The notion of the wind carrying words away so that they have no lasting meaning is a commonplace (see Bömer *ad loc.*). However, this phenomenon is normally a source of complaint - often used by abandoned lovers. The merchant takes this traditional feature of laments and transforms it into a thing that is desired. This transformation of the image into a novel use is characteristic of the way that the merchant perverts traditional values in his prayer.

693-694. at mihi pande, precor, tanto meliora petenti, \
in Geminos ex quo tempore Phoebus eat: Scholars who have wished to divide the poem into episodes see a break between lines 663-692 and 693-720, on the grounds that the former contains a reference to the Ides of May, while the latter refers to an event of the twentieth. (Braun (1981, p.2374) and Riedl (1989, p.5) both note a break at this point; Littlewood (1975a) and Swoboda (1978, p.80) also see the hymn to Mercury as ending before this couplet.)

Lines 693-694, however, are a prayer to the god, and as such form a natural conclusion to the hymnic invocation made by the poet in lines 663-672. The comparative *tanto meliora* links line 693 with the previous passage, and the dative present participle *petenti* echoes *poscenti* on line 691.

Rather than seeing lines 663-692 and 693-720 as forming two separate entries, it is preferable to look at 663-720 as an integrated piece, in which the hymnic form and the presence of Mercury unites two disparate elements of the calendar.

The transition from the subject of the Ides of May to the astronomical information concerning the twentieth is facilitated by the phrase *at mihi*, which corresponds to the Greek rhapsodic formula οὐτόρ ἐγώ, which is commonly used in hymns to introduce a closing prayer or to look forward to a new poetic task (see Lloyd-Jones (1963) pp.92-93).

695-720. After Mercury tells the poet that the sun enters Gemini on the twentieth of May (695-696), the god is asked about the origin of the constellation (697-698). Mercury tells how Castor and Pollux carried off

the Leucippides (699-700) and were attacked by Idas and Lynceus, to whom these women had been betrothed (701-706). In the ensuing fight, Castor was killed, and avenged by his brother (707-714). When Pollux was then offered immortality, he insisted on sharing it with his brother, and the twins became the constellation of Gemini (715-720).

695-696. "cum totidem de mense dies superesse videbis \ quot sunt Herculei facta laboris": The reply of Mercury, stating the number of days between the sun's entry into Gemini and the end of the month as being as many as the labours of Hercules, provides variety and enlivens an otherwise prosaic piece of information. Similar devices are used by Ovid for recording numbers at II.568 and III.584.

The mention of the labours of Hercules introduces a lofty tone, in preparation for the story of Castor and Pollux in which the themes of conflict and honour are prominent.

697-698. "dic" ego respondi "causam mihi sideris huius."
\ causam facundo reddidit ore deus: Ovid suggests a witty verbal exchange between himself and the god. The word *causam* is repeated in line 698 from the previous

line for humorous effect (cf. note on line 320). In addition, the verbs *respondi* and *reddidit* indicate a rapid succession of questions and answers. The idea of a witty exchange is supported by the phrase *facundo...ors*, alluding to the god's proverbial eloquence (cf. Horace *Carmina* I.10.1).

699. abstulerant raptas Phoeben Phoebesque sororem:

Mercury begins his speech with two words, *abstulerant* and *raptas*, which are associated with the subject of stealing. As the merchant's prayer in lines 681-690 has shown, this is a subject in which Mercury has a special interest. The god thus imposes his own personality on the story he tells, stressing the elements which are significant to him.

The phrase *Phoeben Phoebesque sororem* conforms to a favourite Ovidian formula whereby the second person in a list is identified by a word indicating relationship plus the genitive of the first person named (e.g. *Clio Cliusque sorores* (*Ars Amatoria* I.27); *Helenen. Helenesque sororem* (*Ars Amatoria* III.11) - Frécaut (1972, p.101) cites a further seven examples).

700. hic eques, ille pugil: The phrase corresponds to Homer's Κόσσιονό θ' ἰππόδομον καὶ πῦξ ἀγαθὸν Πολυδεύκεα

(*Illeg* III.237 = *Odyssey* XI.300). The symmetrical form establishes the equality of brothers in a way that contrasts with, but complements, the polyptotic phrase that identifies the sisters in the previous line.

701. et frater et Idas: The Apharetides, Lynceus and Idas, are the third set of siblings to be introduced in the space of three lines. Mercury refers to them by way of a formula which is different again from the formulae used to denote the previous two pairs (see notes on lines 699 and 700). This display of virtuosity is appropriate to a god who speaks *facundo ore* (698).

703-704. his amor ut repetant, illis ut reddere nolint, \ suadet; et ex causa pugnat uterque pari: The balanced structure of the hexameter, with *his* corresponding to *illis* and *repetant* to *reddere nolint*, and with *ut* appearing in both clauses, brings out the impasse in which the characters find themselves. This idea is supported by the phrase *ex causa...pari* in the pentameter. It is unusual to have an adjective at the end of a pentameter line (see Platnauer (1951) pp.40-44), and this irregularity lays greater emphasis on the idea of equality.

Although Lynceus and Idas had been pledged by law

to the daughters of Leucippus, Mercury's analysis, which sees both claims on the Leucippides as being equal, shows that legality is not important to him. This attitude is consistent with Mercury's indulgence towards the dishonest merchant (lines 691-692).

706. sed visum celeri vincere turpe fuga: Mercury portrays the twins as noble characters, with a strict code of honour (see Section 12.3). This portrayal appears ironic considering the fact that the twins have just carried off the fiancées of Idas and Lynceus.

712. qua cervix umeros continuata premit: According to Pindar (*Nemæan* 10.70), Pollux struck Lynceus ἐν πλευραῖσι. Ovid chooses to say that the blow landed on the throat, and uses an anatomical reference which echoes Homer's description of the place where Achilles lands the fatal blow against Hector (*Iliad* XXII.324-325: ποίνετο δ' ἢ κληῖδες ὅπ' ὤμων σὺχέν' ἔχουσι, \ λαικανίην, ἵνα γε πειχῆς ὤκιστος ὄλεθρος). The narrator sees a parallel between this combat and the combat between Hector and Achilles in the *Iliad*. Just as Achilles avenges Patroclus, Castor is an avenger (cf. *Altor* (711)), and the precise anatomical reference draws attention to this similarity.

713-714. ibat in hunc Idas, vixque est Iovis igne repulsus; \ tela tamen dextrae fulmine rapta negant: The conflict between Pollux and Idas is not fully explained by the poet. Ovid assumes his readers to have a knowledge of the story that Idas attacked Pollux with the stone from the grave of his father Aphareus, but that Jupiter killed Idas with a thunderbolt (see Pindar *Nemean* 10.67-71; Theocritus *Idylls* 22.207-211; Apollodorus III.11.2). The word *vix* adds a new dimension to the event, suggesting a more dramatic struggle than is envisaged by the other writers.

It appears that Ovid picks up on the version of the myth in which Idas actually lands a blow on Pollux which - had he not been immortal - would have killed him (cf. Apollodorus III.11.2), by saying in line 714 "they say, however, that his weapons were not dashed from his right hand by the thunderbolt". Ovid uses the blow which Idas lands on Pollux as a cue to move on to the catasterisation of the hero in line 715.

715-720. iamque tibi, Pollux, caelum sublime patebat...:

The narrative passes swiftly from the battle scene to the catasterisation of the twins, without a full explanation of Pollux's quasi-death at the hands of

Idas. This swift transition to the denouement of the story is typical of Ovid's narrative technique in the *Metamorphoses* (see Section 16.1).

In the description of the arrangement by which the twins come to share Pollux's immortality and become catasterised as the constellation of Gemini, there are traces of epic style, as Ovid echoes Hesiod, Ennius and Virgil. The phrase *caelum sublime patebat* (715) is reminiscent of Ennius' line *mi soli caeli maxima porta patet* (*Epigrams* 24 [Vahlen]). In line 717, *quod mihi das uni caelum* can be taken as a further echo of Ennius (*Annales* 65 [Vahlen]: *unus erit quem tu tolles in caerulea caeli*). The expression *dimidium toto munere maius erit* on line 718 goes back to Hesiod (*Opera et Dies* 40), while line 719 is a close adaptation of Virgil *Aeneid* VI.121 (see note on line 719).

The apostrophising of Pollux in line 715 and the direct speech in lines 716-718 add drama to the narrative, and the direct speech also makes Pollux's plea to Jupiter more personal.

717-718. quod mihi das uni caelum, partire duobus; \
dimidium toto munere maius erit: The distinction between *uni* and *duobus* is picked up by the juxtaposition of

dimidium coto in the pentameter. By this word-play, Ovid observes the paradoxical nature of the twins, who are at the same time both one of a pair and also half of a whole.

This paradox is compounded by the comment which is made in the pentameter about the half being greater than the whole.

719. alterna fratrem statione redemit: In recording the arrangement whereby the brothers exchanged their immortality on a daily basis, Mercury adapts Virgil's line *fratrem Pollux alterna morte redemit* (*Aeneid* VI.121), making one change. Ovid uses the military metaphor of guards on sentry duty (*alterna... statione*) in preference to Virgil's phrase *alterna morte*. Ovid wishes to stress the role of the twins as stars, whereas, in Virgil, Aeneas wishes to draw attention to their visits to the underworld.

720. utile sollicitae sidus utrumque rati: Castor and Pollux were believed to come to the aid of storm-tossed sailors in the form of St. Elmo's Fire (see Frazer *ad loc.*; Bömer on V.694). This detail is presumably of interest to Mercury as the patron of merchants and travellers. It is natural for him to conclude his speech

as he began it with an observation that is of interest to himself.

12.2 The Poet and the Merchant

The appearance of Mercury is used by Ovid to link together two separate events in May. The first part of this section is concerned with the Ides of May, the date on which a temple had been dedicated to Mercury in 495 BC¹, and which was treated as a festival by merchants². In the second part, the subject is the entry of the sun into the sign of Gemini on the twentieth of May.

In order to combine both of these events in a single episode, Ovid creates a hymn of great complexity. The poet's address to the god in lines 663-672 culminates in the mention of Mercury's worship by merchants. This leads naturally into a digression about the behaviour of merchants at the *aqua Mercurii*, the centre-piece of which is the crudely cynical prayer which Ovid puts into the mouth of the merchant in lines 681-690. The poet then contrasts the merchant's prayer with his own request to find out about the constellation of Gemini. This request completes the hymn which the poet had begun in line 663, and also leads smoothly from

the events of the Ides to the story of Castor and Pollux, which Mercury tells in lines 699-720³.

The formal hymnic features which are to be found in lines 663-692 have been listed by Littlewood⁴ and Swoboda⁵. However, neither of these scholars has pointed out the striking contrast between the words of the poet to Mercury and the words of the merchant which are quoted verbatim in the course of the hymn⁶.

The merchant's prayer is notable for the outrageousness of its sentiments, and this feature serves to highlight the serious tone of the poet. Ovid adopts the role of the *vates*, and emphasises this role through the extensive use he makes of the hymns to Mercury by the lyric poets Alcaeus and Horace⁷.

The opening words *clare nepos Atlantis* (663) are a clear reminder of Horace's address to Mercury as *facunde nepos Atlantis* at the beginning of his hymn⁸, while the phrase *superis imisque deorum | arbiter* (665-666) recalls Horace's concluding words *superis deorum | gratus et imis*⁹. This close imitation of the most memorable sections¹⁰ of Horace's poem spells out unequivocally the influence of Horace on Ovid's composition.

This influence is also evident in the aretalogy of the god in lines 665-668. In the first two stanzas of his hymn¹¹, Horace identifies Mercury as the bringer of eloquence, the god of the palaestra, the herald of the gods, the inventor of the lyre and the patron of thieves. Ovid mentions each of the first four of these roles in lines 665-668, although he does not mention Mercury's connection with deception here.

The reference to Mercury's birth in lines 663-664 is not taken from Horace, but from Alcaeus' hymn to Mercury¹². Nevertheless, the inclusion of the birth-legend helps to place Ovid's invocation firmly in the tradition of the great lyric poets. Ovid follows his literary predecessors with great precision, achieving a tone that is dignified and respectful. This is underlined by the use of the traditional hymnic devices of anaphora, alliteration and relative clauses¹³.

The serious hymn of the poet provides counterpoint to the outrageous prayers of the merchant in lines 681-690. Whereas the poet had pointedly avoided mention of Mercury's connection with thieves, this aspect of Mercury's character comes to the fore in the merchant's prayer. Whereas the poet had addressed a long invocation

to the god, the merchant ignores this convention and proceeds to set out his requests to the god without any such preliminary.

The difference between the poet and the merchant is also evident in the contrast between the Greek tone of poet's words and the Roman setting to the merchant's prayer. The initial invocation achieves a Greek tone through the avoidance of the god's Roman name, the Greek location of the god's birth, and the mention of Maia as *Pleias una* (664). Then, in lines 669-670, there suddenly comes a series of Roman references: mention of the *patres*, the Circus and the Ides unmistakably place the scene in Rome¹⁴.

The contrast between the poet's words and those of the merchant is made explicit on line 693, when the poet says that the things for which he wishes are *tanto meliora*.

These two very different approaches to the god each meet with an appropriate response. As the patron of thieves Mercury smiles at the words of the merchant. The god is thus shown in complaisant and light-hearted form. The merchant's behaviour is condoned, but the patron of thieves stops short of active encouragement.

But the request of the poet appeals to another aspect of the god's nature, and the difference is evident in the positive response which he elicits. In contrast to Mercury's passive acceptance of the merchant's behaviour, the god appears in person in response to the poet's superior prayer, and proceeds to tell him about the constellation of Gemini - the only occasion in the whole of the poem when a catasterism story is told by a god.

12.3 Mercury's Version of the Dioscuri Legend

The story which Mercury tells in order to explain how the Dioscuri became transformed into the constellation of Gemini revolves around the fight between the twins and another pair of brothers, Idas and Lynceus. This conflict is described by a number of ancient authors¹⁵.

The details of the legend vary from version to version. The cause of the quarrel is said by some sources to be the rape of the Leucippides¹⁶, but by others to be a dispute over cattle¹⁷. Similarly there is disagreement about which twin fought with which, and who was killed¹⁸.

The story which Mercury tells tends to use elements of the earlier accounts which are favourable to Castor and Pollux¹⁹. The preparation for an honourable fight in lines 706-708 is a detail which is also found in the version of the story given by Theocritus²⁰. However, in Pindar²¹ the brothers hide from their pursuers.

Other details in Mercury's version can be explained by this reason. The setting for the combat is an open place, whereas some sources say that the twins were hiding in a hollow tree²², and in Mercury's version Castor is killed by a sword rather than by a spear cast at long range²³. In both cases, Mercury chooses to follow accounts which present the twins in a heroic fashion.

Indeed, after declaring that the site of the combat was devoid of trees, Mercury seems to provide a conscious gloss on the choice he has made between the two traditions. The words *apta area pugnae* can be read as a justification for preferring to locate the event in a treeless place. For such a place is more appropriate for a heroic combat of the sort advertised in line 706.

As Ovid visualises a combat in open country, with Castor being killed by a sword at close range, the phrase

for *expectato volners* (710) is surprising. This phrase would seem to hark back to the version of the fight given by the *Cypria* and Pindar, according to which Idas and Lynceus surprise and kill Castor as he hides in a hollow oak. It seems to me that Ovid has imported this detail - which is not after all necessarily incompatible with close range fighting - from the variant tradition in order to add to pathos to the death of Castor, and to explain how such a great hero came to be defeated in combat²⁴.

One detail of Mercury's version which is not easily explicable is the name of the location of the combat. The town of Aphidna in Attica is associated with Castor and Pollux in connection with the rape of their sister Helen by Theseus²⁵. The significance of the place in an account which ought to be set in Sparta²⁶ is, however, difficult to fathom. It might be possible to account for the reference by suggesting that there was another place called Aphidna in Sparta²⁷, or by attempting to emend the text²⁸, or it may be that the significance of the phrase is lost to us because it refers to an element in the literary tradition which is not extant²⁹.

Yet the natural way to explain the phrase *nomen*

Aphidna is as a conflation of two different elements of the mythology surrounding Castor and Pollux. Harries³⁰ argues that such a conflation may be explained not as an authorial mistake, but as a deliberate deviation from the tradition, designed to remind the reader that the narrator is a god renowned for trickery and deceit.

I do not believe, however, that Mercury's "mistake" is made simply for the sake of demonstrating that he is an unreliable narrator. It seems to me that the reference to *Aphidna* can be explained as having a more particular relevance to the story of the combat between the Dioscuri and the Apharetides.

In his account of the combat, Mercury uses several details which are transposed from other stories, and which enliven the narrative. The echoes of the death of Hector in lines 711-712 draw an interesting parallel between Pollux and Achilles³¹. The idea of an unexpected blow in line 710 gives the death of Castor added pathos. Similarly, the mention of *Aphidna* need not be regarded as an aberration, but as a means of investing the situation with irony. The narrator locates the conflict between the Dioscuri and the Apharetides not in Sparta but at the very place where Castor and Pollux once

fought against Theseus to defend the woman he had carried off. The fact that this place is now the scene of another conflict, where the twins find themselves in the position of pursued rather than pursuers is heavily ironic but also very apt.

As a narrator, Mercury is not, therefore, an indiscriminate and perverse liar, but a creative adapter of the tradition. He incorporates details from other myths into the story only to add interest to the account. Thus it is appropriate that Ovid should say, at line 698, *causam facundo reddidit ore deus*.

Notes to Chapter 12

1. See Livy II.21.7.

2. See Festus p.135 [Lindsay].

3. Mercury is not an inappropriate god to inform the poet about Castor and Pollux. The Dioscuri are presented as thieves (see note on line 699), and Mercury shared with them the patronage of athletic festivals (see Pindar *Nemean* 10.51-53).

4. Littlewood (1975a) pp.669-674.

5. Swoboda (1978) p.80.

6. I am grateful to Professor John Miller for his comments to me about these lines. I was not able to gain access to Professor Miller's own discussion of this passage (Miller (1991) pp.100-105) in time to include detailed reference to it in this thesis.

7. Alcaeus fr. 308 [Lobel-Page]; Horace *Carmina* I.10. Horace's debt to Alcaeus' poem is remarked upon by Porphyrio on Horace *Carmina* I.10.

8. Horace *Carmina* I.10.1.

9. Horace *Carmina* I.10.19-20.

10. On the special "quotability" of opening and closing lines as the hallmarks of a poetic work, see Conte (1986) pp.35; 70.

11. Horace *Carmina* I.10.1-8.

12. Alcaeus fr.308 [Lobel-Page] 2-4: τὸν κορυφαῖον τῶν ποιημάτων \ Μοῖσ' γέννητο Κρονίδε' μίγεται \ πομπασίῃ.

The mention of the circumstances of a god's birth is a standard feature of hymns (see Norden (1913) pp.147-149).

13. See note on lines 665-668, and also note on line 673.

14. See Littlewood (1975a) p.671.

15. The main extant literary accounts of the myth are found in the *Cypria*, Pindar *Nemean* 10 and Theocritus *Idylls* 22. It is possible that Ovid's version was also influenced by other accounts that are now lost.

After Ovid, the story was told by Apollodorus (III.11.2) and Hyginus (*Fabulae* 80).

16. E.g. Theocritus *Idylls* 22.137-138.

17. E.g. Pindar *Nemean* 10.60. See also Apollodorus III.11.2.

18. See the accounts of Pindar (*Nemean* 10.60-72), Theocritus (*Idylls* 22.181-204), Apollodorus (III.11.2) and Hyginus (*Fabulae* 80).

19. The generally favourable presentation of the Dioscuri may be influenced by the role which these gods played in Augustan propaganda - see Poulsen (1991).

20. Theocritus *Idylls* 22.141-143.

21. Pindar *Nemean* 10.61-62.

22. The twins were detected by the keen-sighted Lynceus as they hid in a hollow oak tree according to the *Cypria* (fr.11 [Allen] 4-6) and Pindar (*Nemean* 10.61-62).

23. The *Cypria* and Pindar *Nemean* 10.60 show Castor killed by a spear cast. The idea of close range combat is found in Theocritus (although with a different outcome).

24. There may be an echo here of the death of Patroclus (cf. note on line 712). At Homer *Iliad* XVI.789 Patroclus is unaware of the presence of Apollo when the god strikes him.

25. See scholiast on Homer *Iliad* III.242; Herodotus IX.73.2; Plutarch *Theseus* 32.

26. The setting of the fight is given as Sparta or Messinia (see Bömer on V.694).

27. Stephanus Byzantius p.149 [Meineke] tells of a deme of Sparta by the name of Aphidna. However, the existence of a second place of the same name, also having a connection with Castor and Pollux, is extremely unlikely. Bömer (note on V.694) is surely correct in explaining this reference as an attempt to explain the mention of Aphidna in this passage.

28. *nomen Aphiana* is the reading of G and M only. Most manuscripts have *nomina fida*. It is perhaps possible to imagine that *Aphidna* was a gloss on *loco*, influenced by the connection between that place and the twins, and was subsequently incorporated into the text. However, the alternative text is no more satisfactory.

29. See Bömer on V.694.

30. Harries (1989) pp.179-180.

31. See note on line 712.

CHAPTER 13: THE EPIGRAMS

13.1 Commentary on V.721-734

721-734. The book ends with a series of epigrams covering a variety of events in late May. Ovid mentions the festival called the Agonium (721-722), the setting of the star Sirius (723-724), the festival of the Tubilustria (725-726), the meaning of the letters Q.R.C.F. on the calendar for the twenty-fourth (727-728), the anniversary of a temple of Fortuna (729-730), the rising of the constellation of Aquila (731-732), the setting of Bootes (733) and the rising of the Hyades (734).

721. ad Ianum redeat, qui quaerit Agonia quid sint: Ovid refers the reader to I.317-332, where he has discussed the etymology of the name of this festival. The poet had concluded that discussion by expressing the opinion that the word *agonia*, meaning cattle, - rather than one of the five other explanations offered - is the source of the word. He now calls the festival by the name *Agonia*, rather than *Agonium* or *Agonalia*, by which it was also known (see CIL I², p.306). The choice of nomenclature thus reinforces the conclusion that the poet had made in Book I.

725-726. proxima Volcani lux est, Tubilustria dicunt: \
lustrantur purae, quas fecit ille, tubae: The etymology of the word *Tubilustria* does not need to be pointed out explicitly. Ovid places the key words *lustrantur* and *tubae* in prominent positions at the start and finish of the pentameter to make the derivation clear.

727-728. quattuor inde notis locus est, quibus ordine
lectis \ vel mos sacrorum vel fuga regis inest: The extant fasti show the letters Q.R.C.F. in the entry for May 24th. Ovid refers to the dispute about whether the letters stood for *quando rex comitavit fas* or *quod rex comitio fugerat* (see CIL I², p.289).

The dispute is noted without embellishment, with the *vel... vel...* construction providing balance, as though both versions of the story were equally plausible, and the serious researcher was faced with a quandary about the meaning of this acronym. In fact the explanation that the entry commemorates the *fuga regis* is not a plausible one (see Frazer and Bömer on V.727), but it does enable the the poet to create interest by alluding to the memorable story of Tarquinius Superbus.

731. hanc ubi dives aquis acceperit Amphitrite: The epithet *dives* appears to be an unusual word to describe

the sea-goddess Amphitrite.

Perhaps the adjective can be explained if *aquis* is taken not as an ablative of place, but as an ablative of respect, dependent on *dives*. Horace (*Carmina* III.30.11) had famously described Daunus as *pauper aquae*. The phrase *dives aquis* might be an allusion to Horace's expression (which is, incidentally, also found at the end of a book of poetry). As a goddess of the sea, Amphitrite's wealth consists in the great expanse of water over which she has dominion. Thus she is the natural opposite of Daunus, and Ovid reverses Horace's expression *pauper aquae* in order to find an appropriate way of describing her.

(On the use of a spondaic fifth foot in this line, see Section 15.3.)

732. grata Iovi fulvae rostra videbis avis: The phrase *grata Iovi* hints at the reason for the catasterism of Aquila. According to Eratosthenes (*Catasterisms* 30), the bird was elevated into the sky as a reward for its services to the god, either in carrying off Ganymede or in supplying a favourable omen before the Titanomachy.

733-734. auferet ex oculis veniens aurora Booten, \
continuaque die sidus Hyantis erit: The book ends in

anti-climactic fashion. The continuing cycle of night and day, with the movements of the stars superimposed upon it, reflects the ongoing nature of the year.

13.2 The Role of Epigrams in the Fasti

The final fourteen lines of the book represent a considerable change of scale. Whereas the events of the first part of the month are generally dealt with in some detail, at the end of the book eight events are disposed of in seven couplets, with only minimal explanation of each event.

The fact that so many events are passed over so quickly might be taken as a sign of the unfinished nature of Book V. Epigrams are often used in the poem to introduce a new section, and act as preludes to more detailed explanations¹. It might be thought, therefore, that at least some of the epigrams would have been filled out with supplementary material if the poet had had the opportunity and enthusiasm to complete his project².

However, it must, I think, be acknowledged that epigrams have a distinctive and valid role in the composition of the *Fasti*. Santini³ argues that the use

of short epigrams in the poem is in keeping with the epigraphic traditions of the Roman calendar, and that short pieces of between two and six lines can act as "intermezzi" between longer pieces, preventing abrupt transitions between incompatible subjects. Braun⁴ seeks to show that entries may be kept to a few lines in order not to disturb the large-scale structural principles of the poem.

A brief look at the epigrams in the fifth book shows that they perform various functions. The mention of the constellation of Lyra in lines 415-416 acts as a neat footnote to the story of Chiron⁵. The brevity of this and the following couplet, on the subject of the appearance of Scorpio, avoids another lengthy dose of astronomical material after the section on Centaurus⁶, and also provides a slowing down of pace in the middle of the book⁷.

The two epigrams in lines 599-602 again slow down the pace of the narrative after the stirring patriotism of the piece on Mars Ultor which immediately precedes them. Furthermore, the mention of the start of Summer marks a significant point in the progress of the poem.

The epigrams which comprise lines 721-734 have a

rather different function. Just as epigrams in the middle of a book can act as "intermezzi", a series of epigrams at the end of a book can act as a coda, slowing down the pace of the book in order to make a satisfactory conclusion. Moreover, lines 721-734 contain certain programmatic features which make them suitable to round off the book.

The absence of lengthy narrative brings an unusual focus on the passing of time in these lines. The temporal references in lines 723, 725, 730, 731, 733 and 734 bring the pattern of the succession of days and nights before the reader more plainly than in other parts of the poem. In addition, the poem itself is given prominence by the cross-references in lines 721 and 724 to earlier parts of the work⁸. Finally, the calendar is mentioned in lines 722 and 727 as a further source of unity.

Thus the book closes on a note of self-consciousness. The poem itself and the central theme of the calendar⁹ come to the fore and make an appropriate ending to the description of the events of the month.

13.3 Epigrams as a Means of Closing an Elegiac Book

Rutledge¹⁰ remarks that Book V is the only book of the *Fasti* not to have a formal ending referring either to the closing of the month or to the imperial family, and suggests that the book's ending might have been changed if the poem had been fully revised.

In this section, I wish to suggest that the ending of Book V is not unsatisfactory, but that the use of a series of short epigrams to close a book has a number of precedents among authors of Latin elegy. In choosing to close the book in this manner Ovid may be consciously following Catullus, Gallus and Propertius, who used short pieces to bring books of poems to a conclusion.

The clearest example of the phenomenon of using epigrams to round off an elegiac book is to be found in the first book of elegies by Propertius. In this collection, twenty longer elegies are followed by two ten line pieces. The autobiographical nature of the two short poems makes them particularly suitable to close the book, as they form a *sphragis*, in which the poet sets his personal seal to the collection.

The precise form in which Catullus' elegiac poems were published is a matter of some debate¹¹. However,

there are good reasons for supposing that poems 65-116 of the Catullan collection originally formed a single book of elegiac poems¹². If this is so, then we have another example of a collection in which longer poems - that is, Poems 65-68' - stand before a series of shorter epigrams.

It is also possible to see a precedent for the arrangement of epigrams at the end of a book in the fragment of Gallus' poetry from Qaşr Ibrîm¹³. This manuscript seems to show a series of short poems, and it is likely on the grounds of content that these poems came at the end of a roll¹⁴.

The idea of using short epigrams at the end of a collection may have come from the use of the sphragis - invariably a short and simple form - to close books of poetry.

The epigrams which close the fifth book of the *Fasti* do not act as a sphragis, but they do - as I have argued above¹⁵ - contain certain programmatic themes, which make them appropriate to come at the end of the book. It may be that their position at the end of the book also owes something to the similar use of epigrams by Ovid's elegiac predecessors.

Notes to Chapter 13

1. Such introductory epigrams occur in Book V at lines 111-114, 379-380, 493-494, 603-604 and 621-622.
2. Fantham (1983, pp.212-213) sees the presence of so many bare couplets concerning astronomical matters in Books V and VI as evidence of the unsatisfactory state of the last two books of the poem.
3. Santini (1975) p.11.
4. Braun (1981) pp.2367-2368.
5. See notes on lines 415 and 416.
6. On the avoidance of juxtaposing similar pieces as a structural theme in Book V, see Section 14.1.
7. Riedl (1989, p.4) believes that lines 415-418 mark a crucial fulcrum between the two different parts of the book. (On the problems involved in Riedl's analysis of the structure of Book V, see Section 14.1.)
8. Rutledge (1973, p.127) believes that these cross-references highlight the persona of the narrator as a serious researcher.
9. The word *fasti*, found in line 722, has an obviously programmatic function. It is used on eleven occasions in the poem, five times in Book I, and usually in passages at the beginning or end of a book.
10. Rutledge (1973) p.127.
11. See Ross (1969) pp.117-137; Quinn (1972) pp.12-20; Wiseman (1979) pp.175-176; Clausen (1982); Syndikus (1984) pp.52-62.
12. Two compelling arguments in favour of the idea that poems 65-116 were published as a book are the programmatic references to *carmina Sattiadæ* found in poems 65 and 116, which makes these poems likely to be the opening and closing pieces of a collection, and the fact that the Catullan corpus can be divided into three books of roughly equal length comprising firstly the

lyric poems, secondly the longer non-elegiac poems and finally the elegies (see Quinn (1972) pp.12-20; Wiseman (1979) pp.175-176); Clausen (1982).

13. Anderson, Parsons & Nisbet (1979).

14. See Nisbet (1979) pp.149-150. Fairweather (1984) argues that the fragment may not contain epigrams but extracts from a longer poem.

15. Section 13.2.

CHAPTER 14: THE UNITY OF BOOK V

In the first thirteen chapters of this thesis I have analysed each episode of the book in isolation. This approach was used on the grounds that a small scale investigation is the most profitable way of appreciating the literary merit of the *Fasti*¹. In adopting this approach, I have largely evaded questions about how each constituent entry contributes to the book as a whole, and what overall impression Book V might create.

In this chapter, therefore, I propose to enlarge the scale of my investigation, and to consider Book V as an entity. There are good reasons for believing that Ovid may have given some thought to the overall structure of this book. The book is clearly an important concept in the composition of the *Fasti*. Each of the six books begins with a distinct introduction, and has an appropriate close². Moreover, Rutledge³ has claimed that in each book of the poem Ovid stresses different themes in order to give each book a distinctive nature.

14.1 Symmetrical Arrangement of the Episodes

In Ovid's other works the conception of the book as an overall entity is a significant feature. It can be

demonstrated that the poems in the *Amores*, *Tristia* and *epistulae ex Ponto* are carefully arranged so as to produce symmetrical patterns and arresting juxtapositions⁴. If the episodes of the *Fasti* may - as I believe - be viewed as self-contained pieces, analogous to the constituent poems of the *Amores* or the *Tristia*, it is to be expected that Ovid may have taken care to arrange the episodes in an effective manner.

Moreover, there are clear signs that Ovid has manipulated the order in which he presents his material in Book V⁵. The entry on the Floralia, for example, is postponed until the third of May - when the festival ends with games in the Circus - although the festival began at the end of April⁶. Also, the catasterism story of the constellation of Taurus is told on the date of the rising of the Hyades. This is a departure from Ovid's normal practice, which is to tell the catasterism stories of signs of the zodiac at the time when the sun enters that sign⁷.

Another story which seems to have been inserted in an unnatural place is the Orion episode⁸. Ovid gives the impression that he is compelled to write about the constellation at this point⁹, and yet the constellation

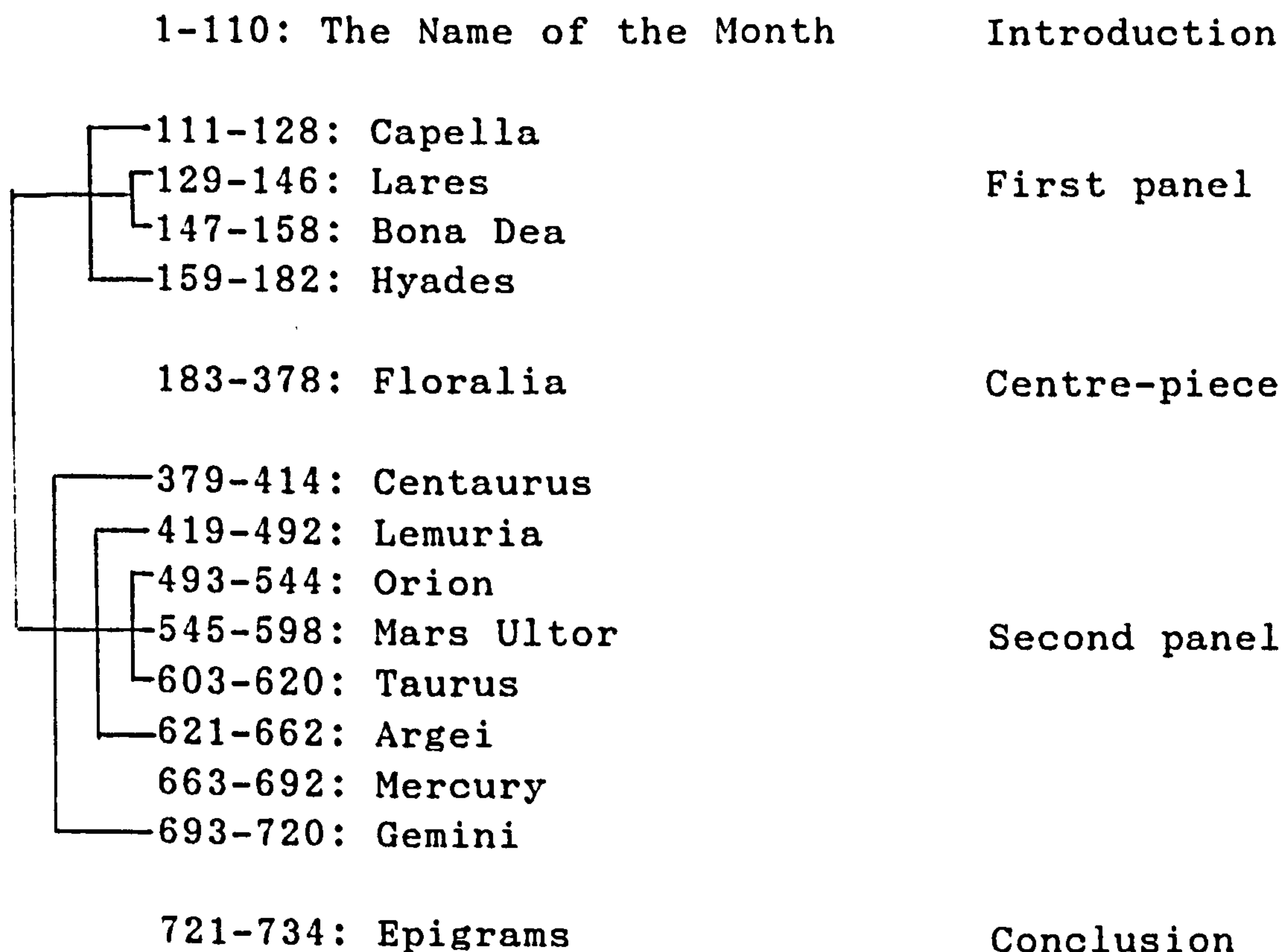
is not, in fact, visible on the date when the entry occurs¹⁰. The inclusion of a catasterism story at the time when the constellation is not visible occurs on only one other occasion in the poem¹¹, and it seems that Ovid is taking liberties with the ordering of his material by including a passage about Orion at this stage.

A final example of the way in which the poet frees himself from slavishly following the order set by the calendar comes in the recording of events of the night before those of the preceding day. Thus the rising of Capella on the evening of the Calends (lines 111-128) is recorded before the anniversaries associated with the Lares and the Bona Dea celebrated on the day itself (129-158)¹². Also, the rising of the Hyades in the constellation of Taurus on the evening of the fourteenth (603-620) is recorded in advance of the festival of the Argei, which Ovid seems to date to the fourteenth (621-662).

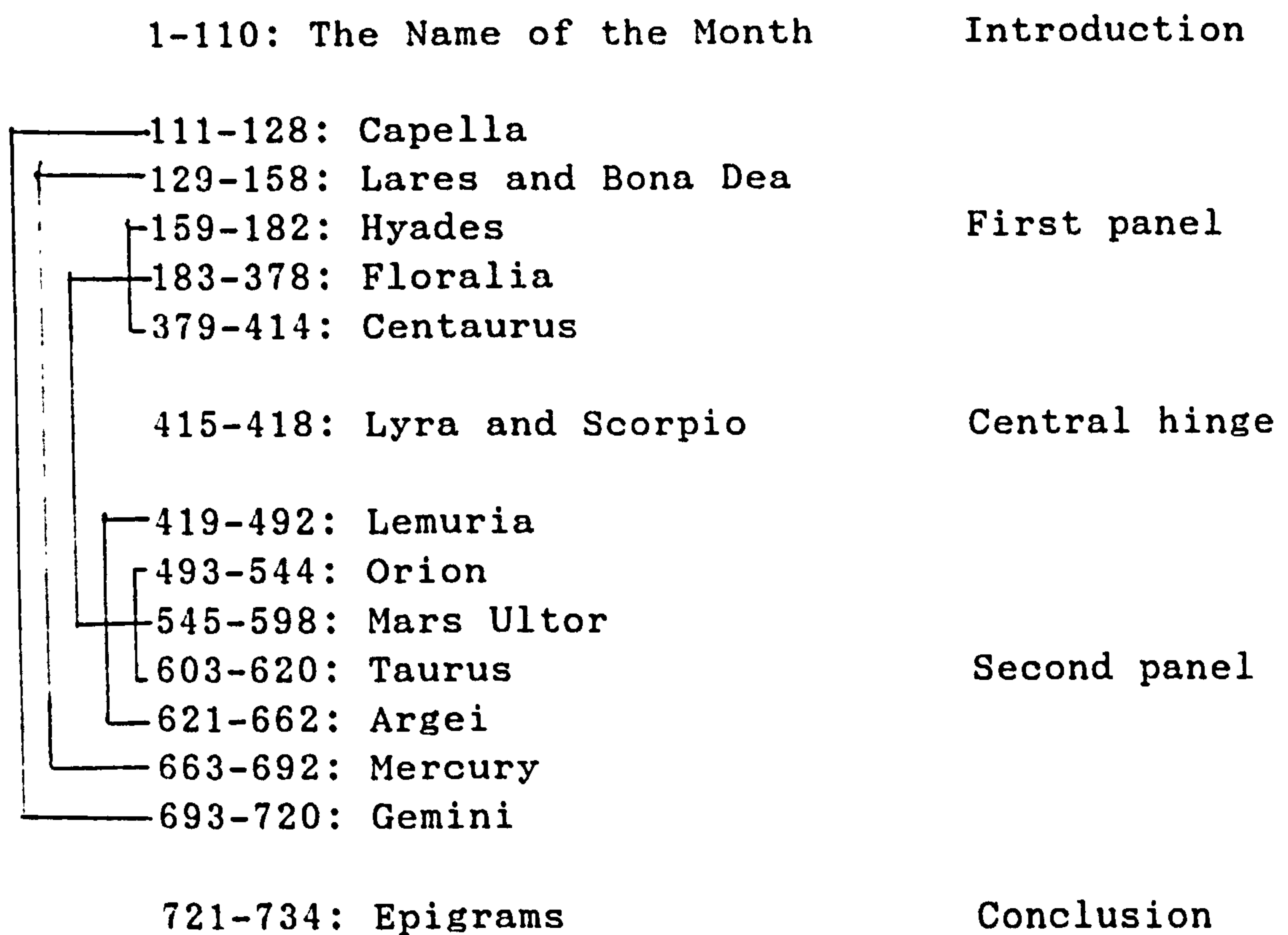
In the light of these examples, it is difficult to support the idea that Ovid is constrained to follow an order that has been pre-ordained by the Roman calendar¹³. It has not, however, been clearly

established that Ovid produces a thoroughly systematic arrangement of the book. Rutledge¹⁴ believes that the contents of the book are deliberately presented without any overriding scheme in order to emphasise the diversity of the calendar in May, but others have detected a coherent structure.

Braun¹⁵ sees the extended piece on the Floralia as the centre-piece of the book. On either side of this, he believes, stand two concentric panels (111-182 and 379-720), which both contain the anniversaries of religious monuments at their centre. This arrangement can be represented schematically as follows:



The main difficulty with Braun's theory about the symmetrical arrangement of Book V is that he cannot find a place for lines 663-692. These lines are accounted for, however, in an alternative view of the structure of Book V provided by Riedl¹⁶. Riedl sees the pair of epigrams in lines 415-418 - rather than the entry on the Floralia - as the central fulcrum of the book, and believes that the structure of the first part of the poem is mirrored in the second half. Riedl's scheme can be represented as follows:



Riedl's arrangement gives special prominence to the

Mars Ultor episode, seeing it as complementary to the extended entry on the Floralia. Although Riedl does point out certain correspondences between the two entries¹⁷, the difference in scale between these episodes makes it difficult for them to be seen as companion pieces. In addition, the overall structure envisaged by Riedl does not possess the neat symmetry of that proposed by Braun.

Moreover, there are certain objections which may be made to the theories of both Braun and Riedl. In the first place, although Braun sees an overall structure behind Book V, he cannot point to similar underlying patterns in the other books of the poem. This suggests that Ovid did not regard symmetrical arrangement of the episodes as a high priority in the composition of the *Fasti*.

Secondly, it is debatable to what extent the symmetrical patterns constructed by Braun and Riedl are detectable to the reader of the poem. In the stories associated with Centaurus and Orion, for example, the theme of catasterisation does not figure strongly in the narrative¹⁸. The fact that Braun and Riedl see different pairs as being complementary casts some doubt on the

validity of the exercise in which these scholars are engaged. The structural patterns which they claim to see in Book V depend upon the links between paired episodes being self-evident. Yet it cannot clearly be shown which episodes in Book V should be seen as complementary pairs.

Thirdly, the division of the poem into a number of self-standing sections is not unproblematic. Lines 129-158 deal with anniversaries associated with the Lares and the Bona Dea. Braun treats these lines as two distinct sections, but Riedl¹⁹ shows that there are good reasons for treating these lines as a single unit. Similarly, lines 663-720 cover two different events and are treated as forming two separate pieces in the schemes of both Braun and Riedl. However, as I have argued above²⁰, there is a continuation of the narrative between lines 692 and 693, and the whole of lines 663-720 can be regarded as a single entity.

In fact, the unity of these lines is of some significance, for it eliminates the asymmetrical element in Braun's scheme. Braun had not been able to integrate lines 663-692 into his schematic arrangement, but if these lines are considered along with lines 693-720 as

forming a single section in which the god Mercury is summoned to tell the catasterism story of Gemini, then Braun's scheme can be emended to produce the following symmetrical structure for Book V:

1-110: The Name of the Month	Introduction
<div> <div> <div>111-128: Capella</div> <div>-129-158: Lares and Bona Dea</div> <div>159-182: Hyades</div> </div> </div>	First panel
183-378: Floralia	Centre-piece
<div> <div> <div>379-416: Centaurus</div> <div>417-492: Lemuria</div> <div>493-544: Orion</div> <div>-545-598: Mars Ultor</div> <div>599-620: Taurus</div> <div>621-662: Argei</div> <div>663-720: Mercury tells of Gemini</div> </div> </div>	Second panel
721-734: Epigrams	Conclusion

Whilst it may not be wise to argue that complex patterns lie behind the arrangement of the material, this emended scheme does seem to show that certain basic principles underlie the structure of Book V.

In particular, there is alternation between material based on Greek stories about the stars - the episodes which are discussed in Chapters 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 of this thesis - and material concerned with

Roman religion - the episodes discussed in Chapters 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11. The book is framed by the introductory section on the subject of the name of the month, and the concluding series of epigrams. This overall pattern of arrangement ensures that similar episodes are not juxtaposed.

If the piece on the Floralia (lines 183-378) is regarded as the centre-piece of the book on the grounds of its exceptional length, the remaining episodes can be seen as forming two panels. Lines 111-182 have a clearly symmetrical structure, with two catasterism stories surrounding two anniversaries of the dedication of sacred buildings. The symmetrical structure is enhanced by the fact that the entries on Capella and the Lares occupy the same number of lines as the entries on Bona Dea and the Hyades²¹.

The symmetry of lines 379-720 is not so striking, but it is possible to see a chiastic arrangement in this panel of episodes, with the imperial propaganda of the Mars Ultor episode at the heart of the structure. The positioning of a section concerning the dedication of a temple, which has a strong Augustan theme, at the centre of this panel corresponds to the placing of the section

on the Lares and the Bona Dea - with its notably Augustan content - at the heart of the first panel.

Although one must be wary of attaching too much significance to the arrangement of the contents of Book V, it is beyond doubt that symmetrical arrangement was used by Augustan poets, and there are signs that Ovid manipulates the order of his material in Book V in order to create a varied yet symmetrical structure.

14.2 Transitions

A second aspect of Book V that is liable to be ignored in an analysis which concentrates on the individual episodes is the way that the poet moves from one subject to the next. In effecting transitions between subjects, as in so much else, Ovid uses a variety of techniques. On some occasions there is no attempt to link a new piece to the preceding section. Elsewhere Ovid attempts to move more smoothly from one episode to the next²².

Indeed, there are two occasions in Book V where the poet moves so seamlessly from one subject to the next that it is not possible to mark a definite point where one subject ends and the next begins. The link between

the entries on the Lares and the Bona Dea is effected in lines 147-148. Although Ovid usually begins discussion of new material with a new couplet, here he employs a "transitional couplet" which both concludes the discussion of the Lares and at the same time introduces the material about the Bona Dea. Thus there is no definite break between the two subjects.

Also, the material on the worship of Mercury on the Ides and the catasterism of Gemini are integrated into a single unit. Ovid inserts material about the dedication of the god's temple and his worship by merchants into the hymnic invocation of the god, and then concludes his invocation with a prayer that he might learn about the constellation of Gemini. Thus two disparate subjects are combined in a single unit with the great ingenuity which is a hallmark of the transitions in the *Metamorphoses*²³.

Of course, not all of the transitions in the poem are effected so neatly. Nevertheless, there are several occasions where, although there is a discernible break between episodes, the poet manages to link two pieces together in such a way that the narrative retains a semblance of continuity.

This is frequently the case with the short

epigrams. Ovid tends to join such pieces to the surrounding narrative rather than leaving them isolated. Lines 159-162, on the subject of Argestes, the West-North-West wind, are closely connected to the longer passage on the Hyades (163-182) by a temporal link. These four lines act as an introduction to the longer piece, with the observation of the coming of dawn in lines 159-160 being picked up by the observation of nightfall at line 163. Similarly, the entry on Scorpio (417-418) is linked to the following piece on the Lemuria through the word *hinc* (419). The epigrams on the rising of the Pliades (599-600) and the beginning of Summer (601-602) are joined by the temporal connective *tum* on line 601, and similar devices link together the series of epigrams at the end of the book²⁴.

A particularly successful transition occurs with the passage from the entry on Centaurus (379-414) to the epigram on Lyra (415-416). Ovid makes use of the association of Chiron with music, and uses the couplet on Lyra as a witty footnote to the story of the centaur²⁵.

There are also smooth transitions between some of the longer episodes. The introductory section on the

name of the month ends with a prayer to the Muses in lines 109-110. The optative subjunctives *adsit* (109) and *lausque* (110) are picked up by the subjunctive *surgat* in line 111, as Ovid begins his discussion of the events of the month with another prayer.

More frequently, the poet uses temporal connections to join two episodes together. The entry on Orion is introduced in line 493 through a temporal statement which refers back to the *tria festa* of the Lemuria mentioned in line 491. Similarly, the entry on the Argei is linked to the preceding piece by the phrase *tum quoque* (line 621)²⁶.

A more ingenious transition is effected in the link between the entries on Orion and Mars Ultor. Ovid imagines the setting of the constellation as occurring with undue haste in order to expedite the event of national celebration which is about to take place.

Although Ovid's use of transitions in this book does not - with two notable exceptions - approach the subtlety and complexity of his technique in the *Metamorphoses*. Nevertheless, the unifying theme of the calendar allows for a thread to be maintained between the diverse events of the month, and in a number of

places the poet takes special care to allow the narrative to flow smoothly from one entry to the next.

14.3 Recurrent Themes

While discussing the overall effect of Book V, it is also worth considering what themes - if any - are common to the constituent episodes of the book, and whether the book can be said to derive any unity from these.

The fifth book has been characterised by Rutledge as "piebald", lacking any significant unifying theme²⁷. However, Rutledge does note that the book is remarkable for the unusually large number of Greek star myths it contains²⁸. A look at the structure of the book shows that every second entry is based on a catasterism story. Moreover, Pfeiffer²⁹ and Braun³⁰ have shown that these stories have certain themes in common. The theme of catasterism as a reward for exceptional piety unites the stories of the Hyades, Chiron, Orion and Gemini³¹, while the constellations of Capella and Taurus both owe their place in the sky to the help they once gave to Jupiter.

In several stories piety is demonstrated by the giving of hospitality. This theme is developed most

fully in the meeting of Hyrieus and the gods in the Orion story³², but it is also present in the Capella and Centaurus episodes. The nurturing of Jupiter by Amalthea and the entertainment of Hercules by Chiron are both kindly acts which bring their reward in the course of time.

The hospitality theme recurs in one of the non-astronomical entries, when Thybris mentions how Evander entertained Hercules before the slaying of Cacus. Indeed, line 647 - *excipit hospitio iuvenem Pallantius heros* - closely echoes the description of Chiron's entertainment of Hercules in line 391.

Another theme which occurs throughout the book is that of the early history of Rome. Descriptions of Rome before the foundations of the city and contrasts with the present are common topics in Latin poetry³³. In a poem which traces the origins of Roman rituals, it is especially likely that the early history of the city will be mentioned, and this theme is by no means confined to Book V of the *Fasti*³⁴. Nevertheless, the references to early Rome in lines 93-96, 279-280 and 639-642 do form a connection between different episodes of the book.

A final way in which the book is given unity can be seen in the role of the god Mercury. Mercury's festival was celebrated on the Ides of May, and he is also associated with the month through his mother Maia. In Mercury, Ovid has a figure who is specifically connected with the month of May, and the poet capitalises on this connection, focusing on Mercury at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the book³⁵. By invoking him as the authority for the stories about the Lemuria and the catasterism of Gemini, Ovid gives Mercury greater prominence in the book than might be expected, and the god thus becomes a central figure in the structure of Book V.

Notes to Chapter 14

1. See Introduction.
2. On the satisfactory nature of the close of Book V, see Sections 13.2 and 13.3.
3. Rutledge (1973) pp.181-187.
4. On the arrangement of the books of the *Amores*, see McCaffrey (1974); Lörcher (1975); McKeown (1987) pp.90-102. On the arrangement of the books of the exile poems, see Dickinson (1973); Evans (1983).
5. See the detailed discussion of Braun (1981, pp.2366-2368).
6. See note on lines 184-190.

7. Ovid does not tell the story at IV.713-720, when he mentions the entry of the sun into Taurus. The stories of Pisces (II.457-472), Aries (III.851-876) and Gemini (V.693-720) are all told on the date when the sun enters the sign. The stories attached to Aquarius and Cancer are not related at all.

8. See Phillips (1992) p.67.

9. V.494: *signi causa canenda mihi*.

10. V.493-494: *quorum si mediis Boeotum Oriona quaeres | falsus eris*.

11. The other story told when the constellation is not visible is the tale of the Dolphin at II.79-118. Braun (1981, p.2356) believes that this passage forms a pair with the entry on Pisces at II.457-472. This may account for its inclusion at an unexpected position in the poem.

12. The reversal of the natural temporal order at this point allows Ovid to make a striking opening to the main body of Book V with the proverbial phrase *ab Iove surgat opus* (111).

13. The view that Ovid is constrained to follow the order of the calendar is advanced by Wilkinson (1955, p.268), D'Elia (1959, p.343) and Martini (1970, p.44).

14. Rutledge (1973) pp.111-129.

15. Braun (1981) pp.2364-2368.

16. Riedl (1989) pp.3-12.

17. See Riedl (1989) pp.7-9. Both entries have the epiphany of a god; both mention games in the Circus; Flora relates her involvement in the birth of Mars in lines 229-260.

18. Braun (1981, p.2365) sees the fact that some catasterisms are rewards for piety, and others are rewards for help given to a god as being significant in the pairing of episodes, but these themes are not always brought out clearly in the narrative.

19. Riedl (1989) pp.5-6. See also Section 3.2.
20. Note on lines 693-694. See also Section 14.2.
21. V.111-146 and V.147-182 are both thirty-six lines. The transition between the Lares and Bona Dea at line 147 is thus also the central point of the whole panel.
22. On the transitions in the *Fasti*, see Introduction to Bömer, pp.48-49; Frécaut (1972) pp.274-275.
23. On the transitions in the *Metamorphoses*, see Wilkinson (1958); Frécaut (1968).
24. E.g. *nocte sequente diem* (723); *inde* (727); *luce sequente* (730).
25. See the notes on lines 415 and 416.
26. It seems to me that the word *Virgo* in this line encourages the reader to anticipate that there will be a thematic link between the new episode and the previous one, with a discussion of the constellation of Taurus giving way to a discussion of the constellation of Virgo. This expectation is then thwarted as the reader discovers that *Virgo* refers not to the constellation of that name, but to the Vestals who participate in the rite of the Argei. This device might be termed a "quasi-transition".
27. Rutledge (1973) pp.111-129; 185-186. See also Fowler (1899) p.100.
28. Book V contains six such stories. The other five books have only ten between them.
29. Pfeiffer (1952) pp.158-160.
30. Braun (1981) p.2365.
31. The theme of piety also occurs in other parts of the book (cf. lines 49; 75-76; 103-106; 423; 471-480; 569-570).
32. See Section 8.2.

33. See note on lines 93-94.

34. It is also found at I.243-252; II.280; II.391-392.

35. V.81-106; V.445-450; V.663-720. Mercury is also one of the gods entertained by Hyrieus.

CHAPTER 15: THE POETRY OF BOOK V

The calendar of the Roman year would seem on the face of it to be an unpromising subject for poetic expression¹. This consideration, allied to the fact that Ovid is a poet who is renowned for his cleverness rather than for the sublimity of his language, leads the reader to have modest expectations of the poetic achievement of the *Fasti*².

Yet Ovid did work in a poetic medium, and it ought to be expected that he would exploit the resources of language and metre in order to enrich the work. In this chapter, therefore, I will consider the use Ovid makes of four poetic techniques in Book V in an attempt to show that the poet is concerned to present his material in an aesthetically pleasing form.

15.1 Imagery

Imagery is a standard part of the repertoire of poets. It allows them to extend the use of language beyond that of normal prose style, and so create memorable effects³. Imagery is especially associated with the higher poetic forms of epic and lyric, but also has a place in an aetiological poem like the *Fasti*.

Ovid's use of the simile has been studied by Washietl⁴, Owen⁵, Wilkins⁶ and Brunner⁷. From the statistics compiled by Wilkins, it is evident that the *Fast* contains relatively few similes compared with Ovid's other works⁸. In Book V, Wilkins counts only three similes. Moreover, these similes do not illustrate the narrative in the vivid manner of the similes in epic poetry⁹.

The use of the expression *quot sunt Herculei facta laboris* (line 696) as a periphrastic way of indicating the number twelve is not a simile in the fullest sense of the word¹⁰, while in the comparison of the flowers which fall from Flora's hair to roses scattered on a banqueting table (359-360), the two items which are compared are too similar to provide any evidence of poetic imagination at work.

The one simile in the book which is developed at length is that of the perplexed traveller at the crossroads in lines 3-6¹¹. Even in this figure, however, the language is not truly poetic, and it is perhaps significant that the closest parallels to this image are found in the political writings of Plato¹² and the gnomic verse of Theognis¹³.

In fact, the most successful simile in Book V is one which is not noted by Wilkins. When the young Achilles stands before the dying Chiron *ut ante patrem* (407), the comparison between Chiron and Achilles' father not only indicates the depth of Achilles' affection for his tutor, but also provides a pathetic allusion to Achilles' regret that, because he is doomed to die young, he will be unable to look after his own father in his old age¹⁴.

Ovid's use of metaphor is, like his use of simile, muted in Book V. Some of the metaphors he uses are part of the common stock of the Latin language, and so fail to surprise or provoke the reader¹⁵. Nevertheless, it is possible for established metaphors to be effective in certain contexts. Juno's use of the verb *excutio* in line 244 to refer to her search throughout the world for a way of getting even with her husband aptly conveys the goddess' determination¹⁶.

Ovid uses metaphor more boldly in line 546, where the shortening of the length of the night is described in the phrase *noxque coartat iter*. The phrase *coartare iter* is used in a literal sense by Livy¹⁷, referring to paths that are made narrow by natural obstacles, but the

transference of the image to express a shortening of time is not found elsewhere.

There are three particularly ingenious ways in which Ovid uses metaphor in Book V. Firstly, certain characters use metaphors as a peculiarity of their speech. Polyhymnia frequently represents the gods by using metaphors drawn from Roman life¹⁸, while Flora's use of legal metaphors is characteristic of her self-importance¹⁹. In both cases the speaker's use of imagery is a significant feature of the poet's technique of ethopoeia²⁰.

Secondly, Ovid exploits metaphors to make etymological points. The metaphor which Ovid coins in calling the constellation of the Hyades a *grex* (line 164) points the reader to the fact that these stars were known to the Romans as the *Suculae* because of their supposed similarity to a litter of piglets²¹.

Finally, Ovid uses certain metaphors to exploit prominent themes. The section of the book in which the poet interviews Flora lends itself to metaphors derived from the flowering of plants. The poet uses the verb *florere* metaphorically at line 353, where youth is said to "flower"²², and again at the end of the interview,

when he records his prayer that his poetry may "flower" under the goddess' patronage²³. In both cases the botanical metaphor is particularly relevant to the situation.

Although Ovid's use of imagery in Book V is sparing, there are occasions when metaphor and simile can be seen to enrich the work. Moreover, Ovid's images are not merely decorative, but bring new dimensions to the text.

15.2 Descriptive Language

A second aspect of poetic language is the vivid detail with which objects and events are described. In the *Fast*, one topic which lends itself to descriptive set pieces is the arrival of the new day. Ovid describes this event in a large numbers of ways during the course of the poem: he refers to the morning star²⁴, the rising sun²⁵ and the dawn chorus²⁶. From the time of Homer, the dawn had been described by poets as a goddess²⁷, and Ovid makes special use of this tradition.

In lines 159-160 of Book V, the poet lingers over the description of the goddess, noting her *rosae lampas* and the *equi matutini* who pull her chariot. The language

is lyrical, and yet also provides a variation on other descriptions of Aurora in the poem²⁸.

Just as the new day can be the signal for poetic description, so can the night-time give rise to a periphrasis. In lines 429-430, Ovid uses the silence of dogs and birds to evoke the still atmosphere in which the festival of the Lemuria takes place.

In general the episodes of the *Fasti* move at pace, and are free from lengthy descriptions. Yet the poet is capable of conjuring up the atmosphere of a scene by precise allusion to details. The plight of Europa is evoked by the observation of her straining to keep the soles of her feet out of the water²⁹, and the simplicity of Hyrieus' hut is evident in a number of details³⁰.

When the opportunity arises, Ovid is also capable of producing highly poetic descriptions. The best illustration of this from Book V is the description of the garden which Flora is given by Zephyrus (209-220). The goddess depicts the place as a typical *locus amoenus*³¹, and the idyllic nature of this scene is sustained by the subsequent picture of the Hours and Graces who use the flowers from the garden to weave garlands for the gods. The emphasis on colour in

variae...comae (216) and *pictis incinctae vestibus* (217), and the delicacy hinted at in *rosida cum primum foliis excussa pruina est* (215) and *inque leves calathos* (218) produce a richly evocative picture of the goddesses at work in early Spring.

The form of the *Fasti* does not demand the concentration on natural description which is characteristic of epic narrative, but the poet nevertheless retains an eye for detail and shows himself to be capable of using poetic language to evoke a variety of atmospheres and settings.

15.3 Metre and Rhythm

For the composition of the *Fasti*, Ovid used the elegiac couplet³². The fact that each couplet ends with a break in the sense has caused some scholars to consider that the overall effect of the work is monotonous³³. However, there are certain advantages which are gained from the use of this verse form. Santini³⁴ argues that the elegiac metre was used in preference to the didactic hexameter because its associations with epigraphy make it suitable for a verse calendar and because Callimachus and Propertius had

established it as the natural literary medium for aetiological poetry³⁵. Furthermore, the fact that the *Fasti* is perhaps better considered as a series of related episodes - mostly well under a hundred lines - rather than a *carmen perpetuum*³⁶ means that there is less likelihood of the metre causing monotony than some critics have suggested.

Ovid's verse conforms to strict metrical rules, which give a greater consistency of rhythm than is found in other Latin elegiac poets³⁷. However, the poet still retains a certain flexibility, and is able to use different rhythms at different points in the poem to produce telling effects.

At one extreme is the tetraspondaic hexameter line, which produces a slow, steady rhythm, due to the eight consecutive long syllables. The stateliness of this rhythm can be used to give an impression of majesty, and two of the three tetraspondaic hexameters in Book V are found in the speech of the Muse Calliope, which abounds in dignified and archaic language³⁸.

The third example occurs at line 395, where the steady rhythm creates a sombre mood in preparation for the fatal wounding of Chiron.

At the other end of the scale are those hexameter lines which preserve an entirely dactylic rhythm. This metrical pattern can be used to convey speed and impatience. For example, in line 403 the rhythm indicates the swiftness with which the poison from Hercules' arrow spreads through Chiron's body.

Twelve lines later, the same rhythm is employed in a line which describes the impatience of the constellation of Lyra to rise in the night sky. In lines 547-548, the dactylic rhythm is sustained through the entire couplet, and indicates the preternatural haste with which the day of Mars Ultor's games arrives³⁹.

One unusual feature of Ovid's metrical technique in Book V is the frequency with which a spondee is found in the fifth foot of the hexameter. This metrical pattern occurs only ten times in the *Fasti*, and five of these instances are in the fifth book. The spondaic fifth foot is an essentially Greek phenomenon⁴⁰, and on each occasion Ovid employs it in Book V, it is in a Greek proper name, and evokes the sound of archaic verse.

The device is one of the ways in which Calliope gives a distinctively archaic sound to her speech, for she uses it twice in the space of five lines⁴¹.

The generally high frequency with which spondaic fifth feet occur in Book V is consistent with the claim of Rutledge⁴² that the fifth book is the most Greek in tone of the six extant books of the *Fasti*. It is notable that spondaic fifth feet occur in the opening (line 7) and closing (line 731) passages of the book, as if to make a conscious advertisement of the shift in balance from Roman to Greek material which is found in this book.

The pentameter line is in general less flexible than the hexameter. Whereas the standard hexameter can accommodate sixteen different patterns of dactyl and spondee, the pentameter has only four such variations. The invariably dactylic rhythm of the final half of the pentameter gives regularity to the verse, and this regularity is strengthened by the convention that the pentameter ends with a word of two syllables. Ovid follows this convention scrupulously in his early poetry, and violates it only twice in the *Fasti*. In the poems written in exile, however, this convention is broken more frequently. It has been speculated, therefore, that Ovid's use of the quadrisyllable *fluminibus* to end line 582 marks the beginning of a

metrical experiment - aimed at giving greater variety to Ovid's couplets - which is extended in the exile poems¹³.

The use of a four syllable word is particularly appropriate in this line, for the long words *circumfusus* and *fluminibus* surround the word *invis* in the same way that Parthia's serpentine river frontiers are imagined to surround its territory. Thus the impenetrable nature of the land is aptly reflected in the rhythm of the verse¹⁴.

Although the elegiac metre does have more limitations than epic hexameter verse, it is not used unimaginatively by Ovid in Book V. The poet uses such variety as is available to him - even taking occasional liberties with the metre - to create a number of appropriate rhythmic effects. In doing so, he creates verse which is free from monotony, and which complements the meaning of the language.

15.4 Word Order

The final aspect of Ovid's poetic use of language which I will consider is his artistic manipulation of word order. In the course of the commentary, I have

noted several places where significant words are emphasised by their position at the start of the line⁴⁵ - especially where there is enjambement⁴⁶ - or at the end of the line⁴⁷.

It is also possible to see places in Book V where word order does not merely emphasise a word, but provides an illustration of the sense. This phenomenon of "mimetic syntax" has been discussed by Wilkinson⁴⁸ and - with special reference to Ovid - by Lateiner⁴⁹.

Lateiner gives numerous examples of words indicating priority which are emphasised by their position at the start of a line⁵⁰. In Book V, the word *primus* does not invariably occur at the start of a line or sentence, but when it does it often has a special significance. In line 111, for example, the sentence describing the beginning of the events of the month is introduced with the word *prima*. In line 152, the initial position of the word *prima* serves to reinforce the meaning with great effect, for the claim that Romulus received his omen first is a novel variation on the traditional myth⁵¹.

Words indicating finality or lateness can be placed at the end of lines to great effect. In line 63, the

word *seros* is placed at the end of the line - a position in which adjectives are rarely found⁵². The postponement of *seros* draws attention to the concept of lateness, and so sense and word order work in harmony.

The order of the words is used to enhance the description of nightfall in line 163, where the phrase *obscura crepuscula* denotes the period of twilight as night approaches, but it is only at the end of the line that darkness actually falls with the word *noctem*. The progressive movement through twilight to darkness is thus reflected by the order of the words in this line⁵³.

On several occasions, a word is enclosed by a phrase, imitating the surrounding of some physical object by another. Thus, on his arrival in Latium, the exiled Evander stands surrounded by the Italian countryside. This situation is mirrored by the word order both in line 91:

Latios Evander in agros

and in line 98:

peregrina constitit hospes humo.

Further examples of this technique of enclosure can be found in lines 433⁵⁴ and 582⁵⁵.

A similar technique is found in lines 329-330 with

the intricate interweaving of the names of the two consuls who inaugurated Flora's games. The words are arranged so as to create two juxtapositions, *consul cum consule* and *Postumio Laenas*. This double juxtaposition of words indicating the consuls throws great emphasis on the collegiality of the two partners-in-office.

In his use of word order, as in his use of the other devices discussed in this chapter, Ovid shows a capacity to manipulate language in order to create striking effects. In the course of Book V he uses the full range of resources at his disposal - the sound, rhythm, position and allusive quality of words. Although he does not strain to achieve a sublime style, there are nevertheless numerous signs of his poetic artistry.

Notes to Chapter 15

1. See Nageotte (1872) p.23; Mariotti (1957) p.628; D'Elia (1959) p.347; Fränkel (1969) p.148.
2. Allen (1922, p.251) talks of the *Fasti* as using "the notes of tinkling cymbals as compared with the organ tones of Virgil".
3. On ancient views about imagery, see Aristotle *Ars Rhetorica* III.1406b-1407a; Cicero *de Oratore* III.155-170; Quintilian VIII.6.4-18; [Longinus] 32.
4. Washietl (1883).
5. Owen (1931).

6. Wilkins (1932).

7. Brunner (1971).

8. Wilkins (1932) counts twenty-nine similes in the poem - that is 5% of Ovid's total number of similes in a work which represents 15% of the Ovidian corpus.

9. Brunner (1971) sees a fundamental distinction between the similes of the *Metamorphoses*, which are constructed in imitation of the epic similes of Homer and Virgil, and the similes of the *Fasti*, which have less grandeur.

10. See Brunner (1971) p.279.

11. This simile is discussed in the note *ad loc.*

12. Plato *Leges* VII.799c.

13. Theognis 911-914.

14. The function of Chiron's death as a surrogate for the death of Peleus is discussed in Section 6.3.

15. E.g. the phrase *carpere iter*, used in lines 88 and 666 (cf. also *carpebant socias...vias* (496)). On this metaphor, see Norden on Virgil *Aeneid* VI.629. On dead metaphors, see Silk (1974) pp.27-56.

16. See note *ad loc.*

17. Livy XXVIII.5.8; XXXIII.6.7.

18. See Section 1.3.

19. See Section 5.3.

20. This is especially important in the case of Polyhymnia, as it helps to distinguish her from the other Muses who speak at the beginning of the book - see Section 1.6.

21. See note on line 164.

22. See Porte (1985) p.33.

23. See note on lines 377-378.
24. E.g. II.149-150; III.877; V.547-548; VI.474.
25. E.g. II.73; III.415-416; III.517-518; IV.180.
26. IV.166.
27. See Kirk on Homer *Iliad* VIII.1.
28. Cf. I.461; III.403; III.711; IV.713-714; IV.943-944; VI.473.
29. V.611: *saepe puellares subduxit ab aequore plantas*.
30. See notes on lines 497-498, 500, 505 and 509-510.
31. See note on lines 209-214.
32. On Ovid's metre and rhythm, see Platnauer (1951); Jackson-Knight (1958); Peeters (1959); Lee (1959) p.410.
33. See Introduction.
34. Santini (1975).
35. Callimachus had used this metre for his *Aetia*, and Propertius had imitated Callimachus in writing aetiological poetry in the fourth book of his collection. Ovid seems to be conscious of his role in this tradition of aetiological poetry - see Miller (1982) pp.400-414; Mack (1988) pp.30-31.
36. See Introduction.
37. See Harrison (1943). Owen (1931, p.106) calls Ovid's metre "faultless". Jackson-Knight (1958, pp.108-110) traces some examples of the liberties which Ovid takes with his metre.
38. Lines 97 and 103. On the style of Calliope's speech, see Section 1.5.
39. Cf. also the note on line 423. The dactylic rhythm can also be employed to similar effect in pentameter lines - e.g. V.88.

40. See Norden (1970) pp.441-446.
41. Lines 83 and 87. See Section 1.5.
42. Rutledge (1973) p.127. The unusual prominence of Greek star myths in Book V has been noted in Section 14.3.
43. See Harrison (1943) pp.99-100. Courtney (1965, p.63) sees the line as proof that the line belongs to the late reworking of the poem - see the Appendix.
44. On this technique of "enclosure", see Section 15.4.
45. E.g. notes on lines 429-430 and 550-551.
46. E.g. notes on lines 174 and 432.
47. E.g. notes on lines 158, 170-172 and 173-177.
48. Wilkinson (1963) pp.65-66.
49. Lateiner (1990).
50. Lateiner (1990) pp.209-210.
51. See Section 7.3.
52. See Platnauer (1951) p.40.
53. The same effect is achieved at *Metamorphoses* I.219.
54. See note *ad loc.*
55. See Section 15.3.

CHAPTER 16: DRAMATIC TECHNIQUE IN BOOK V

In the previous chapter, I examined how Ovid uses various poetic devices to embellish the narrative. A second important feature of Ovid's technique in the *Fasti* is his success in investing the poem with a dramatic quality. Whereas poetic embellishment derives from the sound and allusive quality of language, dramatic embellishment resides mainly in the interaction of characters and the presentation of action.

16.1 Narrative Technique

The key to Ovid's narrative technique in the *Fasti* is his desire to sustain the reader's interest by avoiding monotony. Ovid has numerous ways of giving dramatic force to his narrative. He often punctuates a narrative with direct speech put into the mouths of one of the characters¹, or with apostrophe², in order to present his material in a lively and varied fashion.

Ovid also varies the tenses of the narrative to great effect. This aspect of Ovid's narrative technique has been studied in detail by Albrecht, who observes that significant action is foregrounded by being described in the historic present or perfect tense,

while subordinate material is described using other tenses³, and also that the pluperfect tense is sometimes used to pass quickly over the final action of a story in order to defeat the reader's expectations⁴.

Such changes of tense are only one of the ways in which Ovid varies the pace of his narrative. Ovid follows the Callimachean pattern of concentrating on certain aspects of a story and then moving swiftly over others. Thus in lines 229-260, when Flora recounts her role in the birth of Mars, she recalls her conversation with Juno in detail, but Juno's pregnancy and the birth of the god are condensed into a single couplet⁵. There is a similar change of scale in the Orion episode, where the circumstances of Orion's birth are described in great detail, but his life and death are merely summarised⁶.

An especially remarkable example of this technique is found in lines 569-578. Ovid describes the battle scene at Philippi in two lines, and devotes five lines to reporting Octavian's vow to Mars. The outcome of the vow and the battle is then related in just six words: *et fuso laetus ab hoste redit* (578). The extreme economy of this line provides a striking conclusion to the sketch

of the battle.

Besides variations of form and pace, the narrative is also enlivened in places by allusion to the dramatic setting. The main dramatic setting for the poem is the poet's study. Ovid represents himself in the first book of the poem as composing the poem at his desk and being visited in his study by the god Janus⁷. This setting remains implied throughout the remainder of the poem, but from time to time the poet brings other scenes in front of the reader.

In the fifth book, the reader is transported to the bank of the Tiber, where the river god emerges from his stream to tell the poet about the meaning of the Argei, and to the Forum Augusti, where the god Mars makes an inspection of his temple. On both occasions, the scene is not described by a detached narrator sitting in his study, but it is clear that Ovid is actually present at the places he is describing.

In the case of Thybris' speech, immediacy is gained from the poet's observation of the god emerging from the river Tiber in response to his invocation, and then retiring back into the water at the end of his speech. There is also a reminder of the setting in the course of

the speech. When the river god refers to the Argives settling *montibus his* (652), the deictic pronoun suggests that he is pointing to the seven hills of Rome from his position in the river.

The scene at the temple of Mars Ultor is brought alive by the author's statement that he can hear the sound of arms as Mars arrives at the scene. The first person verbs *fallor* and *fallimur* in line 549 indicate that Ovid is witnessing in person the appearance of Mars at the site of his temple.

The narrative is also enlivened at line 143, where the narrator claims that he has wandered through the streets of Rome in search of the old statues of the Lares. Besides adding credibility to the narrator's claims, this mention of the researcher's field-work moves the setting out of the poet's study and into the city of Rome, thus adding interest and variety to the poem.

A final example of the ways in which Ovid avoids flatness of style in his narrative is his involvement of the reader as a character in the poem. Although the *Fasti* is - in its present form⁸ - ostensibly dedicated to Germanicus Caesar and Augustus, the poet often

addresses the imagined general reader of the poem, either in the singular or plural⁹.

This involvement of the reader is commonly achieved through the device of the rhetorical question¹⁰, but the reader is also invited to imagine himself as the witness of events the poet describes through the use of the word *videres*¹¹.

There are, therefore, many different techniques which Ovid uses to add dramatic force to the poem. He is not content to present his material in a plain and monotonous form, but breaks up the narrative using changes of tense, changes of pace, changes of scene, and changes of person. The events of the poem are thus presented in a vivid form, and the reader's interest is engaged and maintained.

16.2 The Narrator and his Informants

One particularly successful way in which Ovid enlivens the presentation of material in the *Fasti* is through the use of informants. The poet introduces new characters into his poem and sets up interesting dramatic situations by using the fiction that he is at a loss in his researches and seeking information which

that particular character - usually a god - might be in a position to know.

The idea that a poet might gain information from a god goes back to Hesiod¹², but the technique was taken up and developed by Callimachus. In the *Aetia*, Callimachus presents a large number of stories relating the origins of various practices. In order to give that poem variety and dramatic force, Callimachus introduces characters who present him with material for the poem.

The idea of introducing characters from whom the poet gains information was first used in Roman aetiological poetry by Propertius¹³, and Ovid makes great use of this device in the *Fasts*¹⁴.

Book V is especially well-stocked with interviews with informants¹⁵. Moreover, Ovid uses a variety of strategies for presenting these interviews, so that each situation has a different dramatic mood, and each informant presents a distinctive character.

The opening section of the book, in which three of the Muses offer explanations of how the month got its name, takes the form of a contest. Each of the contestants gives a different explanation and uses a different style of speaking¹⁶, and the opposition

between the various speakers produces dramatic tension. Furthermore, certain observations of the silence with which the speakers are greeted and the approval which follows the speeches emphasise the adversarial nature of the encounter, which takes the form of a debate in court¹⁷.

At the heart of Book V, Ovid calls upon Flora to enlighten him about her festival. Flora's appearance is in contrast to that of the Muses, and exemplifies Ovid's use of variety. Whereas the main source of dramatic interest in the introductory section is the interaction of the Muses with each other, it is the interaction between Flora and the narrator which embellishes the section on the Floralia, providing humour and linking together diverse features of the festival into an integrated whole¹⁸. Flora's character also provides variety. Whereas the Muses are dignified, Flora is characterised as being garrulous and self-important¹⁹, and her relative lack of dignity is appropriate for a goddess who is associated with the lower classes.

The next occasion when a god is summoned by the poet is the invocation of Mercury to provide information about the naming of the Lemuria in lines 447-448. Here

Ovid introduces a further variation on his technique of using informants by omitting to report the substance of Mercury's explanation in the mouth of the god²⁰. Instead he cites Mercury as the source of his information and proceeds to tell the story of the naming of the Lemuria himself. This variation is unexpected, and is evidence of Ovid's ability to surprise the reader and his constant striving to avoid dullness in the presentation of his material.

The remaining divine epiphanies in the book conform to the more conventional format. The appearance of the river god Thybris in lines 635-662 adds Virgilian colour to the poem, recalling the eighth book of the *Aeneid*²¹, and also shifts the dramatic setting of the poem vividly to the bank of the river Tiber²². Again, the informant has a distinctive personality, being portrayed as a bumbling old man, nostalgic for the good old days of his youth²³.

Finally, Mercury is summoned a second time in lines 663-694. On this occasion, the poet makes special use of the invocation of the god, using it to include information about the merchants' festival on the Ides of May into the narrative, and also to display his own

piety through a contrast with the attitude of the cynical merchant²⁴. When Mercury then appears, he is presented as an eloquent and ingenious story-teller, who alters traditional details of the story to produce telling literary effects²⁵.

Thus the five occasions in Book V when the poet has recourse to divine informants add greatly to the dramatic presentation of the narrative. The book is given variety both by the different circumstances in which the informants give their accounts and by the difference in the characters of the six speakers. Through the introduction of a varied cast of characters, including such figures as the dignified Calliope, the chatty Flora and the senile Thybris, Ovid invests his poem with interest and vitality.

Notes to Chapter 16

1. See, for example, the notes on lines 38, 409-412 and 715-720.

2. E.g. V.268; V.343. On the use of apostrophe in the poem, see the Introduction to Bömer, p.47; Rutledge (1973) pp.168-170.

3. Albrecht (1968a) pp.462-463. See, for example, lines 201-202.

4. Albrecht (1968a) pp.463-465. Examples of this technique are found in Book V at lines 413-414, 531-532

(see note *ad loc.*) and 537.

5. See note on lines 257-258.

6. See note on lines 537-544.

7. I.93-288.

8. The poem was probably originally dedicated to Augustus, and then rededicated to Germanicus when Ovid began to revise it during his exile - see Appendix.

9. Ovid addresses a plural readership at, for example, IV.878; V.1; VI.195; VI.551. More often, he addresses a singular reader - e.g. V.493; V.599; V.732. On the involvement of the reader in the *Fasti*, see Newlands (1992) p.37.

10. See note on lines 69-70.

11. See note on line 29. Compare also the involvement of the reader in lines 418 and 485-486 (see notes *ad loc.*).

12. Hesiod (*Theogony* 21-34) claims that the Muses had acted^{as} informants to enable him to write the poem.

13. Propertius IV.2.

14. On Ovid's use of divine informants, see Rutledge (1980a); Miller (1982) pp.409-413; id. (1983).

15. Newlands (1992, p.47) believes that the increased number of informants in the later books indicate the poet's uncertainty with his material in the later stages of the poem. It seems to me more likely that Ovid needs to use this sort of dramatic effect more frequently in the later books to sustain the reader's interest in the poem.

16. See Section 1.6.

17. See Section 1.2.

18. See Section 5.2.

19. On the character of Flora, see Section 5.3.

20. See note on lines 449-450.

21. See Section 11.4.

22. See Section 16.1.

23. See Section 11.3.

24. See Section 12.2.

25. See Section 12.3.

CHAPTER 17: THE FASTI AND AUGUSTAN POLITICS

17.1 Ovid and Augustus

It is fairly certain that the *Fasti* was conceived and largely completed in the last decade BC and the first decade AD¹. Thus the poem was written at a time when the fabric of the city of Rome and the public life of its people had recently been transformed in the wake of the numerous reforms instituted by the emperor Augustus.

Contemporary politics had a profound influence on the literature of the age. Virgil and Horace were closely associated with the Augustan regime through projects such as the *Aeneid* and the *Carmen Saeculare*, but political themes also surface in the elegiac love poetry of Propertius and Tibullus. The figure of Augustus looms large in much of Ovid's poetry: the *Ars Amatoria* makes frequent reference to the Augustan monuments of the city of Rome, while Augustus' rule provides the climax to the *Metamorphoses*. The *Fasti* was probably - in its original form - dedicated to Augustus, and contains numerous entries referring to the achievements of the *princeps*².

But while Virgil and Horace had enjoyed the

patronage of the emperor, Ovid's poetry does not appear to have found approval with Augustus. In 8 AD he was exiled on the emperor's command to Tomi, where he remained until his death³.

Scholars have come to widely varying conclusions about the relationship between Ovid and Augustus, and the political aims behind the writing of the *Fasti*. For some, the poem is a staunchly pro-Caesarian document, representing Ovid's "real contribution to imperial propaganda"⁴. Others - possibly influenced by the fact of Ovid's exile - have seen the poem as being deliberately subversive, subtly pointing out the inconsistencies in the emperor's attempts at religious revival and urban renewal⁵. A third school of thought sees the *Fasti* as a tactful attempt by Ovid to ingratiate himself with the imperial regime after Augustus had recorded his displeasure at the flippant treatment of the emperor's deeds in the *Ars Amatoria*⁶. According to this view, the encomiastic element of the poem is neither a genuine expression of thanks to the *princeps*, nor a cleverly-worded critical attack, but rather an "insurance policy", cynically designed to safeguard the poet from any charges of anti-Augustanism.

Recently, however, the idea that there is any clear political agenda has been challenged. Wallace-Hadrill⁷ makes the point that the Augustan regime was so pervasive in its influence that it was impossible for poetry written at the time not to reflect upon it in some way. Moreover, Knox⁸ points out that for a poet writing Callimachean aetiological poetry, it was natural to include allusions to contemporary politics in order to imitate Callimachus' treatment of political themes. Thus the frequent references in Ovid to Augustus and the imperial family should be thought of as being "as much a literary motif as a political issue".

It seems to me that Ovid's consistent primary aim is to entertain his audience through the wit and artistry of his verse. As I have attempted to show in my analysis of Book V, the *Fasti* is no different from Ovid's other poetry in this respect. There is no reason why the parts of the poem which deal with political matters should be any exception. Such passages are useful to the poet as showcases for his ingenuity in handling the standard poetic themes of the time and of the genre.

17.2 The Fasti as an Augustan Poem

Even if the aims of the *Fasti* were literary rather than political, the poem does make substantial use of the preoccupations of the imperial regime. By writing a poem celebrating the Roman calendar, Ovid was making use of a subject which was closely associated with the Caesars. Julius Caesar had reshaped the Roman calendar, introducing the year of three hundred and sixty-five days with a leap year every four years. A poem like the *Fasti* therefore gave Ovid the opportunity to allude to the achievement of Augustus' adoptive father, both directly⁹ and also indirectly through the very form of the poem.

Augustus himself showed a great interest in using the calendar as a symbol of the order that he had restored in the city of Rome, and he encouraged the erection of such monuments as the *Fasti Capitolini* and the *Fasti Praenestini*¹⁰. The culmination of Augustus' interest in the calendar had come in 8 BC when the month *Sextilis* was renamed *Augustus*¹¹, giving the emperor a permanent place in the Roman year alongside his father, whose name had been given to the previous month. It is possible that this event helped to recommend the

calendar to Ovid as a possible subject for his poetry¹².

Ovid's calendar poem contains three main sorts of entry - religious, astronomical and historical - each of which was in its own way relevant to the contemporary political situation. The historical aspect of the poem involves the poet in celebrating the anniversaries of significant events in the life of the city. As Augustus' rule was commonly depicted as being the culmination of Rome's historical mission¹³, any treatment of the history of Rome would give the poem a political slant. Ovid duly records the anniversaries of Augustus' military victories¹⁴, as well as the dates on which he received civil honours¹⁵. The inclusion of these events in Ovid's poem alongside such events as the expulsion of the kings or the murder of Julius Caesar presents the achievements of Augustus as being crucial to the shaping of contemporary Rome.

The astronomical stories in the poem often serve the purpose of providing relief by introducing material from Greek mythology in between the descriptions of Roman festivals. However, astronomy is also a Caesarian theme. Julius Caesar had compiled a treatise on the subject, which Ovid may well have used as a source for

the *Fasti*¹⁶, and was also identified with the *sidus Iulium* - a comet which appeared at the time of his death¹⁷. Thus the idea of catasterism as a reward for great deeds - which is a persistent theme of the astronomical entries in the *Fasti* - has a particularly strong connection with the imperial family.

But the strand of the *Fasti* which makes the greatest contribution to the political tone of the work is ^{the} _^ theme of Roman religion. The revival of traditional religious practices seems to have been used to symbolise the new era which Augustus was proclaiming in Rome. This revival took the form of the building of new monuments, the restoration of temples and shrines, the reintroduction of obsolete festivals and the increasing importance of the priesthoods¹⁸. These initiatives were endorsed by the poets who wrote under the patronage of Augustus and Maecenas. Horace and Virgil show a marked sympathy for the religious ideals of the principate. In particular, these poets show the proper observation of ritual to be of crucial importance to the well-being of the Italian countryside¹⁹.

By taking the traditional religious festivals of Rome as the main subject of the *Fasti*, Ovid was,

therefore, embarking on a poem which touched upon a central element of Augustus' reforms, and which would invite comparison with the treatment of Roman religion by poets like Virgil and Horace.

Thus the themes which Ovid uses in the *Fasti* gave the poem a topical relevance, and established the place of the work in the literary traditions of the time. It remains to consider how the poet made use of these themes.

17.3 Politics in Book V

There are two sections in the fifth book of the *Fasti* when direct reference is made to Augustus and his family. In lines 129-158, the poet mentions Augustus' regeneration of the cult of the Lares in Rome, and follows this up with a reference to Livia's restoration of the temple of the Bona Dea Subsaxana - an act which Ovid claims to have been inspired by her husband's interest in religious revival. Later, in lines 545-598, Ovid reports Augustus' institution of a temple and games in honour of Mars Ultor after his victories at Philippi and against Parthia.

These two sections are prominently placed in the

structure of the book²⁰. The book contains two panels of shorter entries surrounding the long central episode of the Floralia. Both of the pieces which mention Augustus are placed at the centre of one of these panels. Thus it would seem that Ovid highlights the parts of the book which have an overtly political content.

The political tone of these passages has been discussed above²¹, with the conclusion on both occasions that Ovid appears to be sympathetic to the emperor. In lines 129-158, the meandering structure of the passage belies the artful way in which the poet is able to introduce the achievements of the emperor into his poem. In the second passage, Ovid devotes some care to his portrayal of the character of the emperor, stressing his piety and his military achievements.

There are also places in Book V where there are indirect allusions to the contemporary political situation. As I have noted, the appearance of the goddess *Maestas* in lines 11-52 seems to allude to the transference of *maiestas* to the imperial family under Augustus²²; the reference to Aratus' *Phaenomena* in line 111 looks like a compliment to Germanicus Caesar, who translated Aratus' poem²³; and the playing down of the

fraternal strife between Romulus and Remus in lines 451-480 is in keeping with Augustan attitudes about the destiny of Rome²⁴. None of these allusions are overtly hostile to Augustus²⁵, and the presentation of the Romulus and Remus myth seems to have been tailored specifically to fit in with Augustan ideas of a golden age.

In spite of this apparent enthusiasm for the Augustan regime, there have nevertheless been those who have expressed doubt about the sincerity of Ovid's praise. Because Augustus' actions themselves are capable of eliciting either favourable or unfavourable responses, any mention of these acts by a panegyricist must have the potential to be understood in two different ways. It is always possible for the determined critic to find traces of irony in statements about the deeds of Augustus.

However, in the references to Augustus in Book V, I can find no evidence that Ovid deliberately leads the reader to consider his comments in an ambiguous light. Indeed, what is striking about Ovid's political stance in Book V is not the content of the material, but the ingenuity with which Ovid handles it. Ovid uses the

"political" episodes as vehicles for his rhetorical virtuosity. Whether Ovid genuinely felt sympathy for the principate cannot be definitely decided from the evidence in the poem. The political slant of the *Fasti* is used to give colour to the poem rather than for any didactic purpose.

Notes to Chapter 17

1. On the date of the poem's composition and subsequent revision, see in particular Peeters (1939, pp.23-31); Introduction to Bömer, pp.16-18; Syme (1978) pp.21-36.
2. See Allen (1922); Scott (1930).
3. I consider Ovid's exile to be an established historical fact, in spite of the suggestion raised by Fitton-Brown (1985) and Hofmann (1987) that it may have been a poetic fiction.
4. Allen (1922) p.251. See also Rutledge (1980a) p.330.
5. E.g. Holleman (1973); id. (1978); Martin (1985) p.267; Phillips (1992) p.65.
6. See Wilkinson (1955) p.243; G. Williams (1978) pp.84-86; McKeown (1984) p.177.
7. Wallace-Hadrill (1987) pp.221-223. See also Kennedy (1984).
8. Knox (1986) p.79.
9. See III.155-156.
10. See Wallace-Hadrill (1987) pp.223-227.
11. See Suetonius *Augustus* 31.2; Dio LV.6.6.

12. This idea is proposed by Peeters (1939, p.21)
13. E.g. Virgil *Aeneid* VI.791-807; VIII.675-728.
14. E.g. IV.625-628; V.569-594.
15. E.g. I.589-616; II.127-144; IV.673-676.
16. See Introduction to Bömer, pp.28-29.
17. See *Metamorphoses* XV.843-850; Weinstock (1971) pp.370-384.
18. On the Augustan religious revival, see Augustus *Res Gestae* 7.3; 19-21; Suetonius *Augustus* 29-31; Zanker (1988) pp.102-135.
19. E.g. Horace *Carmina* III.18; III.23; Virgil *Georgics* I.338-350.
20. See Section 14.1.
21. Sections 3.2 and 9.2.
22. See Section 1.4.
23. See note on line 111.
24. See Section 7.3.
25. Fantham (1986, pp.268-272) sees strong republican overtones in the passage on Maiestas, but I do not find her argument compelling (see Appendix).

CONCLUSION

In the introduction to this thesis I set out the reasons for writing a literary commentary on Book V of the *Fasti*. My aim was to make a study which would cover an aspect of the poem which is largely ignored in the standard commentaries and yet which is of undoubted interest.

In Chapters 1-13, therefore, I have subjected the text of Book V to close scrutiny. I have found in the case of each episode that there is evidence of the poet's literary artistry. Ovid makes use of word-play, ethopoeia, irony and literary allusion to transform his material. The Ovidian trademarks of humour and verbal dexterity which are so familiar from the *Amores* and the *Metamorphoses* are to be found in the *Fasti* as well. Indeed, in certain episodes, I detect subtleties and complexities in the composition of the verse which belie the claims of the critics about hasty, superficial and unrevised work.

In Chapters 14-17 I have attempted to show that the book as a whole is given unity and coherence in spite of the varied nature of the subject matter. I have considered the poet's success in investing his

composition with poetic language and drama, and his ingenuity in manipulating his material.

My analysis of Book V lends support to recent suggestions that Ovid's literary achievement in the *Fast* may be greater than had traditionally been thought¹. I would hope that my findings indicate that the *Fast* is a text which deserves detailed study, and that my work will encourage researches into the other books of the poem.

But there is one significant way in which my approach to the *Fast* differs from that of many of the scholars who have recently championed the literary merits of the poem. Many recent studies have sought to rehabilitate the *Fast* by claiming that the poem contains some "big idea" about the nature of the cosmos², or the value of religion³, or the ideology of the Augustan regime⁴. According to my reading of the poem, however, the mythological, aetiological and political themes of the poem are only useful to Ovid insofar as they can be exploited for literary effect. Ovid's primary aim, I would argue, was neither philosophical, nor didactic, nor political, but poetic. If there is any big idea behind the *Fast*, it is the

idea of the poem itself.

Notes to Conclusion

1. See especially Miller (1992a).
2. See Martin (1985).
3. See Phillips (1992).
4. See Holleman (1973); id. (1978); Hinds (1992) pp.113-153; Fantham (1992).

APPENDIX: THE REVISION OF BOOK V DURING OVID'S EXILE

In the second book of the *Fasti*¹, Ovid declares that he composed the *Fasti* before his exile. The majority of the poem shows evidence of having been written in Rome, during Augustus' lifetime. However, it is certain that the poem was at least partly revised during the period of Ovid's exile in Tomi. In this revision the poem, which had originally been dedicated to Augustus, was rededicated to Germanicus Caesar, with the original preface probably relocated at the beginning of Book II². Most of the passages which can be dated to this revision are to be found in the first book, (although there is one passage in Book IV³ which was undoubtedly written in Tomi). Traditionally, therefore, it has been supposed that the revision of the poem was not carried out in any detail beyond Book I⁴.

However, it remains possible that the poet may have effected changes to Books II-VI which are not positively datable. Courtney⁵ and Fantham⁶ have suggested that more changes may have been made to the *Fasti* during Ovid's exile than are immediately obvious.

There are three passages in Book V which critics have suggested may have been revised during Ovid's

exile, and I wish to consider the evidence for the date of composition of these passages.

(1) Lines 1-111: The suggestion that the opening of Book V may have been reworked during the period of Ovid's exile has been made by Fantham⁷, who uses two main arguments to support her case. Firstly, there appears to be an emphasis on the role of the magistrates and senate in the speeches of Polyhymnia and Urania which might reflect the shift towards a more "Republican" ideology which characterised the early days of the principate of Tiberius. Secondly, Ovid uses certain Hesiodic motifs in this part of the poem which he also uses in the final poems of the *Epistulae Ex Ponto* - poems which can be dated to the final years of Ovid's exile.

In addition to these points, if the allusion to the opening line of Aratus' *Phaenomena* in line 111⁸ may be taken as a compliment to the new dedicatee of the poem, Germanicus Caesar, then it is likely that that line will have been inserted at the time of the poem's reworking.

It is notable that the themes of old age⁹ and exile¹⁰ are prominent in the opening of Book V. These themes might be considered to be the sort of things which would preoccupy a man who was growing old in exile

himself¹¹.

However, although there is certain evidence to indicate that the passage might have been rewritten at Tomi, there can be no certainty. As Fantham admits¹², the duplication of the same themes in the *Fasti* and the *Epistulae Ex Ponto* does not necessarily prove that the pieces were written at the same time.

Furthermore, the themes of exile and old age occur in several places in the *Fasti*, and their presence in this part of the poem may be coincidental, while variants of the Aratean tag which occurs in line 111 are found so commonly in Roman poetry¹³ that the line need not necessarily be taken as a reference to the literary output of Germanicus.

Even the traces of Republican sentiment, which Fantham sees as the best evidence for the fact that these lines were reworked at Tomi, might be called into question. Fantham regards the move from the *maiestas* of rulers to the *maiestas* of citizens and magistrates in lines 49-52 as having Republican overtones, but the reference to parents and children may be an allusion to the Augustan theme of family life¹⁴, and the *maiestas* of magistrates and *triumphatores* could apply to Augustus'

military successes and his holding of magistracies in Rome.

Neither Polyhymnia's speech about Maiestas, nor Urania's speech, with its emphasis on the role of the senate, is necessarily incompatible with the Augustan principate.

(2) Lines 545-598: The temple of Mars Ultor in the Forum Augusti was dedicated in 2 BC, and Ovid's portrayal of the god descending from the sky to inspect his new temple makes it likely that these lines were composed shortly after the dedication of the temple. The figure of Augustus also has a prominent role in this passage. It would seem, therefore, that the passage was written when Augustus was alive, and that no attempt has been made to make it appropriate to the new political situation after Augustus' death.

There is, however, one feature of the passage which might be the product of revision in exile. In line 582, Ovid breaks the convention that pentameter verses must end with a word of two syllables and uses the quadrisyllabic word *fluminibus*. The only other places in the Ovidian corpus where this convention is broken occur in the poems written in exile¹⁵, and in a passage of the

sixth book of the *Fasti*¹⁶ which deals with the theme of exile in such a way as to suggest that it may have been reworked or inserted at Tomi. Thus Wormell and Courtney¹⁷ suggest that the quadrisyllabic ending to line 582 offers evidence that Ovid might have revised the passage on Mars Ultor during the period of his exile, when he had adopted freer metrical standards.

If this section was revised during Ovid's exile, it is tempting to see line 582 as an allusion to the geography of Tomi. Paley¹⁸ notes that the detail about rivers making Parthia inaccessible is an exaggeration. This inaccessibility would be appropriate to Tomi, however, for Ovid reports that it was surrounded by a large network of rivers¹⁹. It may be that Ovid saw a parallel between the Parthians and the Getae among whom he was exiled. Like the Parthians, the Getae were notable for their prowess at horsemanship and archery²⁰, and Ovid may have imagined the terrain of the two nations to have been similar.

Ultimately, however, I do not find the arguments which suggest that this passage was revised in Tomi to be conclusive. Lines 581-582 are well integrated into the passage as a whole: they lead into the next couplet,

and are later picked up by lines 591-592²¹. It is difficult, therefore, to imagine them being inserted into a passage which otherwise bears every sign of being composed in Rome.

Paley's argument about the inappropriateness of line 582 as a description of Parthia may be geographically valid, but nevertheless the Tigris and Euphrates enjoyed a great reputation in Rome as natural frontiers²². Ovid's description of Parthia as *circumfusus in via fluminibus* is not wholly out of line with contemporary views.

Finally, the use of a four syllable word at the end of a pentameter is not itself decisive in establishing the date of composition. There would be nothing to stop Ovid from using such a pattern in the first draft of the poem as an experiment²³, and the fact that the quadrisyllable produces a rhythm which imitates the sense of the line²⁴ could justify the violation of the poet's normal practice at this point.

(3) Lines 621-662: In the course of Thybris' explanation of the origin of the Argei, the god recalls how Argive settlers in Rome once requested that their bodies be cast into the Tiber after their deaths, so that they

might eventually be carried back to their homeland by the sea.

This detail has caused Porte²⁵ and Fantham²⁶ to believe that Ovid reworked this passage during his exile, and transferred his own nostalgia for his homeland to the dying Argives of the poem. In the *Tristia*²⁷, Ovid uses the same idea, imagining his own remains being carried back to Rome so that he might not remain exiled from Rome in death.

Whilst this passage shows that the idea of returning from exile after death was on Ovid's mind during his exile, it is again impossible to show decisively that the passage from Thybris' speech could not have been written in Rome.

Even before he went into exile, Ovid must have been capable of imagining the nostalgia which a dying man might feel for his homeland. Indeed, this idea is suggested in the tenth book of Virgil's *Aeneid* - which Ovid used as a model for his description of the dying Argives²⁸ - when the exiled Antares remembers his beloved Argos as he dies.

It is not implausible, therefore, to imagine that Ovid might have written the passage as it stands in

Rome, and then seen the opportunity to use the same idea at the time when he was composing the *Tristia* and applied the theme of his earlier composition to his own situation²⁹.

In conclusion, there are no passages in the fifth book of the *Fasti* which can be assigned unequivocally to the revision of the poem during the period of Ovid's exile. There are certain passages in Book V which could plausibly have been reworked at this time, but it is always possible that details which might refer to Ovid's personal situation in Tomi or to the political situation in Rome after the death of Augustus might have been present in the original draft and have a purely accidental relationship to events after 14 AD.

As we know that Ovid did revise the *Fasti* in Tomi, and that this revision was not entirely confined to Book I, it is always possible that at least some of the passages in Book V bear traces of reworking at the end of Ovid's poetic career. However, none of the arguments that have been advanced seem to me to have been successful in isolating examples of this reworking.

Notes to Appendix

1. *Tristia* II.549-552.
2. See Peter (1889) pp.24-25; Peeters (1939) pp.82-83.
3. IV.81-84.
4. The passages which can be clearly ascribed to particular stages of the poem's composition are listed by Peeters (1939, p.84). On the revision of the poem in Tomi, see Knoegel (1885); Peeters (1939, pp.78-87).
5. Courtney (1965) p.63.
6. Fantham (1983) p.215; id. (1986); id. (1992) pp.166-170.
7. Fantham (1986) pp.268-272.
8. See note *ad loc.*
9. See lines 57-76.
10. See lines 91-98.
11. The correspondence between lines 57-58 and *Epistulae ex Ponto* I.4.1-2 is striking. On both occasions the poet uses the symbols of grey hair and the wrinkled face to represent old age. On the prominence of the themes of old age and exile in the *Tristia*, see Evans (1983) pp.74-91.
12. Fantham (1986) p.270.
13. See Bömer on V.111.
14. See Section 1.4.
15. There are 41 lines in the exile poems which end in words of four or five syllables. On Ovid's metrical practice in this regard, see Harrison (1943) pp.99-101; Platnauer (1951) p.17.
16. VI.660.

17. Courtney (1965) p.63; Introduction to AWC, p.vii.
18. Paley on V.580.
19. *Epistulae ex Ponto* IV.10.45-64.
20. See *Tristia* III.10.53-56.
21. See Section 9.2.
22. E.g. *Ars Amatoria* I.223-224; Virgil *Aeneid* VIII.726; Plutarch *Lucullus* 24.4-8.
23. Harrison (1943, pp.99-100) points out that the *Fasti* was composed in the years leading up to Ovid's exile, and the poet may have used this work for his first experiments at breaking his self-imposed rule of ending a pentameter with a disyllable.
24. See Section 15.3.
25. Porte (1985) p.71.
26. Fantham (1992) pp.169-170.
27. *Tristia* III.3.65.
28. See Section 11.4. Ovid combines this nostalgia with details from Epicadus' story of Hercules commemorating his lost companions (see note on lines 653-656).
29. Tacitus (*Annales* XV.70) provides an interesting parallel in his anecdote that, on the occasion of Lucan's death, the poet recited a poem that he had written about a dying soldier, relating it to his own situation.

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