

Ovid's Poetics of Dismemberment; Fasti 2.73-121

Barney McCULLAGH¹

Abstract: *Our principal focus in this article will be the elucidation of the Arion star myth narrated by Ovid at Fasti 2.73-121. The methodology we adopt is unusual and involves redividing the text and reformulating it in order to access subtextual meanings. In order to contextualise this approach we first consider Tristia 3.9 in detail with special reference to the role of the 'speculator' ('the look-out'). The intention is to reveal the polysemantic flavour of Ovid's art which uses allegory, intertextuality, and etymological threads, to create a text that resounds with 'mille sonos' ('a thousand sounds': Fasti 2.119). We hope to persuade readers of Ovid that his grasp of astronomy, particularly the rising and setting of stars, is technically faultless. Any apparent discrepancies are in fact the result of our failure to apply Ovid's poetics to the task in hand.*

Key-words: *stars; Arion; etymologies; lyre; metapoetics; Tristia; Fasti; sea; astronomy; Tomis; speculator; ship; intertextuality; tumulus; hill; Colchis; redivision; allegory; Ovid*

The Poetics of Tristia 3.9:

In previous articles we have argued that Tomis, Ovid's place of banishment, whilst a real place to which real Roman citizens could no doubt be exiled is also a word, the etymology of which is perfectly designed to allegorise the dismemberment of an author's poetry. Firstly Ovid's declared etymology of Tomis is the Greek verb 'τέμνω' ('I cut'). Secondly the foundation myth of Tomis, narrated in Tristia 3.9, involves the dismemberment of a human body, namely that of Absyrtus. Thirdly, Ovid refers twice in the exile poems to collections of poetry as a body of verse (Tristia 2.535; 3.14.8). Ovid's Tomis is the place where his words as a body of verse are severed both literally, at Ex Ponto 4.16.1 ('quid laceras Nasonis carmina?; 'Why do you tear the poetry of Naso?') and allegorically in the same final poem from exile in lines 48-49 ('summotum patria proscindere... / desine'; 'cease to tear the person who has been removed from his fatherland').

The starkest illustration of a poetics of corporeal severing is to be found in the word 'Tomis' itself which emerges from the dismemberment of the words 'MileTO MISsi' at Tr.3.9.3. The phrase as a whole means 'people sent from Miletus' which is a succinct definition of the origins of Tomis as a city and as a word, especially given that those sent from Miletus must have christened the place 'Tomis'. This is known as an 'ab re' etymology (in which the roots of the word spell out the observable truth about the word being etymologised. Thus the reconfiguring of torn texts into new text may well also produce an etymological discourse². Furthermore the question posed in Ex Ponto 4.16 is the following:

¹ Visiting Lecturer, Extra-Mural Department, Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK

² The reverse procedure or 'enodatio' (the unknitting of an etymology from one word to produce the two words from which the one word derives) was a game played much more recently than we think. F.H. Sandbach, a fellow of Trinity College Cambridge, composed the words on the brass plaque in the College Ante-chapel that commemorate Alan Ker, the fellow of Latin poetry who died in 1967. Ker would have appreciated (in two senses) the witty 'knotting' of his own name to form the adjective 'alacer', which Sandbach uses to describe him. We are to understand that the unknotted roots of the word 'ALACER' ('sprightly in mind') are 'ALAnus KER' (the Latin version of ALAN KER). It is as if Sandbach had traced the definition of the word ALACER meaning 'sprightly in mind' (sc. 'animo'), by reversing the compressing together, or 'knotting', of the 2 names 'ALAnus KER'. Varro tells us that words commonly lost a letter or two when combining to form a new word (Lactantius *De Operibus Dei* 12.17: 'item mulier, ut Varro interpretatur, a mollitie, inmutata aut detracta littera, velut mollier'). Thus the argument that ALAnus KER comprises the etymology of ALACER would be accepted immediately by an ancient etymologist. 'Etymology' in Greek literally translates as the 'study of true names' or 'argument from the true meaning of words' (Cicero *Topica* 35). It is as if, without the existence of Alan Ker, there would be no source for either the

‘Why do critics tear to pieces an author’s ‘body’ when the author is already dead?’ The answer had been given in *Tristia* 3.9. The killing of Absyrtus is a secondary consideration viz-a-viz the severing of his limbs. The more scattered the limbs the longer the boy’s father, King Aeetes, will take to recover them, and the more time the Argonauts will have to make good their escape from the clutches of the Colchians (‘divulsaque membra per agros dissipat in multis invenienda locis’: Tr.3.9.28-29). As a dutiful father the King’s priority is to recover his dead son for proper burial. Aeetes represents the reader for whom reconstructing the pieces of the text will be a quasi-sacral duty. Yet so much material is to be recovered that Ovid will always be at least one step ahead. Allegorically-speaking Ovid *qua* Medea escapes to further dissect his text. We, meanwhile, remain in Tomis to reassemble the pieces of the textual body Ovid has left behind (if not quite in the form they were originally).

The Speculator of *Tristia* 3.9

In order to demonstrate the cogency of our thesis it seems only reasonable to tear apart some further bodies of text from the same poem from which the dismembered remains of ‘Tomis’ have been brought to light. We have chosen two ‘bodies’ that are both physical and textual, They relate to different descriptions of the same man, namely a ‘hospes’ (‘stranger’ or ‘guest-friend’) and a ‘speculator’ (‘spy’ ‘look-out’ or ‘senior officer on a governor’s staff’). The word for a look-out man (‘speculator’) derives from the verb ‘specio’ meaning ‘to keep an eye on’ but also to ‘observe omens’ (Varro *De Lingua Latina* 6.82). However, if one were to divide this title into ‘specula’ and ‘tor’ one would create a very thought-provoking nexus. The word ‘specula’ means ‘an eminence’. The same feature of the environment, this time described as a ‘tumulus’, is said to constitute the speculator’s look-out post (3.9.11: ‘tumulo ab alto’). Ovid may be suggesting an alternative etymology for ‘speculator’ here by using a synonym (‘tumulus’) of the word providing the etymological root (‘specula’). This was common practice amongst ancient poets. To give an example, the word ‘rudens’ (‘rope’) was thought by Virgil and Ovid to be derived from the verb ‘rudo’ (‘I screech’ ‘I groan’). on the basis that the taut brailing lines screeched in an adverse wind. But to signal their understanding of this these poets would never write ‘rudens rudens’ (‘a rasping rope’) as such a strident repetition would distract the reader who - to give a contemporary example - might be put in mind of the nomenclature of birds with names like ‘troglodytus troglodytus’³. This would serve to trivialise the verse. If instead the synonym ‘stridens’ were used as a substitute for ‘rudens’ (meaning ‘screeching’) then the etymologising becomes a poetry-enhancing adjunct to the meaning⁴. In Tr.3.9 we could even construe ‘tumulo speculator ab alto,’ in isolation, as an etymological annotation (‘speculator ab’ = ‘a look-out man, deriving from’ ‘tumulo ... alto’ = ‘a high hill’). Meanwhile such an eminence is normally described as a ‘scopulus’ and later in the story a ‘scopulus’ becomes the location of the severed limbs of Absyrtus (‘scopulo in alto’: 3.9.29). The common adjective ‘alto’, forces

term or concept of ‘being sprightly’. Alan Ker stands as the font from which ‘sprightliness of mind’ springs. Sandbach also mentions Ker’s ‘sudden death’, which inevitably reminds us that ‘κηρ’ [‘Ker’ if transliterated from Greek] means ‘death’ - often ‘sudden death’. Another don of Trinity, J. Burnaby, composed the philosopher Wittgenstein’s epitaph, which is also in the College Chapel. It contains the following: ‘rationem ex vinculis orationis vindicandam esse...docebat.’ ‘He taught us...that reason had to be freed from the shackles of speech’. In fact it is very easy to ‘free’ the Latin word ‘ratio’ (‘reason’) from the shackles of the Latin word ‘oratio’ (‘speech’). All you have to do is break the linguistic ‘bond’ (‘vinculum’) that connects the first ‘o’ in ‘oratio’ to the rest of the word to leave ‘ratio’. Burnaby was surely teasing Wittgenstein’s ghost. In the Old Guest Room in Trinity’s Nevile Court meanwhile there is the motto of Vernon Harcourt, the famous Liberal statesman: ‘Vernon semper viret’ [‘Vernon is ever in the prime of his manly vigour’]. But a separation of ‘Vernon’ into ‘ver non’ provides a new meaning ‘Ver non semper viret’ [‘Spring is not always green’]. Notice how the redivision of the ‘members’ of ‘Vernon’ stimulates into life a different meaning of the verb ‘viret’. The domino-effect of a rolling semantic metamorphosis has set in.

³ The wren

⁴ See Ovid *Tristia* 1.4.9: ‘stridore rudentes’; Virgil *Aeneid* 1:87: ‘stridorque rudentum’.

our attention on the connection between the two words, 'tumulus' and 'scopulus'. Not surprisingly the word 'scopulus' is derived by Varro from 'speculator' ('I keep watch'). It is therefore virtually a synonym of 'specula' as well as having similarities of morphology with that word, taking into account the metathesis (SCoPULus – SPeCULa). Meanwhile we should not ignore the literary-critical effect of placing a dead skull on such a 'scopulus'. The inability of Absyrtus' unseeing eyes to 'observe' ('speculari') the approach of his father over the Black Sea creates a harrowing antithesis with his father's all too clear 'view' and 'consideration' ('speculari') of the exposed head and hands of his son.

We mentioned the two fragments 'specula' and 'tor'. English-speakers will have had their attention drawn by the suffix 'tor' which, particularly in the UK counties of Devon and Cornwall is a popular term for a 'crag' or simply 'a hill'. Whilst many will be incredulous at the suggestion that Ovid may have known items of Celtic vocabulary, we are less sceptical. We would point to the word 'ex[s]ul' ('an exile') and to Ovid's adoption of Minerva as the deity who, in the form of the patroness of his ship and as the goddess of the temple at Castro⁵, was to oversee his journey as an 'ex-sul' to Tomis. That is, 'ex-Sul' could reasonably be thought to be a self-defining grammarian's tag, meaning 'through the agency of 'Sul'. Sul was the British equivalent of the Roman Minerva and the Greek Athene. Julius Caesar's expeditions will have brought back in their wake information about the British Pantheon which will have revealed the Roman gods had their British equivalents (De Bello Gallico 6.17: 'habent opinionem:... Mineruam operum atque artificiorum initia tradere'). When Romans made vows in a foreign land their prayers were such that any well-disposed local deity would be invited to consider themselves addressed. Over time Caesar's troops would have made it their business to learn the names of their potential addressees before making these gods' names known to their kith and kin in Rome. The word 'tor[e]' meanwhile seems to have been the Gaelic word for 'bulging hill'⁶. Indeed the word can also mean 'a pile of stones' which brings it closer to the nuance of 'funeral mound' ('agger') which will soon become the focal point of our investigation of Ovid's intertextualising with Virgil.

Thus the title of 'specula/tor' deconstructs as 'the small hill/the high hill'. The 'tor' may add a welcome suggestion of height in view of the diminutive ending of 'specula' (and of 'tumulus' and 'specula' for that matter). Thus we now have three hills, ('scopulus''specula' 'tumulus') and a person a 'specula/tor', who doubly represents such a hill. It is incumbent now to bring our second textual re-division into our discussion. The words of the 'speculator' begin with 'hospes' which is interpreted as a nominative describing the approaching Aeetes as a 'stranger'. However thanks to the fast-fading pronunciation of the aspirate in the Early Empire, a word such as 'hospes' would have been pronounced 'ospes'. This could then be redivided as 'o spes' ('Oh! Hope!'). Before we examine the role of 'Hope' in the text we should point out that the word 'specula' ('hill') has a further meaning, namely 'a ray of hope'. Such interlinking of subtextual connections ('scopulus-specula-hill-hope-specula-hospes'⁷) makes us doubly conscious that the superficial text constitutes only a fraction of the text which the author intends the reader to receive. That is 'specula's meaning of 'hope' validates our 'redivisional' approach to the text. The look-out man himself now has a much-extended identity. Etymologically, he represents 'the High Hill and has 'hopes' invested in others.

Once we hear that 'Hope', in the form of Aeetes' ship, is 'on its way from Colchis' we can be assume that the look-out is a double-agent with a talent for cloaking his words in oracular meanings. The more one pores over his words the more unease creeps in. Ovid

⁵ See Barney McCullagh *Disiecta Membra* (2019)

⁶ See The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles (1973). A 'tumulus' meanwhile is, etymologically-speaking, a 'small swelling'

⁷ Note the chiasmic movement of these connections

asserts that this slippery character had seen the pursuing Aeetes from afar ('quem procul ut vidit'). This must be true since it is guaranteed by the author. Now the word 'afar' will always be relative and even though the 'speculator' must have been chosen on the basis of his excellent vision, to recognise a person from a distance of more than twenty-five feet is problematical. The website www.livescience.com reports that 'celebrity face identification remains quite reliable up to about 25 feet and then degrades gradually to zero reliability at 110 feet'. Yet the look-out's words are the following: 'I recognise the sails' ('nosco... vela'). Whilst he is no doubt telling the truth, he must have recognised the sails a long time earlier if he has just now 'seen Aeetes from afar'. Meanwhile if he has seen king Aeetes, then Aeetes must be sitting aloft on the ship's prow in the manner of a 'prorates' ('the look-out'). He cannot be on the quarter-deck or 'ikria' at the stern because the sails are hoisted making it impossible to see anyone but the ship's own 'look-out man'. However good the eyesight of Jason's look-out man is, he will not be able to recognise Aeetes from more than a distance of, say, 120 feet at the absolute maximum. Thus we know that the ship is no more than 40 yards away. The look-out man has, it appears, given out-dated information, information that serves to trigger preparations for immediate departure among the Greeks. Medea at first feels it is too late to come up with an escape plan. 'We are caught' she says trenchantly (20:'tenemur'). However, in killing her brother she will be aware that Aeetes should by now be able *to see and to recognise* someone who is at the same distance from him as the look-out man (on the basis that the look-out man had recognised Aeetes). Everything happens at lightning speed thanks to the look-out man's earlier deliberate dilatoriness. We suggest that Medea puts Absyrtus' dismembered head and hands on the same tumulus as that on which the look-out man had been standing. This guarantees that Aeetes will recognise his son and become fixated with gathering up his remains, thereby allowing the Argo to make good its escape.

The 'speculator' speaks in heavily chiasmic (ABCBA) Latin which is a common feature of (ominously) sepulchral texts and (sepulchral) ominous texts. His words are: '*hospes, nosco, Colchide, vela, venit*' ('a stranger is coming from Colchis, I recognise the sails': Tr.3.9.12). The anomaly of one recognising the sails of a ship whose captain is a stranger will be addressed soon but for now the chiasmus will reflect, we suggest, the mirroring of the two faces of the 'speculator' and Aeetes, both serving as the lofty look-outs of their respective contingents. Given that Aeetes' crew will be behind him, we suggest that the Argo's crew are similarly behind the look-out, cowering behind the hill. They cannot be far because the look-out is audible without having to shout.

The chiasmus then relates the look-out's words to a funerary text speaking from, as it were through the text of the stele (inscribed tombstone) that was regularly placed on top of a dead hero's 'tumulus' (Iliad 16.456-457: 'ἐνθά ἐ ταρχύσουσι κασίγνητοί τε ἔται τετύμβω τε στήλη τε: τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἔστι θανόντων'). Now one could assume our 'speculator intends 'hospes' to be a vocative, addressing, one assumes, Jason, though if Aeetes is only 40 yards away one could argue he might also consider himself addressed. The addressee will be 'a stranger' or 'guest-friend'.

There is a very similar funerary text that not only begins by addressing the passer-by as 'hospes' ('stranger' and 'friend') but also contains a striking, chiasmically arranged, comment on the interred ('hospes, quod deico paullum est, asta ac pellege,/ *heic est sepulcrum* hau *pulcrum pulchrai feminae*'; 'stranger, what I say will not take long, stop and read it through; here lies the unbeautiful tomb of a beautiful woman'⁸). The chiasmus points up the etymological joke on 'sepulcrum' ('tomb') which was thought to derive from 'sine pulchro' ('without beauty'). We also note the deceased's rhetorical conciseness of expression based on the assumption by the dead that passers-by do not want to be detained long. The

⁸ CIL 1211

chiasmus contributes to this pithiness. Meanwhile a look-out too is obliged to transmit his message in short order. Jason's look-out speaks very pithily but does not start speaking until it is almost too late.

Chiasmus, by its very conciseness, can create uncertainty of meaning. The look-out's words, as we have seen, are not monolithic. Consider the following translations of what he says:

- (a) [to Jason]: **'your guest-friend is coming from Colchis, I recognise the sails'**. Here, in sardonic terms, the look-out is commenting on Jason's all-too-un-guest-friendly treatment of Aeetes. Jason had eloped with Aeetes' daughter Medea after robbing the king of his prized Golden Fleece. When Greek aristocrats went to visit their Greek or foreign peers, they normally went as 'guest-friends' on the basis of close ties between the respective families. The look-out is satirising Jason's visit as one of guest-friendliness. However he is also commenting on the return visit of Aeetes as Jason's guest-friend in Tomis. Aeetes, he suggests, had so enjoyed Jason's visit that he has set off immediately to sample Jason's reciprocal hospitality. This is of course darkly sardonic.
- (b) [to Jason]: **'a guest-friend [of mine?] is coming from Colchis, I recognise the sails'**; the look-out here may be thought to be arrogantly admitting to being a 'speculator' in another sense ('spy' = 'speculator'); he may be thought to have infiltrated the Argonauts on behalf of the Colchians; although the speculator will not be on the same social level as Aeetes nothing stops him from using his assumed affiliation to Aeetes as sarcastic swipe against Jason who had not behaved as the 'guest-friend' he should have been expected to be towards Aeetes.
- (c) **'O [Jason] guest-friend of his that you are...'**; this carries the same force as (a)
- (d) **'O [Jason], guest-friend, it [the ship] is coming from Colchis'**; here we assume the Colchian has also been chosen as the look-out for his knowledge of the Colchian royal emblems on the sail. However the reference to Jason as 'guest friend' is intended to suggest Jason will be offering hospitality to the arriving crew. This will be the last thing on Jason's mind
- (e) **'o stranger, he [Aeetes] is coming ...'**; of course we cannot discount the possibility that 'hospes' conveys the look-out's actual relationship with Jason as mercenary viz-a-viz an employer ('O stranger')
- (f) this brings us back to the received translation **'a stranger [Aeetes] is approaching ...'**. In full, the last version should read 'I know the sails [as being from Colchis]; a stranger is arriving'. The ship's captain seems to be unfamiliar to the look-out man ('a stranger') though the ship is certainly Colchian. But by now the look-out is said to have seen Aeetes. Assuming he knows whom he sees, the only way we can rescue the look-out from lying is to assume he uses the word 'stranger' in reference not to himself but to Jason. But in saying 'someone Jason does not know' is approaching, the look-out can again be accused of adopting a sardonic tone. Jason, it is intimated, is about to meet a quite different Aeetes to the one he 'had known' in Colchis. Jason will, as it were, not recognise the implacable enemy that is about to come ashore.

The sepulchral texts all make 'hospes' a vocative and so common was the word at the start of an inscription that a Roman reader could not fail to take it in that sense here whilst also accepting the rhetorical insinuation that he or she was to listen to the whole speech right to the end. Now, if *Aeetes* were able to hear the look-out's words, he could consider himself to be addressed. We could therefore translate the text, from his perspective, as follows:

- (i) **'O (Aeetes) guest-friend, (I know the sails from my time in Colchis) he [Jason] has been sold off [to you] for my financial gain'**; here 'venit' is understood as

coming (unmetrically) from the verb ‘veneo’ (‘I am sold’). In general, the translations in this section will acquire a particular frisson if we assume the ‘spy’ is a mercenary interested only in his own profit. The spy ‘sells’ or betrays Jason for profit to Aeetes by failing to tell the Argonauts when he first knew a ship bearing Aeetes was coming from Colchis. Meanwhile the word ‘guest-friend’ is used in a jocular way as might be expected of two business partners. It purveys a mordant humour in the sense that Aeetes might be thought to be ‘visiting’ the look-outas though they were both aristocrats. On the occasion of such visits, the guest would depart with gifts from the host. The implication here is that Jason is being presented to Aeetes as the mercenary’s (‘paid-for,) gift.

Here are further versions addressed to Aeetes:

- (ii) **‘O stranger (I know the sails from my time in Colchis), he has been sold into your hands’**; here one could argue that the relationship between the mercenary spy and the king is purely professional, with Aeetes constituting merely the unknown paying customer: ‘
- (iii) **‘your guest-friend has been sold [into your power]’**; here one could make Jason the implied nominative with heavy irony being invested into the term ‘guest-friend’;⁹
- (iv)or **‘the stranger (i.e. ‘Jason’) has been sold [into your hands]; I know your sails from Colchis’**. The references to the knowledge of sails are the spy’s way of ensuring that Aeetes knows who he is. He is showing his identity card as it were. As a mercenary he eschews all personal knowledge of his customers.
- (v) **‘O stranger, I am becoming familiar with your sails from [my time in] Colchis...’**; here there could be a sly observation that the spy is getting more and more business from the treacherous Colchians. He could be saying (with heavy irony invested in the word ‘stranger’ and the meaning of the verb) that Aeetes in fact is becoming *all too familiar* a face to the mercenary from the latter’s frequent trips to Colchis
- (vi)lastly, ‘O Spes’ (> ‘Ho Spes’) may also be simply a theatrical aside or an appeal to the Goddess of Hope, rather than the nominative of ‘venit’: **‘O Hope, he [Aeetes] is coming from Colchis, I recognise the sails’** or **‘O Hope, he is coming, I recognise the sails from [my time in] Colchis’**; or **‘Hope is coming from Colchis, I am getting to know the sails’**).

Meanwhile the chiasmus is so obtrusive that we are obliged to consider the metapoetic significance of it. The words *χιάστυ* (‘à la Chians’ and ‘crosswise’) and *χιάζω* (‘I play the Chian’ and ‘I dispose crosswise’) relate chiasmus to the roguishness of the ‘lying’ Chians. This explains the expression ‘not a Chian but a Keian’ in Aristophanes’ *Frogs* 970, referring to someone honest not a dissembler.

Now the word ‘scopulus’ is also thought to derive from the verb *σκειπαζω* or *σκειπω* (‘Servius *In Aeneid* 1.45) meaning ‘I protect [ships, by providing a mooring station]’. Throwing a cable around a large rock was the favoured way of mooring an ancient ship to the beach. This leads us to Ovid’s use of ‘agger’ at 3.9.13 where the crew of the *Argo* release the cable from the ‘agger’. In this sense ‘agger’ can be thought to allude to the ‘scopulus’ on which Absyrtus’ remains rest. This rock, by playing host to Absyrtus’ body parts and thereby distracting the attention of the pursuing Aeetes is instrumental in engineering the Argonauts’ escape from Tomis. At the same time the Argonauts’ flight from Tomis begins with the cable being unwound from around the (same?) ‘agger/scopulus’ by the crew.

⁹ See (b) above for the tone

Now, as we have seen, it would make sense if the 'speculator' were on the same 'high hill' as that on which Medea mounts the head and hands of Absyrtus. First of all the 'speculator's' words must be audible. He is not said to shout and cannot therefore be far from the Minyans. As soon as the Minyans hear the look-out's words they prepare to launch the ship. Medea herself has little time to think once she knows Aeetes is approaching. Moreover we know that there were 'tumuli' or burial mounds on promontories¹⁰ that stretched into Lake Sinoe at Histria just up the coast from Tomis (the so-called 'Movilele Dese' - 'the thick-set mounds'). Meanwhile we also know of two tumuli lying south-east of the so-called Saturn Swamp near Mangalia. These too are associated with a promontory. Our thesis is that the look-out was standing atop the same Getic funeral mound as that around which the Minyans had tied their ship's mooring cable. The siting of Absyrtus' head and hands here would also literally put new flesh on the bones of the funerary nature of this 'tumulus' which has been characterised as a mound-with-stele through the sepulchral style of the look-out's words. Absyrtus' remains reinvigorate the ancient tomb in reconnecting it to its function as a 'grave-marker' (rather than as a place to moor a ship). Meanwhile the look-out's words complement this movement back in time through performing the role of a stele, a stele which then gives way to Absyrtus' unverbaised declaration of ownership.

Ovid himself seems to suggest that a 'tumulus' graced the site of Tomis and was included within its city walls (*Tristia* 5.10-17-18: '... tumulus defenditur ipse / moenibus exiguis ingenioque loci'). Yet the 'cleverness of its position' must mean that it was somehow far from, or protected from, the range of enemy fire. With the city walls being small or of short circumference the best place for the 'tumulus' (perhaps meaning both 'tomb' and 'acropolis') would be near the sea, perhaps on a strategic headland¹¹. The article 'Despre un tumulus la Constanța (Un răspuns tehnic la o întrebare a D-lui Dan Slușanschi)' sets out the evidence for a 'tumulus' within the walls of Tomis¹². Our feeling is that there was only one high hill in the precincts of Tomis.

Intertextuality and *Tristia* 3.9

Meanwhile *Tristia* 3.9.13 ('dum trepidant Minyae, dum solvitur aggere funis') must also intertextualise with *Metamorphoses* 14.445 which forms part of the retelling of the *Aeneid*'s Caieta story ('solvitur herboso religatus ab aggere funis'). The main difference gives us much to ponder. Only the latter version's 'agger' is described as 'grassy' which echoes *Aeneid* 7.106 where a ship is moored, not to a grassy bank but, we think, to 'a grassy eminence on the bank' ('gramineo ripae religavit ab aggere classem')¹³. The Oxford Latin Dictionary assumes that 'agger' here means 'a river bank' near the sea but Virgil would scarcely have written 'ripae' if 'agger' had already articulated the same feature. Moreover we suggest that the word 'grassy' (both in Virgil and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*) evokes the antiquity of the relevant monument which has become part of nature over time. This reminds us of funerary monuments on the Trojan plain that become part of the matrix of the living over time and are even adapted to new uses within the epic's narrative (ἐν ξυνοχῆσιν ὁδοῦ, λεῖος δ' ἰππόδρομος ἀμφίς / ἧ τευ σῆμα βροτοῖο πάλαι κατατεθνηῶτος, / ἧ τό γε νύσσα

¹⁰ Stefan, Maria-Magdalena, Dan Stefan, and Valeriu Sirbu. 'Tumuli, Roads and Plots. Decoding the Monumental Funerary Space of the 4th-3rd Centuries BC Kallatis'. *Journal of Ancient History and Archaeology* 4.1 (2017): fig. 7 p.59

¹¹ Elpenor, we think, was buried on a conspicuous headland (*Odyssey* 12). See the last words of the main text of our work 'Disiecta Membra' (2019)

¹² Covacef, Petre 'Despre un tumulus la Constanța (Un răspuns tehnic la o întrebare a D-lui Dan Slușanschi)' in *Pontica* 31 (1998) pp. 261-264

¹³ Note that 'religavit' in Virgil means 'he tied [the rope to the grassy mound]'. However Ovid's 'religatus ab' is more likely to mean 'having been untied' [from the grassy mound]. (*Catullus* 63.84). This is intertextualising at its best. Ovid alludes clearly to Virgil but in the same instant takes the inter-narrative further.

τέτυκτο ἐπὶ προτέρων ἀνθρώπων, / καὶ νῦν τέρματ' ἔθηκε ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς': at the narrowing of the road, around about there is a smooth race-track; either it is the grave-marker of some human who died long ago, or it was made into a turning-point among earlier men, and now swift-footed shining Achilles has made it the finishing point': Iliad 23.330-333).

Thus Ovid's 'grassy' is a metapoetic device intended to remind readers that the literary mound constructed for Caieta is now part of literary history. However the word 'grassy' also reflects the passing of human lives. Our view of ancient tumuli is that the stones that were heaped over the body ('agger') were enclosed with sods of earth ('tumulus'). However it is easy to imagine these sods being applied like wallpaper. To do that would be to invite the sods to fall off. In fact it must be the case that the sods were laid horizontally to create a thick wall of earth around the 'agger'. This will mean that the tumuli did not initially appear 'grassy'. The grass was all hidden. Thus 'grassiness' conveys actual or literary 'antiquity'.

Meanwhile the Tristia's 'agger' in 3.9 cannot be a river bank if it refers to the hill from which the look-out speaks. In any case, in that poem, there is no mention of a river. It is possible to argue that 'agger' at Aeneid 7.106 means the rampart, as it were, of the bank, but we find this forced. In any case, to describe a 'river bank' as 'grassy' seems quite otiose. It seems more likely that both the Metamorphosean ship of Ovid and Virgil's Thyber ship of Aeneid 7 were moored by having a cable thrown around a tumulus ('ab aggere') somewhere upstream of a river mouth. If this was not Virgil's original conception then Ovid must be thought to have reconfigured Virgil's text through intertextualising with it in the Metamorphoses and the Tristia.

Meanwhile, there are no 'tumuli' to which Apollonius' Argonauts may moor their ship at A.R.2.1282-1283 ('ὕψοθι νῆ' ἐκέλευσεν ἐπ' εὐναίησιν ἐρύσσαι / δάσκιον εἰσελάσαντας ἔλος' ... and 3.6-7 ('πυκνοῖσιν ἀνωίστως δονάκεσσιν / μίμνον ἀριστιῆς λελοχημένοι'). Instead, at precisely the halfway point of his epic, the Argonauts ingloriously anchor 'far' upstream in a marshy backwater hidden amidst reed-beds. From here the Argo is positioned to launch an ambush against the Colchians. By contrast the Caietan episode that similarly bridges the two halves of the Aeneid locates the hero's ships on the shore with the prows facing seawards and probably propped upright Iliad-fashion by the use of staves or 'έρματα' ('ancora de prora iacitur, stant litore puppes': Aeneid 7.901). That is, for the ships to 'come to rest' on the shore ('stant') implies that they were beached by being driven backwards at the sands or pebbles in the heroic manner of the Phaeacians at Od.13.113-115. They were then propped upright ('stant'). Unlike Apollonius' ship, Virgil's ships face out to sea, ready to restart the epic head on. They have also left behind a 'monumentum' of themselves, as a more permanent, heroic marker. For tumuli bring to mind the glorious dead in battle rather than one's nursemaid. Meanwhile the Phaeacians' explosive arrival on Ithaca had begun the fashion for halfway points of ancient works to be marked by the mooring or beaching of a ship. Virgil's account ('stant litore puppes') articulates closely, if less ostentatiously, the same vignette as the Odyssey. The Phaeacian ship is left with half the ship on land. Like the Phaeacian ship, Virgil's ships must have their bows in the water (otherwise the anchors could not have been dropped at Aeneid 7.910)¹⁴.

We would hold that Ovid's intention in Metamorphoses 14, is to summon up Apollonius' anti-heroic craven crew from their backwater in order to comment upon Virgil's heroising text. Skulking amid the thick reeds, the Argonauts of Apollonius had reminded one of the suitors in the Odyssey who also wait in ambush, this time in a roadstead. The irony of

¹⁴ The dropping of anchors clearly alludes to the Apollonian passage. One would have thought Aeneas' ship would be better served by stern cables being attached. However the anchors are thrown to stabilise the ships as, one after the other, they strike the pebbles, The verb 'stant' is highly polysemantic in this context ('= come to a juddering halt' but also 'are propped upright' [by staves] and 'remain motionless'[thanks to the anchors])

the description of the Odyssean suitors as Iliadic heroes (Ἀχαιοί) is picked up by the word ἄριστῆες (literally 'the best men') in Apollonius (Od. 4.844-847: τὸν γε μένον λοχόωντες Ἀχαιοί = A.R. 3.7: μίμνον ἄριστῆες λελοχημένοι). Meantime, when Ovid writes 'procul insidias ... relinquunt' (Met 14.446, ostensibly referring to Circe ambushing the Trojans) the attentive reader should wonder if the Trojans are not themselves 'leaving a [craven Odyssean and Apollonian] 'place of ambush' which *they were intending to use against others* just as we find is the case in the contrapuntal passages of Odyssey 4.844f and Argonautica 3.7. In short, the landing procedure at the mouth of the Tiber in Aeneid 7.106 is recontextualised by Ovid, (through the joint grassiness of the passages' respective 'aggeres') with Met. 14.445-6 from whence it reinforces the Caietan episode which, in that context, attracts into the Aeneid the ambience of Apollonius' underhand ambush. By the time of the Metamorphoses passage the 'tumulus' of Caieta, only freshly constructed at the beginning of Aeneid 7 ('aggeres composito tumuli':7.6)¹⁵, had itself become a feature of the literary landscape and a place to tie up¹⁶ (just as tumuli further north along the Latium coast will have existed before Aeneas' landfall at 7.30-36 and 106). Thus Ovid, in 'Apollonianising' Virgil through having Aeneas' ship leave its mooring from alongside a river bank some distance upstream from the sea (Met.14.445), is doing far more than realigning Virgil's Caietan episode with Apollonius' anchoring of the Argo in a marshy backwater. For, the paralleling of the two texts (with the Odyssey in the wings) invests the later Virgilian version with notions of cowardice, underhandedness, and superciliousness. These qualities, that is, will particularly inform the actions of Aeneas' crew at Caieta, but will also lend their colour to the landing at the mouth of the Tiber¹⁷.

15 Note in this phrase the association between 'agger' and the 'tumulus'. The 'agger' is the heaped up stones that create the crown of the tumulus.

16 In an actual and literary sense

17 The Argonauts manage to keep their ship stable by using stone anchors cast from the prow. But this means that without cables stabilising the stern, the ship will have its stern unheroically facing towards the sea, assuming a residual current obtains in the backwater. Meanwhile these anchors, unlike stern cables around a tumulus, are easily and speedily gathered in when the ambush is launched (Ovid will be alluding to this at Tr.3.9.14 as well as to the denouement of Euripides' Iphigeneia in Tauris). Virgil by having Aeneas beach the ships on the sea-shore, flatly subverts or Homericises Apollonius' 'anti-heroism'. Ovid, through having Aeneas leave Caieta in highly Apollonian circumstances, de-heroises the context anew. The Virgilian beaching is lost sight of. Note that the area of the Numicius River, specifically the part close to the sea is, 'covered by reeds' (Ovid Met.14.598-599). Ovid is here recontextualising Aeneas' arrival in Latium by reference to the same marshy riverscape of Argonautica's central passage. According to the order of places mentioned at Aeneid 7.150f the river where the Trojans land ought to be the Numicius ('haec fontis stagna Numici, hunc Thybrim fluvium, hic fortis habitare Latinos') *pace* Aeneid 7.30f. Ovid's Numicius boasts standing waters ('stagna') suggesting the marshiness of the Argo's position in Apollonius. The river which Virgil's Aeneas enters in Latium is shaded though it could also be thought by an Ovid to suggest the darkening effect of reeds ('et laetus fluvio succedit opaco':7.36). Dionysius of Halicarnassus tells us that in historical times there was a tumulus erected to Aeneas on the Numicius (Roman Antiquities 1.64.5 'And the Latins built a hero-shrine to him with this inscription: 'To the father and god of this place, who presides over the waters of the river Numicius.' But there are some who say the shrine was erected by Aeneas in honour of Anchises, who died in the year before this war. It is a small mound, round which have been set out in regular rows trees that are well worth seeing' (translation courtesy of Topos Texts). In Ovid's Metamorphic world, the tumulus one ties up to will once have been a freshly built tomb but it could also one day be the site of one's own freshly-built 'acculturating' tumulus (the 'tumuli' of the same tribe tending to group together as markers of territory). Thus the act of mooring to another tribe's tumulus can be read allegorically. The Tomis tumulus meanwhile, in Medea's hands, becomes a Scythian-like temple decorated by barbarian trophies. Bronze Age tumuli were meant to be seen from a heroising distance with the corpse imagined to be inside (as fondly imagined by Elpenor in the Odyssey). On top would have been a stele with brief details about the interred. If 'tumulus' is intended as an etymology of Tomis, then in Tristia 3.9 it must add a flavour of the after-life to that of corporeal dismemberment. At the same time a strong flavour of the bloodthirstiness of the Scythian beheaders will be unavoidable with Absyrtus remains telling the story. All three elements are strongly represented in the exile texts (Ovid-as-deceased; the vicious detractors; word-dislocation). Through the head and hands of Absyrtus, the tumulus twice-over points deictically to itself, indicating to the reader of posterity as much as to Aeneas that what is missing is the true body of the text, namely its severed 'limbs'. 'Membra' ('limbs') also means [severed] 'metric feet'. We the readership have a sacred duty to gather up ('lego' = 'read' and 'gather') Ovid's remains. The text must be treated as a tumulus to be resanctified. The unreconstituted Ovid will cry out from the near bank of the Styx until he is properly interred. To do that means recovering his 'disiecta membra'. Even today Ovid inhabits a provisional Underworld. Meanwhile the grassiness of a tumulus indicates that it was deliberately heaped over with turf once the core burial had been prepared. See Gerling, Claudia Prehistoric Mobility and

There seems to be a distinctly funereal theme running through *Tristia* 3.9. The mooring cable retrieved from around the tumulus is described as a ‘funis’ which later in Cassiodorus (*In Psalmata* 15,61. 129A) is thought to derive ‘a funeribus’ (‘from funerals’ on the grounds that ropes were burnt like tapers around the corpse). Meanwhile the ‘coloni’ of line 3 could be thought to be a creative transliteration of the Greek ‘κολωνη’ meaning ‘burial mound’ or ‘barrow’. The word ‘θωμος’ (‘heap’) meanwhile transliterates as ‘T[h]OMOS’ such that in the plural (‘θωμοι’) it will represent a version of the spelling of ‘Tomis’ as ‘Tomoi’¹⁸. Other words that are etymological candidates for Tomis include ‘θημα’ or ‘T[H]eMa’ (‘tomb’) and ‘θημων’ or T[H]eMon’ (‘heap’). Nor, as we have seen, should we consider the morphology of the word ‘TuMulus’ itself to be far removed from that of ‘ToMis’. As we discuss in our book *Disiecta Membra*, the letters of the word ‘Tristia’ may be thought to etymologise as a collection of large pebbles (‘tri-stia = ‘τρι-στια’). This would inevitably form a heap as would the ‘[huge] pile of stone-dust’ or ‘λιθοκονια’ which Hesychius gives as another meaning of [‘τρι’] ‘στια’. Lastly, if we were to jumble the heap of letters of the word ‘IS[H]TMO’ (‘from the isthmus’) we would arrive at T[H]OMIS. On his journey to Tomis Ovid crosses the Corinthian land isthmus at *Tr.*1.10.9. He also rejoins the ship ‘Minerva’¹⁹ to cross a sea isthmus at the entrance to the Dardanelles (1.10.26). These same boundaries are noted by Barchiesi as structuring devices in the *Metamorphoses* (‘quaeque urbes aliae bimari clauduntur ab Isthmo / exteriusque sitae bimari spectantur ab Isthmo’: *Met.*6.419-420; ‘Ultus abit Tmolus liquidumque per aera Vectus / angustum citra pontum Nepheleidos Helles’: *Met.*11.194-195). Thus Ovid’s journey into exile is punctuated and rendered a triptych by the same ‘articulatory’ places as used to structure the macrocosmic but equally triptychal *Metamorphoses*. Ovid reaches his place of exile by living out the journey undertaken by his *Metamorphoses*. Meanwhile, in continually asking Augustus for a ‘change of place’ for his exile Ovid is engaging in the ongoing dynamic of the *Metamorphoses* in which all is in continual flux. A change of place will also imply that the letters of TOMIS could be changed to, and indeed exchanged for, those of the place called IST[H]MO. Ovid rhetorically agrees to swap Tomis for Corinth.

Chian fabrics

Back at *Tr.*3.9.12, the words of the Chian look-out now unravel fully from their convoluted chiasmus. Yet the next translation of his words will seem bizarrely off-key at first: ‘[having betrayed the guest-stranger for cash] **I am coming to know the fabrics from Colchis**’ he crows (‘nosco Colchide vela’). This strange statement will also have an oracular meaning. Ancient ‘sails’ (‘vela’) were made of finely-woven linen, as both the words ‘εἶδος’ in Greek and ‘velum’ in Latin prove (‘woven material’ and ‘sail’) Now the methods for producing this linen in both Egypt and Colchis were quite distinct from the methods adopted elsewhere in the ancient Mediterranean. This may have led Herodotus to mention the linen’s name. The historian terms Colchian linen ‘Σαρδονικόν’ (Herodotus 2.105: ‘λίνον δὲ τὸ μὲν Κολχικὸν ὑπὸ *Ἑλλήνων Σαρδονικὸν* κέκληται’). This is not just an adjective referring to that which is Sardinian. It also evokes that which provokes ‘bitterly sneering laughter’. Pollux (5. 26) quotes Herodotus as referring to ‘Σαρδονικὸν λίνον’ which obliges us to privilege this spelling of the adjective (there are many variants of it). The fact that this variant relates directly to Sardinia, means that the origin of the bitter laugh (from the facial expression

Diet in the West Eurasian Steppes 3500 to 300 BC p. 15: [of the North Pontic Yamnaya Kurgan culture] ‘grass sods were used to build the mound’. The theme of ‘heaping’ pervades *Tristia* 3.9.

¹⁸ Suetonius *poetae* 30 (‘Ovidius ... iuxta oppidum Tomos sepelitur’)

¹⁹ See Barney McCullagh *Disiecta Membra* (2019)

caused by eating the bitter plant Sardinian Crowfoot or 'Σαρδανη') can be more directly related to this form of the adjective.

In sum, all the sardonic meanings we have ascribed to the Chian look-out can now be embraced as being part of the author's intended meaning. The word 'Sardonikon' puts the final nail in the coffin of the reader's opinion of the look-out man. The author has infiltrated a metapoetical indication that the word 'sardonic' ('bitterly humorous') should characterise the look-out man's words. In fact even in saying 'I recognise the sails from Colchis' (= 'I am familiar with what is 'sardonic') the look-out is speaking sardonically. Following his words, the Argonauts spring into action. The verb 'trepidant' is just as likely to mean 'they are feverishly busy about' as 'they fear'. Without having to look out to sea the Minyans realise that Aeetes is almost upon them. Line 14, in which the anchor is hauled in through a flurry of hands, is inspired by the attempts of Orestes, Pylades and their crew to reel in the *stern cable* in Euripides' Iphigineia in Tauris (1352: ἤγον χερῶν πρυμνησια'). In that play the anchors are mentioned first, as being hung from the catheads, with the stern-cables being simultaneously hauled in by other crewmen. There are many other parallels between these two myths. To name but a few: the heroine's theft of Artemis' statue in Euripides (1383f) equates to the theft of the Golden Fleece (implied) in Ovid; the female *dramatis personae* are both temple-wardens, both sacrificers of those who should be guest-friends from Greece, both attempting a sacrilegious act before escaping to Greece from the western Black Sea via the Clashing Rocks en route to Attica; thematically-speaking, there is also the use of deceit on the part of the Chian and Iphigineia (Euripides *IT* 1330ff).

The Fasti: Marsyas: 6.708:

Carole Newlands, in her book 'Playing for Time' notices an example of word-play at Fasti 6.708 where Marsyas' limbs are cut 'from his skin' ('ā cute'). As she points out these five letters also spell the word 'shrilly' ('acute') suggesting that we can hear Marsyas' staccato, 'unmetrical' screams beneath the textual 'flaying'.²⁰ The meanings of 'a cute' are worth pursuing for a moment as they contain a clear example of the hidden discourse that is central to Ovid's programme of word redivision. The usual translation '**Marsyas' limbs** ('caesa...membra'), **having been cut from their skin, came away** ('recesserunt') does not mean that the limbs were severed from one another. But the line could be retranslated metapoetically to call attention to the possibility of finding chopped limbs ('caesa...membra') that have 'come apart' from the skin ('recesserunt'). On this reading Marsyas is first dismembered and then flayed.

From here we can progress to a metapoetic meaning of the text which expresses the fact that in 'chopped units of poetic text' ('caesa'), namely 'feet' ('membra') have come apart ('recesserunt'): e.g. 'a cute'. This now uses 'a cute' in apposition to the rest of the sentence to illustrate the new meaning through a single example. For 'a cute' could be thought to be a severed metric foot (having formerly, one assumes, constituted the amphibrachic 'acute'). Its severed parts, we should assume, in no longer being scanned as an amphibrach, have 'fallen short of their surface appearance' ('recesserunt a cute' where again the dismembered status of 'a cute' illustrates the point being made)²¹. This means we are obliged to reunite 'a' and 'cute' to arrive at the original, as it were, 'prehistoric' text. Indeed the metapoetics of the text agitate constantly for a 'return' to 'acute' especially if we translate 'caesa recesserunt ... membra sua' as 'his cut feet have gone back [to their former condition](namely 'acute'). This leads to another grammarian's aside ('the cut feet have reverted: i.e. [to form] 'acute'). Thus,

²⁰ The phrase 'beneath the textual flaying' is intended to convey both that the word 'acute' is beneath the 'textual 'a cute', and that Marsyas' screams provide an audible soundtrack which underlies the scene of flaying.

²¹ See Quintilian 1.5.28 ('non recedent')

in case we had been hesitant in accepting the (strictly speaking) unmetrical reconstitution of the words ‘a cute’ into ‘acute’, the presence of the word ‘acute’ is vindicated as the original text by more than one way of reading the received as well as the reconstituted text. The ‘reunification’ of ‘a cute’ as ‘acute’ would also reflect the practice identified by Quintilian who notes that, in the pronunciation of verse, two separate words would be thrown together as though they were one (1.5.27). This reduces the effect of accentuation since ‘a cute’ in constituting two words would normally provide two accents. Under Quintilian’s procedure the ‘word’ ‘a cute’ would be initially accented only on the ‘u’. However Quintilian also observes that preserving the metre could be thought to alter accent (1.5.29). Thus with ‘acute’ ‘restored’ to the text, the metre could only be preserved by having the accent fall on the antepenultimate syllable. This produces a dactyl and gives a coincidence of stress and accent. A further reading of the text, in which ‘a’ and ‘acute’ share a ‘littera communis’ ([a] acute), also gives literary advantage. For, in the phrase ‘a acute’, ‘acute’ qualifies the letter ‘a’ as ‘acute’ (as attracting the accent). The upshot of all this is that we may now translate the line as though the limbs of Marsyas had been cut and parted to the shrill accompaniment of a high-pitched scream (‘acute’).

Fasti 2.73-121: the Story of Arion

Our other purpose in this article is to present a case study of a Fastian episode. We have chosen the story or aition of Arion the famous musician. Of his day, Arion was the most celebrated practitioner of the Lesbian Lyre or barbiton. He was also, according to Herodotus’ account (1.23) the inventor of the dithyramb. Thus Arion must be chosen by Ovid at least in part to reflect his own status as the greatest elegist of his day, an elegist who was himself an inventor in daring to use the minor key of elegy to express the major (‘epic’) subject of the annual festivals of Rome (the Fasti). In narrating Arion’s rescue by a dolphin from a band of would-be pirates, Ovid is inserting a star myth to lighten the onerous epic trawl through the Roman year. Thus the story restores elegy to a lightly narrative context. Each star myth will explore the aition relating to the constellation that is setting or rising on the particular day Ovid has reached in the course of the year. The constellation in question here is that of Delphinus the Dolphin, and the story recounts how the dolphin saved Arion’s life as he returned by ship to Greece from Sicily after a lucrative tour of Magna Graecia. It is Ovid’s practice to frame such narratives with short notes about the sky at night in order to identify the calendrical date by reference to the setting and rising of constellations. This creates a triptych within which the main narrative is nested.

We begin then with the first leaf of the triptych, lines 2.73-78, and adopt the premise that these outer leaves will inform or allude in some way to the content of the main narrative, even if that does not seem to be the case at first sight. Ovid begins by referring to dusk on February 2nd when the Sun (Titan) uncouples his purple horses from the bejewelled yoke of the chariot. Now the equivalent of ‘iugum’ (‘yoke’) in Greek is ‘ζυγόν’ and this word also refers to the cross-bar of a lyre. Such a crossbar adorns the lyre of Homer’s Achilles who sings of the deeds of heroes on a clear-sounding and intricately-wrought lyre with a silver crossbar (Iliad 9.185f: ‘φρένα τερπόμενον φόρμιγγι λιγείη / καλῆ δαιδαλέη, ἐπὶ δ’ ἀργύρεον ζυγὸν ἦεν’). Now the jewels on the Fastian Sun’s chariot *might* be thought to represent the stars of the constellation Lyra which will contain silvery points of light rather similar we might think to those on Achilles’ lyre. At this point we are reminded that the yoke is uncoupled just before the Sun sets (‘abiturus in undas’; 2.73). The sun promptly descends with his horses in a blaze of purple. Effectively, if this is allegory, it will suggest that the crossbar of the lyre is left behind in the sky, resting right on the horizon. Yet the Lyre constellation is still aloft in the sky long after the Sun sets. In the meantime the bejewelled

crossbar of Lyra is only bejewelled by a single star. Vega, the fifth brightest star in the sky, does duty it seems for the rest of the pegs which stretch across the crossbar. These pegs were known as ‘κολλοπες’ and their function was the same as that of the tuning pegs on a modern guitar. We mention this because the everyday calendars (‘parapegmata’) that were used in Italian cities in order to keep the locals informed of the calendrical date and its associated festivals (along with the constellational risings and settings associated with that date) were kept up to date by inserting a peg into a hole beside the relevant entry. Ovid is therefore keeping his own calendar up to date by referring to a quite different set of pegs, those which allegorise not only the calendrical pegs but also the form in which Ovid’s calendar advances, namely through the multifarious notes produced by different tunings of his compositional lyre. Ovid is ‘lyricising the calendar’. These pegs determine the pitch of the lyre’s strings. Without them the lyre would not enjoy its famous variety of note. With them, Ovid effectively disposes of the ‘mille sonos’ which at line 119 he prays for in tackling the most solemn and important theme of the entire book; Augustus’ elevation to the status of ‘Pater Patriae’ (‘Father of the Fatherland’).

The Sun, as we have seen, uncouples its yoke at the eleventh hour. He is ‘all set to enter the waves’. Yet at sunset, we find not Lyra but Delphinus on the horizon at the moment the Sun is about to pass beneath the waves. Its stars $\delta \theta \iota$ describe a gently curving ‘inner’ line just as Ovid says of Cybele’s chariot yoke at *Fasti* 4.216 (‘iuga curva’). The line $\delta \theta \iota$ however is encompassed from above, or to the right as we look, by the line of stars $\gamma \alpha \beta \eta \epsilon \kappa$ where $\zeta \beta$ are side-by-side such that ζ could be thought to stand proud of the two lines below it. The metal yoke piece of a chariot found at Wange seems to be formed of two curved bars with a screw in the middle at the top to hold the pieces together. This follows the schema of Delphinus’ stars almost exactly as outlined above. Meanwhile the sarcophagus from Ostia showing Achilles as a Cupid dragging Hector’s body around Patroclus’ tomb has a similar twin-barred yoke with a screw in the middle (and perhaps at the end as in the Wange yoke. On balance we suggest Ovid has seen the design of an ancient chariot yoke in the stars of the constellation Delphinus. He has created a vignette to describe sunset but also to guide the reader to the conclusion that the constellation Delphinus, rather than Lyra, is the truer counterpart of the yoke-cum-lyre-crossbar. The brightness of the Delphinus stars is underlined at *Fasti* 2.79 where the constellation is ‘engraved’ or ‘embroidered’ with ‘stars’. We know ancient British chariots with decorative yokes were ridden around Rome as an aristocratic fad. Maecenas, Horace’s patron, had one (‘essedae caelatis ...iugis’: Propertius 2.1.76). The word Propertius uses to describe these decorated yokes is the same as that used here by Ovid of Delphinus (‘caelatis ... caelatum’). The word ‘caelatum’ conceals a pun on ‘caelum’ (‘engraver’) and ‘caelum’ (‘sky’). Ovid makes this pun overt (‘engraved with stars’). We may assume then that Ovid thinks Propertius’ chariot yoke was spangled with stars. This brings us back to ‘gemmea ... iuga’ in Ovid.

The Ancient Lyre-Player

Ille caput flavum lauro Parnaside vinctus
verrit humum Tyrio saturata murice palla,
instrictamque fidem gemmis et dentibus Indis
sustinet a laeva; tenuit manus altera plectrum. *Met* 11.165-168

Now our main narrative concerns Arion, the most famous lyre-player of his day. The passage *Metamorphoses* 11.165-168 usefully summarises the appearance of a professional lyre-player in the person of Apollo. He wears a garland on his head. In Apollo’s case this is of evergreen laurel as one would expect of the immortal god of Parnassus. His long cloak,

called a 'palla', is more than dyed with Tyrian purple, it is thoroughly infused. Most interestingly the lyre itself is encrusted with gems which we would hold mark the heads of the pegs. Thus Ovid confirms that both types of 'iuga', that of the crossbar on the lyre and that of the chariot (Fasti 2.79 with Propertius 2.1.76) were inlaid with precious stones. The white ivory pieces will be inlaid into the tortoise-shell which formed the sounding-box of the lyre. The white ivory will be complemented by the white stones which, as we shall see, were almost certainly diamonds.

As we have seen, etymologies and their unravelling are pervasive preoccupations of elegy and of the Fasti in particular. The word 'lyre' was derived from the verb 'ληρειν' by Isidore of Seville who is thought to reflect the derivations of Ovid's contemporary Verrius Flaccus. Isidore helpfully expands on the relevance of 'ληρειν' in expressing the 'variety of sounds' of the lyre. The Lesbian lyre of Arion was also known as the 'barbiton' which had a multiplicity of strings according to Theocritus ('πολυχορδος': 16.45). Thus, when Ovid wishes he had 'a thousand sounds' in him (2.119) he is affecting to forget that the lyre (which he is metaphorically playing) provided a vast range of notes. However the verb 'ληρειν' has another nuance. First of all, on the basis that 'ληροτης' means 'ὕσθλος' (Hesychius), we assume that 'ληρειν' gives 'variety' through the meaning of 'engaging in dilatory conversation' or (less kindly) 'prating or babbling'. However, strictly speaking 'ληρειν', means 'to talk nonsense'. Now in addressing Homer in line 2.120 as 'Maeonides' Ovid may be alluding not only to Homer's traditional birthplace in a district of Lydia known as Maeonia but also to the verb 'μαειται' ('maeitai') meaning 'to talk nonsense'. One may expect this verb to have an active verbal participle 'μαιω̄ν' ('maeon') which exactly replicates the beginning of the word 'Maeonia'. Thus allegorically or metapoetically, the rich variety of the sounds produced by Ovid's own lyre continues to express itself through these lines. Notes are superimposed on other notes. Ovid's Arion plays only one string (2.108) that nevertheless gives back multiple sounds. This inexhaustibility of the lyre's output of notes was well known to ancient writers such as Quintilian 12,10,68: 'eademque musicis ratio est, qui, cum in cithara quinque constituerunt sonos, plurima deinde varietate complent spatia illa nervorum, atque his, quos interposuerunt, inserunt alios, ut pauci illi transitus multos gradus habeant'. Each lyre-string clearly had a root note but the subtleties introduced through retuning the strings and through the harmonics given off by each note will have created a panoply of sounds. This aspect of the lyre is, we suggest, pressed into allegorical service in support of the 'multi-toned' text of Ovid's Fasti.

Etymological 'Harmonics'

One aspect of multi-tonality is etymological play. In the first leaf of our triptych, Helios is given the title 'Titan'. Hesiod conveniently explores the derivation of 'Titan' at Theogony 207 and concludes its roots are in 'τιταίνειν' which means 'to strive, strain'. However in tandem with a chariot as its object, it also means 'to drive the chariot at full stretch' ('ἄρμα τιταίνειν': Iliad 2.390). This now illuminates the behaviour of the Titan Helios as he drives his chariot to the edge of the waiting waters of Oceanus at Fasti 2.73 ('Hesperias ...abitus in undas'). At the same time 'τιταίνειν' can also be used with the lyre to mean 'to stretch the lyre's strings' or 'to tune the lyre's strings' ('φορμιγγα τιτηναμενος': Orphica Argonautica 251). This refocuses our attention on the tuning pegs which we mentioned earlier in relation to what we might call Ovid's 'lyricisation of the calendar'. Before we leave Hesiod we note he intrudes another possible derivation of the word 'Titan', namely 'τισις' ('payment in recompense for [work carried out]'). In applying this to the story of Arion we note that the lyre-player was returning home with the wealth he had acquired from performing on a tour of Sicilian and Southern Italian cities.

In describing Arion's concert tour, Ovid follows closely his source Herodotus (Herodotus 1.24.1: 'ἐπιθυμῆσαι πλῶσαι ἐς Ἰταλίην τε καὶ Σικελίην, ἐργασάμενον δὲ χρήματα μεγάλα'; Ovid *Fasti* 2.93-96: 'nomen Arionium Siculas impleverat urbes, / captaque erat lyricis Ausonis ora sonis;/ inde domum repetens puppem conscendit Arion, / atque ita quaesitas arte ferebat opes'). Now the secondary etymology of the Titan Helios, namely 'τισις' also prefigures one of the underlying themes of the story. The life of a professional musician could be lucrative. It could also attract envy. Covetousness leads to crime and crime needs to be punished. Thus 'τισις' can also mean 'retribution' or 'punishment in payment for crimes'. Although neither Ovid nor Herodotus mention retribution for the sailors who had conspired to kill Arion and seize his wealth, Hyginus (*Fabulae* 194) informs us of their crucifixion beside the monument set up to the dolphin who had saved Arion's life. Lastly 'τισις' can also refer to 'payment in kind'. We find even this nuance reflected in the wider narrative for, on his way with the dolphin to Taenarum, Arion paid his fare by playing the lyre (2.115-116). Thus, instead of feeling obliged to introduce the 'τισις' etymology in the context of the word of which it forms the root ('Titan') Ovid sprinkles his etymological notes across the firmament of the text in the form of narratological sequins. Ovid embroiders his text, much as the lyre box is inlaid with precious stones and the sky is studded with stars.

The Second Leaf of the Triptych, Etymologies and Emendations: *Fasti* 2.119f:

After Ovid finishes telling the story of Arion in the *Fasti*, we have the following lines: 'nunc mihi mille sonos quoque est memoratus Achilles / vellem, Maeonide, pectus inesse tuum' ('I would wish there to be in me a thousand sounds and that inspiration of yours, O Maeonian Homer, by which Achilles' story was narrated': *Fasti* 2.119-120). Now Ovid goes on to regret that he had chosen the light medium of elegy for his epic, for he now has to tackle the heavyweight theme of the anniversary of the conferral of the title 'Pater Patriae' upon Augustus. And all this on a day, the Nones', that was itself so unlucky in Augustus' mind that he refused 'to take up any important business' (Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*, 92). Ovid fears his 'strength' will buckle under the weight of a theme (with its pitfalls) which his metre is incapable of bearing ('maiora viribus urgent'). Thus Ovid above all requires strength to carry on. In singing the sacred Nones in alternating hexameters and pentameters with a plectrum, Ovid harks back both to the plectrum held by Apollo in his 'alternative' hand (*Fasti* 2.121: 'alterno pectine' = *Met.* 11.168: 'tenuit manus altera plectrum') and to the thumb by which Arion will have gripped his plectrum ('icta ... pollice chorda': *Fasti* 2.108). That is, the lyre is still on Ovid's mind despite the Arion story having just ended. The introduction here to the theme of Augustus as Pater Patriae is equally a postscript to the Arion aition. It is as if Ovid is here keying in to the greatest exponents of the lyre to garner support for what follows. The words 'mille sonos' smack of epic exaggeration and it will therefore not harm Ovid's preparation for the Nones to have aligned himself with the 'epic' lyre-player Apollo from the *Metamorphoses*. If Apollo had swept to an epic victory on the lyre in the *Metamorphoses*, then perhaps Ovid could hold his own when the 'materia' of the calendar becomes of epic weightiness.

The 'thousand sounds' we looked at earlier are themselves the subject of Ovid's interest in etymology. For, in Greek, the nexus 'mille sonos' translates as 'ἄχαι χιλιαί' ('achai chiliai'). This could be rationalised as 'achiliai'. Clearly this two-word etymology provides a close morphological approximation to the name 'Achilles'. Indeed the text of line 12.119 if emended could be translated so as to convey the author's sanctioning of this etymology. If 'quo' were changed to 'quibus' we could render the line in isolation as 'I would wish there to be in me the 'thousand sounds/notes' (ἄχαι χιλιαί) on the basis of which 'Achilles' has been

named'. However the new translation simultaneously suggests that there may be a plethora of sounds that could combine to sound like the word 'Achilles'. Indeed we investigate the name further in our discussion of Tr.3.10 in the book *Disiecta Membra*. One possibility we discuss there is that 'Achilles' is the derivation of the word 'Aquila' ('Eagle') which figures very prominently in our night sky next to Delphinus. On the other hand we should not exclude the possible derivation of 'Achilles' from 'ἀχι χιλια' ('a thousand woes'). This will remind the reader of the fury of Achilles that brought ten thousand woes on the Achaeans (Iliad 1.2: 'μήνιν ... Ἀχιλῆος ... ἦ μύρι' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε:').

However there is another etymological aspect of Achilles' name that we think has been ironed out of the text by scribal emendation. Line 2.120 we think will have to undergo even more intrusive surgery than 119 to restore its literary import. Our version of the entire couplet 2.119-120 is the following: 'nunc mihi mille sonos, quibus est memoratus Achilles / vellem, Maconide, et pectori inesse adamans' ('O Homer, now I would wish that the thousand notes, through which Achilles' story was celebrated, be in my breast along with adamant [while I sing of the sacred Nones]'. Here Ovid, in order to meet his commitments in 'singing of the Nones' requires not only the 'varietas' of Homer's lyre in Homer's description of the *aristeia* of Achilles, but also the hero's untiring resilience, symbolised by adamant the hardest substance known to the ancients. However there is a subtextual game in progress here. The Greek word for the original tortoise-shell 'lyre is 'χελυς'. Now 'χελυς' also means 'pectus' or 'breast'. Thus Ovid's 'pectus' in Latin is, we suggest, concealing 'the 'lyre' under its surface meaning. And indeed it would be reasonable to suggest that another Greek word for 'lyre' namely 'πηκτις' ('pectis') could be an etymology of 'pectus'. Furthermore 'adamans' can also mean 'diamond'. This brings us back to the jewel-encrusted lyres of Arion and Apollo. Ovid, that is, would wish to have the extraordinary range of expression (a 1,000-note 'lyrical' range) with which Homer treated the Achilles episodes in the Iliad. Meanwhile, in recognition of his own powers of expression, the modest Ovid would be proud to have a single diamond on his 'χελυς' which masquerades here as 'pectus' ('pector[i] inesse adamans'). Ovid's text seems to comment here on the excessively ornamented lyres of Apollo and Arion. They attract envy. Ovid would have just one. In this he aligns himself with the true constellation of Lyra which reveals Vega to be the only prominent star (or 'diamond') on the crossbar.

Alternatively the text of the second hemistich of 2.120 could be read as the following melange of Greek and Latin: 'pector[i] iv[ι] esse adamans'. This could be analysed as a predicative dative construction ('I would wish for the thousand notes ... and that adamant was for a strength ['ivι'] to my chest/lyre'). That is, Ovid wishes that the adamant 'could make [his] heart/lyre capable of standing up to the strain imposed by having to hymn the Nones'. The relationship between 'adamant' and 'the chest' was part of a well-known 'topos'. At *Heroides* 10.105, 107-110 and 131-132 Ovid connects the 'unconquerability' of Theseus viz-a-viz the Minotaur ('non equidem miror, si stat uictoria tecum'), with the 'adamant' that protects his heart ('pectore ... illic adamanta tulisti'). This constitutes a development of the etymological meaning of 'adamant' as 'that which is unconquerable' ('α' privative and 'δαμᾶω' 'I conquer')²². Comically, it is Ariadne's view that, even if Theseus had not protected himself with bronze armour, the impenetrable hardness of his heart would have fended off any weapons ('ut te non tegeres, pectore tutus eras'). Meanwhile the impossibility of 'transfixing' the lower part of Theseus' chest ('non poterant figi praecordia ferrea cornu') is a play not only on the word that is morphologically the closest to 'pectus' in Greek, namely 'πηκτος' ('fixed'), but also on the 'fixed' and immutable character of 'adamans' ('illic adamanta tulisti') which conventionally could not be pierced due to its

²² See Ovid *Ex Ponto* 4.12.31-32: 'pectora ... /... invicto adamante clausa'.

solidity ('nec tamen ille meis impenetrabilis armis / gerens solidoque satos adamante lacertos / venerat': Statius *Thebaid* 1.3.15-17). Ovid relates 'adamans' directly to the 'breast' at *Metamorphoses* 9.614-615 ('nec ... in pectore... adamanta gerit'). Again this is meant to suggest endurance just as at *Deipnosophists* 13.13 the tag 'ὁ δὲ πόνος ἀδάμαντος' suggests 'a tolerance of suffering that is of adamantine proportions'. Thus our emendation of 'adamans' has much to recommend it in the light of the qualities of character Ovid requires to surmount the next 'trial' which his elegies are to undergo (hymning the February Nones).

The same Double Dative perspective on the text leads us into an etymological discourse. We could assume 'iv[ι]' ('ις') is the equivalent of 'vis' in Latin in the meaning of 'δυναμις' ('force') which in Plato's *Cratylus* (405e: τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ ὀνόματος φοβοῦνται) is the word for 'etymological root'. This allows us to translate as follows: 'I would wish I availed of a thousand notes and that 'adamans' ('fixity' 'unchangeability') constituted an etymology for 'pectus' on the basis of which [i.e. the notes and the 'pectus'] 'Achilles' has been characterised. The assumption here is that 'πηκτος' ('that which is fixed') will be an etymology of 'pectus' on the basis of morphology. The word 'adamans' conveys the image of 'fixedness' and stands as a synonymous articulator of the meaning of 'πηκτος'. Thus 'adamans', *qua* 'πηκτος' invests 'fixedness' into Ovid's chest allowing him to feed into the fixed implacability of Achilles at *Iliad* 16.33-35 where, like adamant, the hero remains unswayed in his resolve to remain outside the fray.

The word 'χελυς' it will be noticed, is yet another word that could stand alone as the etymology of Achilles assuming the word 'a' which introduces the etymology ('deriving from') is also included within it. That is, 'a' + 'χελυς' equals 'A/chelus' which constitutes a concatenation of letters that approximates in appearance to 'from Achilles'. This would give the translation 'I wish there were in me a thousand sounds and that the word 'pectus'²³ had an etymological significance (i.e. 'χελυς'), by all of which the much-loving Achilles came to be called 'Achilles' ['adamans' as deriving from the verb 'adamo' 'I love dearly']. Here, we engage with the Achilles of *Iliad* 18 who must have played the lyre during the night or two nights that he and his Myrmidons spent sorrowing over his much-loved Patroclus (*Iliad* 18.315; 354-355: 'παννύχιοι Πάτροκλον ἀνεστενάχοντο γοῶντες... παννύχιοι μὲν ἔπειτα πόδας ταχὺν ἀμφ' Ἀχιλλῆα / Μυρμιδόνες Πάτροκλον ἀνεστενάχοντο γοῶντες'). The repetition of lines here and the prefix 'ἀνα' allegorise the antistrophic singing of the Myrmidons as they repeat Achilles' sung laments. These will be the lyrics of love sung to the accompaniment of the Achillean 'χελυς'.

The Second Leaf of the Triptych: Homer's Notes

There is a possible word redivision in line 119 which can be thought to allude to a hitherto unbroached aspect of the main Arion narrative. In ignoring the metre, the word 'memoratus' could be reconfigured as 'me moratus' producing the clause 'quibus est me moratus Achilles' ('I would wish to avail of the thousand sounds by which Achilles detained me'). Achilles' detaining of Ovid alludes to the bewitching effect of Homer's words on the grounds that Homer's treatment of Achilles is both prolonged ('multi-tonal') and entrancing. In saying he has been 'forced to stop what he has been doing' by the Achilles story, Ovid must be aligning himself with the animals and rivers in the Arion story which stand stock still, enchanted by *Arion's* music. Particularly compelling is the vignette in line 85 where the arresting effect of Arion's voice deters the wolf from chasing the lamb ('... lupus est a voce

23 The same Double Dative construction is operative here ('that adamant ('fixity') be for an etymology to 'pectus' (i.e. via 'πηκτος')). Note that 'pectus' could also be a virtual transliteration of 'pectis' ('πηκτις' meaning 'a lyre'). That there was a tendency to transliterate the Greek iota into the Latin u may be demonstrated by the inscription of one Aeschines (AE 1922, 0135. 15) where the reverse tendency is in operation. The Latin 'Augustus' becomes ΑΥΓΙΣΤΙ in the Greek 'translation'.

retentus’). In fact all the animals and birds mentioned in lines 84-90 of the narrative also play a role within Homer’s Achilles narrative. Iliad book 22 is a particularly rich source of animal similes centring on the aggressor and the victim. Achilles’ is the dominant duellist. He is compared to a falcon swooping on a dove (22.139-140: ἤϋτε κίρκος ὄρεσφιν ἐλαφρότατος πετεηνῶν / ῥηϊδίως οἴμησε μετὰ τρήρωνα πέλειαν’). When Hector lies dying there is the famous vaunt from Achilles’ lips to the effect that lions cannot sit down to speak with men, nor wolves with lambs (22.262-264: ὥς οὐκ ἔστι λέουσι καὶ ἀνδράσιν ὄρκια πιστά, / οὐδὲ λύκοι τε καὶ ἄρνες ὁμόφρονα θυμὸν ἔχουσιν, / ἀλλὰ κακὰ φρονέουσι διαμπερὲς ἀλλήλοισιν’). This is the very point of view most at odds with the Fasti passage which extols the pacifying effect of Arion’s music on the relationship between even sworn bestial enemies. Book 22 begins with the Trojans being compared to fawns. Later Hector is depicted as a fawn in the sights of a hound (22.189-190: ὥς δ’ ὅτε νεβρὸν ὄρεσφι κύων ἐλάφοιο δίηται / ὄρσας ἐξ εὐνῆς διὰ τ’ ἄγκρα καὶ διὰ βήσας’).

However the culminating allusion between the Achilles aristeia and this episode of the Fasti comes at Iliad 21.22f where the smothering of the waters of the Scamander with men and weapons is compared to a dolphin of huge maw before whose onset the other fish seek out the innermost nooks underwater in a harbour of good anchorage only to be eaten when they are caught (21.22: ὥς δ’ ὑπὸ δελφίνος μεγακίτεος ἰχθύες ἄλλοι / φεύγοντες πιμπλάσι μυχοῦς λιμένος εὐόρμου / δειδιότες: μάλα γάρ τε κατεσθίει ὄν κε λάβησιν’). The pacified animal kingdom lulled into inaction by Orphean song is violently contrasted with the battles that Homer describes and which Ovid will need to draw on soon. At the same time the author has brought the dolphin out of its obscurity to cap all the other instances of predatoriness. Far from being one of the tamed aspects of nature the dolphin represents Achilles at his most overbearing.

Thus the ‘notes’ from Homer’s piteous singing about the carnage caused by Achilles’ aristeia may be, as it were, ‘harmonics’ that intersect with Ovid’s own thematic material. These notes may even be, as it were, an octave apart from the notes played by Ovid. Thus Achilles abjures the notion of predator ceasing to prey on its victims. Achilles is resolutely adamant (Iliad 16.33f) and as pitiless as the very un-elegiac ‘adamantine’ dolphin. On this note, Ovid’s line Fasti 2.84 may not be read simply and elegiacally, as ‘he [Arion] held back the running waters with his song’ which is the regular interpretation, as guaranteed by Horace Odes 1.12.9-10 in relation to Arion’s ‘alter ego’ Orpheus. For it is possible to translate the words as though Arion ‘were keeping the waters of rivers running’. The notion of the continuous flowing of a river reminds the reader of the Callimachean criticism of the bloated river-torrent of epic that flows like a juggernaut into the sea. In fact the two meanings of ‘currentes ... tenebat aquas’ neatly summarise the epic/elegiac bitonality of the ‘lyrical epic’ that is the Fasti. The holding up of the waters suggest the elegiac incantatory effect of the melodious lyre. The permitting of the waters to flow, by contrast, releases the vast and unstoppable epic side of the work. This ambivalence is present in the bifocality of ‘adamans’ in meaning ‘rock-like invincibility’ and ‘tender love’ both of which find their way into the poetics of Achilles’ lyre which sings of the glorious feeds of men (Book 9) but also piteously bewails Patroclus (Book 18). Achilles viz-a-viz Patroclus is himself by turns ‘adamant’ and ‘much-loving’. Even the dolphin of the Iliad is bitonal. It blocks up not the river itself but the harbour area thereby allowing, one assumes, the river itself to flow. The dolphin therefore becomes a totem of Ovid’s elegiac epic.

In summary, the suggestion then from a reading of the subtext of Fasti 2.119-120 is that Ovid has been charmed and beguiled by the Achilles episodes in Homer (‘Achilles

delayed me' = 'Achilles made me read to the end of his aristeia'). And indeed we have found many examples of Orpheus-like beguilement in the text. This tends to support the viability of seeking out and exploiting the sort of subtextual words we have been promoting in this article. As we have seen, it as if the subtextual Ovid is aligning himself alongside Arion's 'beguiled animals' in the supertext of *Fasti* 2.84-90. Just as the animals are rooted to the spot by the notes pouring from Arion's lyre so Ovid has been engrossed by the notes garnered both from the Homeric descriptions of Achilles ('the many-hollowed Dolphin') and (literally) from the silver lyre of Achilles in Books 9 and 18. Moreover Ovid will have been stunned by the thousand noises ('sonos') that are produced in the course of Achilles' aristeia. The colossal din produced at *Iliad* 21.9-11 is exceptional even by *Iliadic* standards ('έν δ' έπεσον μεγάλω πατάω, βράχε δ' αιπά ρέεθρα, / ὄχθαι δ' άμφι περι μεγάλ' ίαχον: οἱ δ' άλαλητῶ / έννεον ένθα και ένθα έλισσόμενοι περι δίνας'). We should also assume that some of the thousand sounds are Ovid's own as he is delayed by composing one of his longest star myths, anxious as he is to reflect and develop these Achillean themes in his text and subtext. If there are a thousand notes in the treatment of the Arion Achilleid then this makes the requirement for the same number in the following, apparently rather standard, panegyric, all the more intriguing. Just as intriguing will be the 'iron in the soul' wished for in line 120 (if the emendation gains any credibility). The indomitable, unconquerable nature and etymology of 'adamant'²⁴ will have transmitted itself to Ovid's sensibilities from Homer's treatment of the aristeia ('qualities with which the Achilles theme was recounted'). This unreflective, martial fervour, in being literally of epic proportions, will assist Ovid gaining a desired epicising foothold in the next narrative yet not at the expense of a wealth of subtle elegiac tones.

Our emendation of 'Maeonide, et pectori inesse adama[n]s' throws up one further such subtlety. The Greek word 'ivες' ('sinews') can be disengaged from 'pectori [i] vες (s)[e] adamas'. The doubling of a consonant such as that with which 'ivες' ends should not worry us unduly. For one thing we would hold that a provincial grasp of spelling becomes an aspect of Ovid's poetics of exile. Secondly one finds that provincial spelling under the Empire remains similar to Republican spelling in Rome. Thirdly an internal consonant was not doubled in Republican times, which means that 'inεsse' might have been spelt 'inεse' in any case. The spelling 'inεsse' could of course also represent a forgivable hypercorrection. There is also a 'littera communis' between 'pectori' and 'ivες'. The meaning will be the following: 'I would wish that I availed of a thousand notes, and that adamant constituted the sinews in my heart, by all of which Homer's Achilles delayed me or by which Achilles' story was recounted [by Homer]'. It seems the poet is arming himself to make a show of epic strength when the moment comes. The point about 'sinews' is that they would provide another epic helping hand to the woefully underpowered elegiac poet faced with extolling the emperor in regard to his most prized appointment. Sinews and adamant sit well together as symbols of indomitable, epic prowess.

In the final analysis, Ovid maybe saying that to adequately do justice to the following Nones he will need the full panoply of elegy and the martial fervour and indomitable mastery of the epic poet. Meanwhile, it will have struck the reader that the members of the animal and natural kingdoms, charmed by Arion, are little different from those beguiled by Orpheus with his lyre. In fact the lyre that is represented by Vega and its fellow-stars was thought by many sources to have been Orpheus' not Arion's (Hyginus 2.7)²⁵. Thus Ovid makes a clear gesture towards the mythical bard by retelling his 'finest performances' in the person of Arion. Orpheus effects on nature are recorded by e.g. Horace (the halting of rivers, winds, escorting

²⁴ See Ex Ponto 4.12.32 ('invicto ... adamante').

²⁵ Other candidates for ownership of the celestial lyre are Theseus, Thamyris, (Hyginus 2.6) and Hermes (Hyginus 2.7) Other candidates for the Dolphin are the pirates who held Dionysos (Hyginus 2.17 on Aglaosthenes) and the successful go-between for Poseidon in his suit of Amphitrite (*Fasti* 2. 81Hyginus 2.17 on Eratosthenes).

of oaks: Odes 1.12.9-10) and Virgil who speaks of Orpheus and Arion in the same breath as consummate tamers of nature ('Now let the wolf itself run from the sheep, let tough oaks bear golden apples, let alders flower like narcissi, let tamarisks exude thick amber from their bark, let shriek-owls vie with swans, let Tityrus be an Orpheus, an Orpheus in the woods, an Arion among the dolphins': Eclogues 8.1f). Another reason for bringing the image of Orpheus so clearly before the reader, is the fact that the nearby constellation of the Swan was thought by some sources to be the catasterised figure of Orpheus. Orpheus had been dismembered by the women of Ciconia, following which both he and his lyre were set among the stars²⁶.

Redivisions

Meanwhile one of the reconciliations that takes place in the Fasti occurs between the owl and the crow, two age-old enemies in the animal kingdom²⁷. The salient aspect of this episode is that it includes text that may be redivided more than once. At Fasti 2.89-90 'cum palladis alite' ('with the bird of Pallas Athene') could provide a gloss on the crow's cessation of hostilities ('sine lite') with the owl. This depends on one 'hearing' the phrase 'ā lite' instead of the textual 'ālīte' (i.e. 'away from dissension'), alongside the received translation²⁸. In the meantime we should remember that the 'cornix' or 'crow' had a reputation for uttering omens, or 'συμβολοι' in Greek. The crow's utterances when 'thrown together' ('συμβαλλω') or 'interpreted' gave advice (A.R.3.927-939; Callimachus Hymn to Apollo 105 and Hecale 260.17). In line 2.89 of the Fasti the crow is particularly talkative:

'sine lite loquax cum palladis alite cornix / sedit...'

'and the chattering crow sat down without contention with the bird of Pallas Athene'

In sitting, the crow apes the stance Arion will adopt when playing his swan-song on the lyre on the dolphin's back. The posture pre-enacts the future. However, we also suspect that Ovid is sequinning his text with references to Herodotus, his source. Herodotus uses the phrase 'ἐν τοῖσι ἐδωλίοισι' twice to mean on the 'ikria' or stern quarterdeck' where Arion was to sing. However the phrase also means 'on the seats' and suggests the places where guest travellers would have sat beyond the helmsman on the ikria. Now Hesychius also defines the term 'ἐδωλίον' as 'a rowers' bench'. As such these seats will be cross-planks of a sort and synonymous with 'ζυγα' ('benches') which we met earlier as the term for the crossbar of the lyre and the yoke of the chariot. Beneath the surface of the text we again find interconnections between words which bind even disparate parts of the narrative together.

We now turn to the redivision of the text, noting the change of three metrical lengths to accommodate the new words that emerge, and understanding a participial verb such as 'dicens' to complete the sense:

'et sine lite loquax 'CUM PALLĀ DĪ(S) (S)ĀLI [TE]' cornix / sedit'

'and without dissension the chattering crow sat down, [saying] 'WEALTHY ONE, WITH YOUR FORMAL ROBE [ON], PRESERVE YOURSELF IN SALT' or 'SUMPTUOUS AS YOU ARE IN YOUR FORMAL ROBE, EJECT YOURSELF'
²⁹or **'PRESERVE YOURSELF, YE GODS, IN YOUR FORMAL ROBE'**.

²⁶ Ps-Eratosthenes 24.140 where Orpheus' worship of Helios-Apollo is said to have angered Dionysus who subsequently set the Thracian women on the bard.

²⁷ Crows will habitually mob an owl that seems to be innocently trying to find a roost during daylight hours

²⁸ See Henri Le Bonniec's article 'les Fastes d'Ovide' in *Orpheus* 16 (1969)

²⁹ The verb 'salio' to leap has a transitive meaning as is shown by the inscription 'aquam ... in piscinam saliendam curavit' (CIL 9.4786.5: 'he saw to it that the water was made to gush or spurt into the pool'). Thus 'sali te' could mean 'make a spurt'

Normally the owl ('strix' or 'bubo') was considered a harbinger of doom (Aeneid 12.862; Pliny NH 10.16-18), while the crow had a reputation for uttering good omens (Livy 10.40)³⁰. On this occasion, both birds sing from the same subliminal songsheet: one speaks - the chatty crow - while the other, the owl of Athene the weaver, provides interwoven words from within its text. The message is clearly for Arion (the imperative 'sali' is singular). He is to jump off the ship dressed in his purple robe. The insistence on the robe means that Arion has to suggest singing a swansong as a pretext for donning the robe. He will be 'preserved in salt' where 'salt' means 'sea' but it is a sea that also taps in to the preserving power of desiccated salt which is abundant, if in solution, in the sea.

In our redivided line, we see the 'palla' which is the robe Arion dons in a few moments time (line 107) before 'leaping' ('desilit' line 111) into the preserving salt³¹, that is 'into the midst of the waves' ('in medias...undas' line 111). Meanwhile we already know Arion is rich ('dis') from line 96 (...quaesitas arte ferebat opes...). He needs a ship to transport his wealth back home. The 'palla' has been dyed twice in Tyrian purple making it particularly costly and comparable to Apollo's garb we saw earlier which was heavily infused with purple dye ('saturata'). Moreover 'dis' can also mean 'richly endowed with mental qualities' and we should take this on board as a hidden compliment to Arion's skill as a musician. In sum, the joint efforts ('sine lite') of crow and owl have produced a procedure by which Arion is to extricate himself from his predicament. And Arion is too 'richly endowed with mental qualities' not to take the hint.

Now when 'alite' 'becomes' 'a lite' we will be witnessing a second reformulation of letters, and this one gives rise to a minor etymological 'excursus', namely that 'a bird' ('alite') derives its character 'from' ('a') 'dissension' ('lite'). At Aeneid 4.463 we know that the 'bubo' itself ('owl') was a querulous bird ('saepe queri...') and 'queror' is a verb used of making an official complaint in court. The word 'querula' meanwhile comes to mean 'a difference of opinion' and the word 'lis' itself means 'a dispute at law' and 'disagreement'. Our point however is that all birds had a reputation for querulousness in Latin (Ovid Amores 3.1.4, Horace Epodes 2.26), so our word 'alite' can be also understood here as a generic noun, which has been deconstructed into its component parts to reveal its etymology. This is another example of live 'enodatio' where a word's roots are 'unknotted' ('alite' = 'a lite') with the immediate context ('sine lite') sanctioning the result. Moreover a bird's 'complaints' were traditionally 'untutored' or 'unmetrical'³² which allows us to feel more confidence in looking for (their) unmetrical outpourings amidst Ovid's metrical text, especially here where the subject of birds forms the 'materia' of the text.

The word used for the 'ship' in the story is almost exclusively 'puppis' (lines 95, 101, and 112). And this is not used generically of 'ship' but specifically of 'stern' at 101, where the pirates are told by Ovid to get back to their position - at the 'stern', where a sailor steered the ship by manoeuvring the 'clavus' (Cic. Fam.9.15.3). The 'clavus' was the tiller, a detachable handle with a round hole at one allowing it to be slid down along the tapering handle of the steering-oar. The tiller³³ was also known as the 'ansa' (Vitruvius 10.3.5) or 'οἰαξ'. The ancients were amazed at the capacity of a small piece of wood to control a huge ship (Lucian Navigia 6). The Viking Vorsa rudder was said to be manoeuvrable by a single finger laid on the tiller. This focuses our attention on 'Ovid's observation that the helmsman, in abandoning the helm to pick up a sword, is guilty of assuming 'arms' or 'implements' that should not be held *by his fingers*. This cleverly implies that fingers were all that were needed

³⁰ See Cicero's death in Plutarch however, portended by a crow

³¹ Salt was even more of a 'preservative' for the ancients than it is for us. Many towns in Romania are named after salt mines ('Ocna').

³² See Tristia 3.12.8 'indocilique loquax gutture vernat avis'

³³ See O. Crumlin-Pedersen 'Two Danish Side Rudders' MM 32 (1966) pp.251-261.

to control the ‘clavus’ which, as well as meaning helm, also means (like ‘arma’) ‘[practice] sword’. Thus, one ‘harmless weapon’ or ‘implement’ is being abandoned in favour of an offensive weapon. The ‘clavus’ was also the term used of a stripe of purple dye on a quite different formal robe to the ‘palla’. This was the toga worn by senatorial-ranked Romans and its presence in the wings of the text gives ‘clavus’ a double-dyed allusiveness, just as the ‘palla’ was literally double dyed. Meanwhile, in Aratus, the ‘stern’ is the ‘κορωνή’ (line 345) which the sailors are now accused of failing to control (‘dubiam ... puppem’). Furthermore, the word for ‘garland’ is also ‘κορωνή’ (‘κορωνή’ = ‘corona’; Lewis & Short s.v. ‘κορωνή’ II, 6/7). Ironically then, when Arion takes the ‘garland’ as the formal sign that he is about to perform (just as Apollo takes the laurel in the *Metamorphoses*), he is symbolically taking control of the ‘stern’ of the ship which was the point from which the ship was steered. Arion is now, appearances notwithstanding, the person at the helm (in two senses). And ‘κορωνή’ was also the ‘climax’ of an arts festival, a climax which in this case is the ‘swansong’ that seemed likely to constitute the final encore not only of Arion’s tour of Southern Italy and Sicily, but also of the wider ‘arts festival’ that constituted Arion’s life as a travelling minstrel. Yet the principal meaning of ‘κορωνή’ is ‘crow’ or ‘raven’ which brings us back to the ‘chorus’ of this section - the crow - whose words are ‘taken up’ or ‘taken on board’, as it were, (‘capit...coronam’) by Arion, and whose ‘omen’ saves Arion’s life. The ‘swords’ (‘ense...gladio...haec arma’) which the sailors ‘take up’ are in fact countered by Arion in the sense that ‘Ἀρείον’ (= ‘Arion’ transliterated) was the synonym of a small plant called a ‘ξίφιον’ which any Greek would immediately relate etymologically to ‘a little sword’.

There is a lot further one could go down this associative road. The simile of the swan introduces much more than just an image to reflect the performance of a dying musician. The Greek word for ‘olor’ (‘swan’) is ‘κυκνος’ and indeed Ovid could have used the direct equivalent of this in Latin viz. ‘cygnus’. We should learn to be suspicious of Ovid’s motives when he avoids the obvious Latin counterpart of a Greek word in favour of that Latin word’s synonym. The word ‘κυκνος’ itself means (also) ‘bard’ or ‘minstrel’. This subtextual coincidence (‘swan’ and ‘bard’) provides a subliminal link between Arion and the swan simile. But ‘κυκνος’ is also used of a ‘ship’ in the sense that, like a swan, a ship has a curving neck. According to Liddell and Scott (s.v. ‘κυκνος’) it is the S-shaped prow of a ship that inspires this convergence of shape between ‘swan’ and ‘ship’. But it could just as easily be the ‘stern’ or the ‘puppis’ (‘recurvam...puppem’: Met 8.141) which is where Arion must have taken his stand before his plunge for the following reasons:

- (a) it had been abandoned by the sailors
- (b) Arion’s dive splashes the stern (line 112) and
- (c) Arion symbolically holds the ‘corona’, which in its Graecised form is ‘κορωνή’ (= ‘stern’), in his hand.

So the swan has close verbal links to Arion and his ship and the part of the ship where he sits. Furthermore, as we have seen, ‘κορωνή’ also means the ‘handle of a door’ which is also the meaning of ‘ansa’ in Latin. Yet ‘ansa’ is, as we have seen, is also the ‘tiller’. Thus here we have another route which leads to Arion’s control over the ship’s stern. Given these connections, it is not impossible that Ovid could have had in mind the following, somewhat looser, subtextual thread: namely that the words ‘anser’ and ‘ansa’, lying hitherto unseen and ‘unheard’ beneath the text, are sending up sonar echoes of each other. For the word ‘anser’ can mean ‘goose’³⁴ and a goose’s head was the shape given to the finial attached to the end of the ‘aplustre’ or ‘stern decoration’. This connection now illuminates the references to a double curve in ‘recurvo’ in its application to the back of the dolphin. That is, Arion will be leaping from the area of the aplustre which will duplicate the ‘S’ curve of the dolphin’s back

³⁴ Ovid is always concerned to exploit the subtextual, subliminal links that bind his work together.

(Met 8.141 above). Without the 'aplustre', the stern sports only a single, simple 'curve' ('curvo'). Yet even with the aplustre and the goose's head, the stern in normal circumstances, will only create a single curve, as demonstrated on e.g. the Francois Vase. The double ('S') curve will only become manifest when the ship is facing a head wind which will catch the flimsy top planks or 'goose's head of the 'aplustre' and blow them backwards. The effect is well captured in Casson (1995) at figure 141 where a stationary boat finds an offshore wind troubling the 'aplustre' in the bottom left-hand corner of the scene. This now explains the author's concerned warnings to the crew. The ship must be moving about erratically in a headwind which creates the 'S' curve at the stern. Meanwhile the swan's presence in the text strengthens the dynamic towards a double-curved neck of the stern. Since a swan is an 'Amyclaeus anser' (Amyclaeon goose') we are entitled to seek a strengthening of our thematic double curves by the alignment of our ship with those ships that have a goose finial such as appear on Trajan's column. From 'anser' we are taken by paronomasia to 'ansa' the tiller at the stern which then feeds into 'clavus' ('tiller') and on to the presence of formal purple-dyed costumes on the stern.

However there is a broader reason why Ovid is so anxious to insinuate sinuosity into Arion's ship's stern. The dolphin receives Arion on his back in front of his double-curving tail which ensures a smooth transition for the bard who has just left the backward curving stern ('tergo...recurvo': Fasti 2.113; 'recurvam ... puppem': Met 8.141). Now when Ovid says the event was 'greater than could be believed' ('fide maius': Fasti 2.113) we can surreptitiously understand the words as referring also to the sinuous shape of the lyre which Arion has been holding. 'Fides' means 'belief' but also 'lyre'³⁵. And 'maius' ('more greatly') could be construed closely with 'recurvo' which describes the dolphin's back. In other words the dolphin's back is now 'more (greatly) back-curving than the lyre' (sc. 'fide maius recurvo'). And we know the shape of the 'barbiton' lyre was 'curved' but scarcely 'back-curving' (Horace Carmina 1.10.6: 'curvae...lyrae parentem')³⁶. At the same time however most photographs of leaping dolphins reveal its profile to be simply curve-shaped than sinuous. However the dolphin can twist its body to create an 'S'-shaped contour. That is, the dolphin, as Ovid implies, is more backward-curving than common belief would suggest ('fide maius recurvo'). Thus both subtextual reinterpretations of the three-word phrase are true.

Now Arion had dived into the middle of the waves³⁷. A curious detail involves the sprinkling of the blue stern with water thrown up by the splash made by Arion's heavy fall. In our view the entry of Arion into the water will allegorise a celestial setting of a star or constellation. Famous men, then as now, were termed 'stars'. We should not then be surprised at seeing them exhibit star-like behaviour.³⁸ Arion's fall will involve the onlookers seeing a mass of purple blowing with the wind towards the rear horizon. This flurry of movement from the 'palla' will represent the approaching sunset. Arion must be thought to jump directly off the back of the ship by the 'aplustre' so that he strikes the waters that lie below the centre of the ship³⁹. That is he does not leap into the waters to the side of the ship.

³⁵ See Carole Newlands (1995) p.180 note 17 who first noticed this pun without however integrating the phrase 'fide maius' into the syntax of the surrounding sentence.

³⁶ Unlike the traditional tortoise-shell lyre ('χελυς') which appears to have sinuous arms in Greek Vase paintings. See Apollo and the Muses, Musée du Louvre, Paris K570 by Asteas

³⁷ In an article written last year ('Crows and Cormorants') we tried to show that the Lucretian redefinition of a fluctus as an 'S'-shaped oscillation through a woman's body is not picked up by his contemporary Cicero who holds that the standard shape of the wave before breaking was a single open oval. In Cicero's opinion the sea-wave is the same shape as the neck garland termed a 'hypothumis'

³⁸ When Ovid mentions a star entering the sea we should suppose he refers to the star's actual (morning or evening) setting. When, by contrast, he speaks of a star being lost to human sight he should be thought to refer to a star's apparent (morning or evening) setting. Likewise when a star rises from the sea this will represent its actual rising, as opposed to it becoming visible above the horizon (its morning or evening apparent rising).

³⁹ Note that the phrase 'capit coronam' could also mean 'he occupies the end of the stern'

This is the sense in which he leaps into the ‘waters in the middle’. His closeness to the ‘S’-shaped ‘aplustre’ should lead us to consider the etymology of the ‘aplustre’ as given by Festus (10: ‘navium ornamenta... erant amplius quam necessaria’). He derives the word from ‘amplus’ (‘excessive’ ‘of great dimensions’) and ‘illustro’ (‘I embellish’). Wearing a doubly-dyed (and therefore excessively-dyed) performer’s gown, Arion is described as ‘ornatus’ which alludes directly to his ‘excessive embellishment’. Meanwhile the adjective purple, as well as describing a colour that symbolised (excessive) wealth and royalty, also bore the meaning ‘shining’⁴⁰. There is then another reference here through verbs such as ‘illustro’ (‘I shine upon’) to the suffix of ‘aplustre’.

Now the trajectory of Arion’s dive will render him invisible as soon as he leaps. This equates to the ‘apparent setting’ of a star or constellation which will have made an appearance on the western horizon 45 minutes after sunset only to set almost at once. This explains the role of ‘protinus’ in the text (2.111). No sooner had the [properly-dressed] ‘star’ Arion appeared against the darkening sky than he was gone into the ocean. To explain the astronomical angle a little further, on successive nights the same star (like all stars day-by-day) arrives in the same place 4 minutes earlier, by which time however the sky will not yet be dark enough to allow the star to be visible. Thus the relevant star will set without being seen from Earth. This articulates another aspect of the story. For when the crew saw Arion flying off the stern past the ‘shining’ and ‘purple’ aplustre they were not expecting his star to rise again any time soon.

Returning to the relevant star’s visible setting on the previous evening, its brief appearance will be accompanied by the appearance of slightly less luminous stars that are nevertheless higher in the sky and further from the residual light of the invisible Sun. Thus the setting of the ‘star’ Arion will coincide with the casting of a sprinkling of lesser stars onto the night sky at a slightly higher level. This celestial phenomenon is transformed by the poet into the splashing of tiny drops of foam higher up over the ‘dark-blue’ (‘night-sky-blue’) ship’s stern. On an imaginative level then the results of a heavy fall into cresting waves on the part of a terrestrial ‘star’ could be thought to allegorise the sudden appearance of a smattering of foam-like (actual) stars across the expanse of blue sky immediately above. An ancient ship’s prow was regularly thought to be blue-painted (‘κυανοπρωρος’: Iliad 5.693) and we may suppose the same went for the stern. The details of his vignette have much in common with the arrival of Titan’s ‘purple’ horses on the western horizon. The purple, like Arion’s cloak, reflects the sky at sundown. The ‘iuga’ with its stars is decoupled from the horses just before the chariot sets. Rather than Lyra, it is the constellation ‘Delphinus’, with its two strings of slightly curving stars that represents the abandoned ‘iugum’. It is on the point of setting as the sun enters Oceanus⁴¹.

If one consults the planetarium Stellarium on the night of February 2nd when our story begins (2.73) and if one assumes it is 10CE when Ovid was thought to be in Tomis, one will see that, at the moment when stars become visible, at least 45 minutes after sunset, most of crossbar that we have identified as emerging from the stars of Delphinus will have set (Pliny 18.219). By contrast Vega will still be a long way from its setting. Now Ovid cunningly allows it to appear that Vega and its lyre have set. He introduces a star-gazer who is scanning the skies in Rome looking for Vega. This amateur astronomer is puzzled. He saw Lyra shining yesterday but cannot now locate it. Yet we know it is reasonably high in the sky. The explanation in our opinion derives from Vega’s widely acknowledged variability in luminosity. Either this was much greater in ancient times or the ancient eye was vastly more

⁴⁰ There is an omen here which has been filtering through the entire text namely that too much ostentation may be counterproductive. A single diamond on one’s lyre may be enough.

⁴¹ There may be a sense in which the ‘iugum’ is to be related to the iugum that oxen wore when pulling the plough. Such ‘iuga’ were left behind on the field when the day’s ploughing was done

sensitive to gradations of stellar luminosity or the ambient light of modern civilisation makes it impossible now for the naked eye to appreciate nuances in the photometric variability of celestial objects⁴². It is estimated that the period of Vega's variability is as short as 4.56 hours (0.19 of a day). Thus it is highly possible that a star-gazer from night to night may find Vega difficult to locate by reference to its brightness. After 23 hours and 56 minutes, our Roman star-gazer would expect to see Vega return to the same point in the night sky. However, having been at maximum brightness just after sunset on February 1st it will now be around 2.2 hours of an hour into a 4.56 hour period of photometric variability. It will be only be around 0.08 of an hour (4.8 minutes) away from its moment of minimum brightness assuming the period of variability to be symmetrical. It will not appear to be the shining star of yesterday. Indeed it will not appear, full-stop.

We can reconstruct from this a few minutes in the life of an ancient star-gazer. At 16.20:50 UTC on February 2nd 10 CE this person notices the sun begin to set in the west. They know that in 45 minutes time they will begin to see the stars appear in the night sky. They next gaze heavenwards at 17.05.50 UTC (or so) to the point in the sky where they had seen Vega well above the horizon at around the same time the previous evening, 45 minutes after sunset. They know Vega could not yet have set having been so far above the horizon 24 hours earlier. As the fifth brightest star in the heavens Vega is well placed to be visible at the expiration of the period of 45 minutes between the sun's setting and the sufficient darkening of the skies for stars to be visible. Minutes pass. At 17.17.20, 11.5 minutes later, as this person continues to scan Vega's area of the sky, their attention is suddenly drawn to the appearance of a star to the right but so low on the horizon that almost in the same moment that it becomes visible it sets at 17.17.20. The star is the double star Zeta Herculis, the brightest of those stars of the constellation Hercules that are still above the horizon 56.5 minutes after the sun sets on this date⁴³. With a visual magnitude of 2.81 it is the first star to appear that evening in that quarter of the sky. Meanwhile, during the 11.5 minutes following sunset during which the star-gazer had been scouring the skies looking in vain for Vega, Vega had reached its minimum luminosity at around 17.10.38. By the time Zeta Herculis sets, Vega will have turned the corner and find itself 6 minutes 42 seconds along the road that leads back to maximum brightness.

This all means that Vega was less bright than Zeta Herculis on that date. Indeed when Zeta Herculis 'splashes into the sea' at 17.17.20 we may decide that Vega will constitute the allegorical referent of one the specks of sea foam that sprinkle Arion's ship when he throws himself overboard. That is, the star-gazer will suddenly see a faint trace of the brightening Vega at 17.17.20. This will also mean that the binary star Zeta Herculis corresponds to the figure of Arion. Its oneness is belied by a duality which allegorises the elegiac-epic bitonality of the *Fasti*. In conclusion, if the average brightness of Vega today is 0.026 we seem to be suggesting Vega once experienced a vertiginous oscillation in its luminosity.

Now the star-gazer who notices Zeta Herculis setting seems to have in mind a star that is half-way down the back of the constellation Leo (2.77-79: 'medii quoque terga leonis / ... mersa notabit'). Yet Leo is still well above the North-Eastern horizon. Nor is it very close to the sector we are dealing with. The point must be that the star-gazer is describing Zeta

⁴² See the online essay 'The Brightest Stars 2019: '2007ASPC... 64...305G, reviewing the history of α Lyr photometry, considers modest variability likely (and indeed α Lyr is classified at AAVSO(VSX) as a low-amplitude δ Sct variable, with period 0.19 d). See also (a) Wikipedia 'Vega', (b) Cox, Arthur N., ed. (1999) *Allen's Astrophysical Qualities* (4th ed.). New York: Springer-Verlag. p. 382 [on Vega] ' $\pm 2.8\%$ luminosity variation' (c) Samus, N. N.; Durlевич, O. V.; et al. (2009) 'VizieR Online Data Catalog: General Catalogue of Variable Stars (Samus+ 2007-2013)' where the apparent magnitude of the star oscillates between -0.02 and $+0.07$. The regular magnitude is given as $+0.026$. Thus its period of variability shows a symmetry of brighter and fainter maximum readings viz-az-viz the mean

⁴³ The star Epsilon Herculis to the left of Zeta would be expected to be brighter given that its Greek identifying letter, Epsilon, comes earlier in the alphabet than Zeta. Unfortunately the stars of Hercules do not follow the normal rule.

Herculis in words that only *appear* to point to the constellation Leo. For Hercules is regularly depicted as wearing the lion skin he has won from the Nemean Lion. The word ‘terga’ (‘back’) also means ‘lion-skin’. Thus Zeta Herculis can be defined as being *on the lion-skin half-way down* the figure of Hercules which is ironically a position that lies on the front, not *back*, of Hercules’ torso. In other words, Ovid is setting us to test our powers of observation (both textual and astronomical). Meanwhile, thanks to our misconception of Ovid’s intentions we have tended to assume Ovid is poorly informed about the night sky. Nothing could be further from the truth.

A postscript

There are a few loose ends to tie up before we leave Arion and the Dolphin. The serpentine story involves a comparison of Arion to a swan. The swan was, like the crow, a harbinger of good omens in Latin Literature, most memorably in the Aeneid when 12 of them portended the safe arrival of Aeneas’ 12 lost ships into harbour (Aeneid 1.393). Macer also mentions that the swan is ‘in auspiciis semper laetissimus ales’ (poet.4). So the figurative appearance of the swan is, as it were, an omen of ‘good omens’ within the text. Its presence is a subliminal indicator (an ‘omen’) that the crow’s omen is about to be brought to happy fruition. And Arion fulfils the terms of the prediction by leaping into the waves.

Secondly, in line 83 the words ...nescit Ariona tellus...’ seem to us to contain another redivided text in which the word ‘cit[h]arion’ should be considered a transliteration of a genitive plural:

‘... nesCIT(H)ARIO(N) NATellus...’ namely ‘O son (‘nate’) of the citharas’ (κιθαρῶν)’. Here Ovid assigns an honorific title to his famous predecessor in the art of elegy.

Thirdly, Ovid records the Dolphin’s setting as being on the 3rd February. Stellarium records that on that evening at exactly 17.7.20 Al Salib, the northernmost star of Delphinus is securely below the horizon 45 minutes after sunset (16.22.20). Thus it can be said to have fled from our sight on that date (2.80-81). The previous night the same star had appeared above the horizon at 17.5.20, 45 minutes after the sun had set at 16.20.2, meaning that its constellation, as a whole, could still be said to be visible to our eyes. To clarify the apparent setting of this star will be on 2.2.10 since an apparent setting is defined as being the date when the star is last visible on a day-to-day basis 45 minutes after sunset. It can only be said to have disappeared from view (‘be invisible’) beginning from the following night onwards. Far from being slapdash about astronomical detail, Ovid is very punctilious.

Fourthly, we have adopted the premise in studying the Arion myth that the author is writing all or part of the story in exile. Our reasons come mainly from line 2.76. The words of the star-gazer and their attitude of prayer give us to suppose that they have much in common with the speaker of the line Tristia 1.7.10. (‘quam procul a nobis Naso sodalis abest’; ‘how far away from us is our fellow-worshipper or society member!’ [Ovid]). In a quiet moment this former companion of Ovid’s reflects on the absence of a ‘sodalis’, a member of their social group. A similar moment is captured at Tristia 5.3.34 when a fellow Bacchus worshipper is imagined to address the entire company around the society’s altar with the words ‘nescioquis nostri cultor abest (‘one or other of our company is missing’). The last example is the most interesting since it suggests that societies observed a formal moment of remembrance and calling-to-mind of perhaps the deceased members of the society. As someone living out a living death in the Tomitan Underworld, Ovid will be keen to regard this moment as one which contributes to his poetics of exile. Meanwhile the certainty as to

who is absent is certainly formulaic and allows the society to commemorate either all past members at the same time or one specific individual.

In the example of this phenomenon drawn from the Arion Myth the caller-to-mind uses a form of words that perhaps suggest the danger of Ovid's friends revealing their allegiance to the author in the early years of Ovid's exile. The star-gazer indulges in a spot of allegory. He remarks to himself but also to anyone listening (these remarks are clearly uttered) that a lyre that once shone so brightly 'yesterday' is nowhere to be seen. This alludes to Ovid, once the most famous poet in Rome, whose talent had soared. Perhaps Ovid had also been a regular leading light ('he had shone') in the relevant astronomical or literary gatherings. Clearly however there is also a reference to Arion the global superstar whose dolphin story was probably (and improbably) claimed by more than one ocean since the main question is not whether there is any country that is not familiar with Arion (any country where he had not been on tour) but whether any ocean had not made his acquaintance in claiming the dolphin episode as theirs⁴⁴.

Fifthly, there is a redivided text at line 109 of the *Fasti* [as emended, see below]: 'canens veluti ... ([the swan], singing harsh metrical notes ... 'with a pig in the mud ('sue luti)'). The constellation of the Dolphin was formerly known as the pig or SHAH constellation in ancient Sumeria.

Lastly and most importantly, all the astronomical data presented here seem to fit Ovid's words very precisely. The setting of Delfinus on 2.2.10, its period of invisibility starting from 2.3.10 onwards, the setting of Zeta Herculis during the search for Vega on 2.2.10, the presence on the horizon of the 'crossbar-like' image of Delphinus on 2.2.10, representing the yoke that the Sun had just uncoupled from his purple horses at sunset just before entering Oceanus. The problem is that all this data has been collected from a single point on the Earth's surface. That point is not Rome, it is not Tomis, it is not Alexandria. It could theoretically be a point near Huntingdon in the UK but the British Isles were not part of the Roman Empire in that era (10 AD). Our location for all this data is in fact a double-sized Roman fort that was set up at the modern settlement of Vechten in the Netherlands. It was named Fectio by the Romans, and, since it is practically a suburb of the modern city of Utrecht, the fort's foundation date of 5AD was adopted as the foundation date of Utrecht itself when it celebrated 2,000 years of its existence in 2005 AD. A strange dilemma presents itself. Either our data or our interpretation of that data in relation to Ovid's text, are wrong. Or Ovid was speaking in exile from a 4-year-old, town-sized fort in the Netherlands, and Tomis is a literary recreation of Vectio in modern Romania. Or Ovid had some other reason for making Fectio the location of his star-gazer of *Fasti* 2.75-78

The evidence for the Roman name of the site derives from a dedicatory altar (CIL XIII 8815). Most intriguingly it is named 'Fictione' by the Anonymus Ravenna. Etymologically this would mean 'by way of a pretence' 'by an invention' 'from the coining of a word or phrase' ('Fectio?'). A recent study suggests the settlement already existed by the time of Tiberius' operations on the Elbe in 5 AD. We think the use of its name was a literary legerdemain on the part of Ovid designed to both authenticate the astronomical data required to piece his narrative together and to reassure his readers that the story derives in a highly Fastian, etymological way, from 'fiction' ('Fectio' = 'Fictione').

Appendix: the Swan: *Fasti* 2.109-110

⁴⁴ Note *Tristia* 3.14.37-40 where Ovid decries the lack of books in Tomis. Books, he says, provide intellectual stimulation ('alar') but they also lead to one being 'invited' ('inviter') to participate in the recitations ('recitem') held as part of social events organised by intellectual circles. Such circles are alluded to cryptically at *Fasti* 2.76. Ironically Ovid attends a Getic recitation where he reads out his poem composed in Getic (*Ex Ponto* 4. 13.33)

As we have seen, Apollo is Arion's model as a lyre-player. But the two were also connected through the figure of the dolphin was the symbol of the god from its etymological link to Delphi, Apollo's oracle. However at *Fasti* 2.109, another type of creature becomes a referent for Arion as the latter prepares to play his swan-song. Naturally this is the swan itself. However, the poem's modulation to the swan simile is dictated as much by the presence of the Swan constellation near the Lyre and Delphinus as by any appositeness of the the swan-song image to Arion's last hurrah. The ever-imminent celestial collision between the Arrow and the Swan's approaching right wing will have focused Ovid's attention on producing an aition for that part of the sky. The impact of the Arrow on the Swan's wing will take place in front of Delphinus. The couplet that articulates the image of Arion as a swan will repay further study:

**'flebilibus numeris veluti canentia dura / traiectus penna tempora cantat olor'
 'just as the swan pierced by a cruel arrow through its greying temples sings in
 elegiac measures'**

In the night sky, Cygnus, or *κυκνος*, flies in very close proximity to Lyra. However it is the 'penna' or 'arrow' that most occupies our interest. The image presented by the text at this point strikes an unexpectedly harrowing note. A swan has suffered the agony of being shot through the temples by an arrow. As it passes away, it sings its swan-song. This is supposed to reflect the plight of Arion as he sings his last 'high-pitched melody' in elegiac couplets ('ὁ ὀρθίος νομός': Herodotus 1.24.5), before drowning himself. However all is not as it seems. In the heavens, 45 minutes after sunset, the constellation 'Sagitta', the arrow, sets not far from Cygnus, the Swan, which however is still fully above the horizon. The arrow is not lodged in Cygnus' head. Rather it is poised to pass alongside the swan's temples. Now the word 'traiectus', according to Cicero's usage at *De Finibus* 4.22, could mean in the context of arrows or javelins 'to fire alongside'. This seems to summarise the night sky's conformation adequately with the arrow harmlessly passing *alongside* the swan's temples⁴⁵. This disjunction between the celestial 'data' and the myth as recounted by Ovid makes us uneasy. Meanwhile, the coincidence of 'tempora' and 'dura' appearing in the same couplet yet not being connected grammatically seems unlike an ancient poet. This is compounded by 'pennam' ('wing' or 'plumage') being used in a highly unusual (and therefore obtrusive) sense ('arrow') in a passage where the normal sense would be expected ('wing, feather'). Nowhere else is 'penna' used purely of an arrow. At *Metamorphoses* 6.258 the word is used of the fletching at the neck of an arrow. At the same time of course nothing prevents Ovid now using 'penna' as synecdoche for 'an arrow'. As we shall see, Ovid is poised to have his cake and eat it in this regard.

In general, the above considerations give us to suspect that the text may not be sound. Further doubt is occasioned by the very fact that Virgil (*Aeneid* 9.418) had described the penetration of both temples by a spear just as Statius was to do later in reference to an arrow (*Thebaid* 9.761). The problem with scribes is that, faced with an awkward text, they will reduce its narrative to a reading with which they are familiar. Textual critics of the modern era are hardly less guilty of this refuge-taking in a 'previously documented' reading. In our emended version, through a spondeiazon followed by a dactylic denouement, the arresting effects of an ageing bird being wounded *in the wing* followed by its sudden descent to earth, are expressed. Elisions and feminine caesuras speed the descent of the bird. In the meantime, we would point out that if the movements of the celestial arrow and celestial Cygnus are extrapolated there is nothing to prevent the arrow striking the swan's wing. Indeed the swan

⁴⁵ It may however strike the Swan's wing if the Swan moves into the arrow's trajectory.

is flying full tilt into the path of the arrow such that it seems unlikely the arrow is going to miss. Ovid is concerned throughout to preserve the naturalism of the night sky as it is and as it evolves. We begin by translating only the initial participial phrase:

**'pennam et tempora dura canens, veluti traiectus /
est canentem olor in flebilibus numeris'⁴⁶**

**'just as, while sounding forth as to its wing and prophesying hard times *or*
'whilst prophesying as to its wing and uttering harsh syllables *or* singing of bitter times
and proclaiming defeat 'or' sounding as to its wing and as to its harsh temples'⁴⁷**

The phrase 'pennam et tempora dura canens' exhibits a striking zeugma. On the one hand the swan produces bitter inarticulate sounds ('uttering harsh syllables') which in expressing unverballed pain are highly elegiac and highly appropriate to the metre's historical and etymological character. For, the origins of elegy were thought to lie in the unintelligible expression of raw suffering, such that the etymology of the word was imagined to be 'ε, ε, λεγειν' ('to cry ah! ah!'). The fact that animals cannot verbalise their pain make them useful conduits of literary-cum-etymological treatments of elegy. Yet birds in particular were thought to be able to convey oracular meaning, for the ancients practised ornithomancy ('divination based on bird behaviour')⁴⁸. Particularly striking is the testimony of the Hebrew savant Nachmanides who discusses divination in his commentary on the Torah. He understands the biblical term 'nahash' to mean 'ornithomancy' ... [divination] by looking at the wings of the birds [in flight] or by listening to their chirping'⁴⁹. The scholar goes on to say 'they tell ... only of events that are about to happen. Some make them known by utterance of **bitter sounds** [resembling wailing] over the dead, and some **by spreading their wings**'. Now in our text the swan, alongside the uttering of guttural sounds, is also *sounding as to its wing* ('pennam ... canens'). Meanwhile, the constellation of Cygnus is depicted with its wings fully spread. Now the elisions within 'penn [am] et' and 'canent [em] olor' also allow us to *hear* 'pennam' and 'canentem' as a nexus in the ablative ('penna' and 'canenti' as it were). This brings us back to the nexus 'sounding as to its [greying] wing' which could also now be heard as '**prophesying with its greying wing**' or '**producing a sound from or with its greying wing**'. This will also bring us to Ovid's interest in didactic asides. It will be no surprise to aficionados of Mute Swans that their wings make a distinct creaking noise in flight. This had been identified by Virgil in the Aeneid in the same context of swans providing omens (1.393 & 397: '... bis senos cynos... // ... illi ludunt **stridentibus alis**'). Even the slightest creaking of a dove's wing is an omen that strikes fear into the exiled Ovid

⁴⁶ See Ovid Amores 1.1.27 for 'in' with 'numeris' in the ablative. There 'numeris' means 'feet' within a highly programmatic poem that plays an important role in the history of elegiac poetry. This precedent allows us to assume that there are 'lamentable feet' in Ovid's couplet under discussion here.

⁴⁷ It is thought by some that it may be the regular sound of air entering the Mute Swan's lungs (in synchronisation with the wings flapping) that produces the creaking sound, not the wings themselves. See the following reply to a BBC TV Springwatch thread (where interestingly even the experts admit ignorance): 'My husband believes it is the airflow in the airways which causes a synchronous grunt with the wing beat'. Our point is that Lucretius describes as 'templa' the areas of the mouth, throat (DRN 4.624) lungs (DRN 5.103: 'in pectus ac templa mentis' where 'templa mentis' perhaps glosses 'pectus') or cranial area (if 'templa mentis' refers to the head). Cicero, at around the same time, tries to accommodate 'templa' to the meaning of 'tempora' in the sense of ('hollow') 'head temples' (see our book *Disiecta Membra* 2019 for a full discussion). Ovid covers all bases in the *Fasti* by suggesting the sound produced by the swan could originate in the hollows of the head (the 'hard' or 'bony' sinuses or 'templa') or in the movement of the wings. And of course he must be right.

⁴⁸ It is worth noting that Augustus' name (as an adjective) was thought to derive from 'the behaviour of birds' (Paulus Festus 1: 'augustus locus sanctus ab avium gestu').

⁴⁹ Ramban, Commentary on the Torah. Deuteronomy, translated and annotated with index by Ch.B. Chavel, New York 1976, p. 216.

(Tristia 1.1.75: ‘minmio pennae stridore’). Whatever the case, any sound produced by (otherwise) *mute* Swans is likely to be highly oracular.

Meanwhile just as oracles (and oracular swans) produce more than one meaning so our oracular text here is polysemantic. Thus the ‘prophesying of hard times’ (‘tempora dura canens’) can be interpreted as a gloss on the meaning ‘creaking as to its wing’ (‘pennam canens’) which now becomes more than an aural phenomenon. The creaking prefigures, or is interpreted as prefiguring, misfortune (‘tempora dura’). At the same time, this alternative meaning provides internal evidence from the text of swan sounds being used for ornithomancy. The swans’ bitter sounds and meanings meanwhile are transmitted through ‘tearful rhythms or strains’ (‘flebilibus numeris’). As the Mute Swan flies, the harsh creaking of its wing will follow a rhythm which will allegorise the conventionally ‘sad’ strains of the elegiac couplet within which the swan is also made to express itself here. Alongside this allegorical aspect there may also be a humorous nuance in ‘flebilis’ in the sense that the metrical units, in containing ‘harsh syllabic quantities’ such as would make one weep, are lamentable in quality. The swan’s creaking is in itself harsh. Its rhythm lacks the mellifluousness of the elegiac metre.⁵⁰ Indeed, as we have seen, all other birds were thought to *sing* in a querulous, elegiac mode, which did not respect the elegiac metre’s syllabic schema. If we may interpret this too allegorically, it suggests the poet, in the person of Arion, is using quantities within the elegiac couplet that abuse the hexametric-pentametric schema. This provides metapoetic justification for the unmetrical redivisions of words which lie at the heart of our interpretation of the Fasti’s poetry (and which have been shown to be in evidence here in the form of ‘sue luti’ deriving from ‘canenS VELUTI’). These new words will be thought to be worthy of oracular interpretation, just as the sounds a swan made were subject to ornithomancy.

Moreover, the testimony of Nachmanides mentions the ‘bitter sounds’ of birds as being redolent of the practice of keening. Clearly, in the Hebrew tradition, emotional bitterness was thought to be a feature of bird-song. In Ovid the same bitterness is not only conveyed by the meaning of the words ‘tempora dura’ (‘bitter syllables or notes’) but also articulated by the context of Arion’s last song before he dies. Far from being a sweet melody this swansong moulds itself to the sepulchral context through producing harsh quantities, strident calls, and ametrical feet as indeed one might expect from a ‘keening’ swan. They are also what one might expect from a greying, swan-like poet (Tr.4.8.1-4) writing the ‘Tristia’ (‘The Bitter Songs’) in exile and experiencing a living death and a diminution of his powers such that he sings metrical measures that are harsh.

Now given our analysis of the unmetrically-produced hidden Greek word at 2.83, namely ‘**κιθαριων**’ (> [nes]CIT[H]ARION [N]ATE[**llus**] = ‘**O son of the kitharas**’), we suggest it is reasonable to peer through the Latin text in the hope of accessing Greek words that may have infiltrated the original medium of transmission (Latin). This will particularly be the case when a nexus in Latin has a corresponding nexus in Greek. Thus the phrase *tempora ... dura* is the mot-a-mot equivalent of the Greek ‘**ὦμοι χρονοι**’, a nexus which is also metrical, elegiac and epigraphical in character. It appears on a Greek funerary inscription (IG 3.1372). However Ovid’s particular interest in such a ‘translation’ will reside in an alternative meaning of the phrase which can also be clarified by redivision. For, a Greek speaker, on seeing the phrase ‘**ὦμοι χρονοι**’ on a tombstone, would immediately be put in mind of the homonym ‘**ὦμοι**’ meaning ‘Ah!’ ‘Alas!’ This again is elegiac in its inarticulacy (‘Oh!’) and, in being considered the swan’s outpouring of pained expression, will serve to allegorise the ‘sad’ origins of elegy. However, if we redivide the word into ‘**ὦ! μοι!**’ a certain specificity of meaning evolves (‘Oh! Me!’) which focuses on Arion’s personal woe (which is

⁵⁰See Lucilius for a jocular use of ‘flebilis’ (194)

still nevertheless inarticulate). This now changes Ovid's text into the following 'harsh syllables **pennam et tempora** [hiatus] **ὦ! μοι canens**'. That is, we now hear in direct speech the sounds made by the swan representing Arion and the author. Using accusatives of exclamation, the voice cries 'O the arrow, O the times ah! me!'). The meaning 'arrow' is a nuance developed from 'penna' meaning 'feather'. As we have seen this swan is destined to intersect with the trajectory of the arrow in the night sky. Meanwhile, having now, we presume, been struck by the arrow, the swan laments the weapon most to be feared by avian prey on the wing, namely the arrow. On the other hand the 'arrow' also constitutes the single greatest danger to Ovid's life in Tomis ('ah! me!'). It is to be bewailed alongside the 'metrical lengths' ('pennam et tempora dura') of his poems in exile'. And these 'mala' are to be expressed in faulty elegiacs allegorised by the Fastian swan crying (or creaking) its pained sounds. Within this Grecising of the text another interesting intermetrical text emerges. If we redivide the words 'tempora pennam et ὦμοι canens' we arrive at a new text 'TEMPORA PENN[AM] ET '[**T**]Ω**MOI**' canens'. This now means 'singing of 'the Times, the Arrow, Tomis' which stands as an accurate resume of Ovid's predicament as a poet bequeathed jejune materia in exile. In regard to 'Tomoi', Pliny's accusative case ending for 'Tomis' is 'Tomos' (4.44). On the basis that 'Delphos' is the equivalent case ending in Latin for the Greek 'Ἐλεφοί', it is reasonable to assume that the form 'TOMOI' was at least one of the contemporary spellings of 'Tomis'. Thus, allegorically speaking, the lyre-string plucked by the plectrum of Arion, emits its harmonics or subtextual meanings alongside its main note to create the 'mille sonos' that, it is hinted, lie within the remit of elegy. The elegiacs modulate (1) between the swan, Arion, and the author (2) the Fasti and the Tristia, and (3) between the mythological and celestial narratives. These modulations are articulated by the metapoetics of the text and by key words that link all these aspects together.

If we are guided by a thoroughgoing metapoetical approach towards the text we will assume that through the words 'tempora dura' the author is annotating our manuscript with indications as to the appropriate 'elegiac' length of annotated syllable. In other words if we take 'tempora dura' on board as an instruction to be carried through our reading of the text, we will be obliged to start by lengthening or hardening the first syllable of 'canens'. One could also suggest that 'singing heavy measures' ('tempora dura canens') metapoetically imposes the condition that the [word] 'singing' should be 'heavy' in measure. Furthermore the allegorically uncertain metrical lengths of the swan's (or any bird's) plangent 'elegiacs' also allow the same liberties to be taken with the 'schema metricum' ('cānens > cānens'). Lastly, as we have seen, 'in numeris flebilibus' means that the poet is writing in 'lamentable ('elegiac' and 'lamentably poor') poetic feet

In a nutshell we should be encouraged to see all syllable lengths in his couplet as anceps. Thus the new meaning of 'cānens' with a long first syllable ('greying') will in turn persuade 'tempora dura' to reconfigure itself as 'the hard temples'. To put flesh on the bones, the words now suggest the meaning 'going grey as to one's hardening temples' instead of 'singing of hard times'⁵¹. It was conventional to specify the 'temples' as the first area of the head to be affected by the ageing or greying process (Ovid Metamorphoses 8.568: 'Lelex, raris iam sparsus tempora canis'; Virgil Aeneid 5.414: 'temporibus geminis canebat sparsa senectus'). Meanwhile whilst 'hardening' implies ossification and the loss of youthful 'greenness', it also has particular relevance to temples that were regularly so 'hollow' that arrows would avail themselves of this gateway to penetrate from one side of the head to the other (just as this text would wish to convey in its received version which follows Virgil and prefigures Statius in this regard)⁵². In hardening with age, the poet's own temples become

⁵¹ It is the 'singing of hard syllabic measures' that produces 'the greying as to hardened temples'. Does this also mean that artistic composition involving unmetrical subtexts prematurely ages one?

⁵² See above

that much less intellectually acute, though also more emotionally resilient. If we are correct in our emendation of *Fasti* 2.120, we should see Ovid having grown a thick skin as he enters old age. He still requires adamant in the soul to cope with the trials to come.

Of course in dealing with a swan we are dealing with an animal that was uniformly grey throughout its life. Such anthropomorphic treatment of the swan must create humour through the anomaly of a swan not just going grey but *beginning* to go grey. On a more serious note however the poet may be trying to limn what in a swan's case is the almost imperceptible process of ageing through their hair or feathers turning grey. That is, is the willingness of the text to embrace defective metrical measures the first faint sign of a poet or a lyre-player losing the technical mastery of their art? It will be the reader's responsibility to decide whether the 'dying' Arion is intruding false quantities to reflect the bird's declining powers. That is, we should ask the question, is the bird singing '[deliberately] rough measures' or is it 'ageing as to its temples'? Or is it difficult to distinguish objectively between the two, just as at first glance it is difficult to distinguish between *cānens* and *cānens*? Is the process through which one's powers of intellect diminish intended by the author to be reflected in a process that is almost impossible to calibrate? And is this as difficult as deciding how much a swan has greyed? All these are questions raised in the *Tristia* of the author himself, thereby revealing simultaneously how deeply the exile poems intrude their poetics into the *Fasti*.

We have not yet explored the couplet as an integral text. As we have seen, in restructuring the line we have deliberately sought to allow 'pennam' and 'canentem' to elide such that 'pennam' and 'canentem' whilst nominally accusatives meaning 'a sounding or greying wing' could also, when elided, be received as ablatives (i.e. 'penn[a] ... cānent[i]'/cānenti') meaning 'by a sounding, or greying wing'. The effect this has on the sentence is to make it polyvalent in translation e.g.

(a) [with 'penn[am]' as accusative] 'just as the swan, greying as to its wing and hard temples, has been pierced as to its wing, when sounding in tearful strains [i.e. 'when aloft with its wings beating']; here the adjective injects pathos in the sense that the swan with its 'ageing' wing, it was not far from death even as it was. Its swan-song has been cruelly brought forward; at the same time it was not obvious to the archer that he was bringing down 'old meat;'

(b) '[with 'penn[am]' as ablative] 'and just as the swan, in prophesying hard times, has been pierced by the arrow sounding in sad strains'; here the arrow has become the instrument giving off sound as it whirrs towards its victim ('stridens alis ... sagitta': *Aeneid* 12.319); the congruence of sound between the arrow and wing is symbolised by the fact that 'penn[] ... canent[]' could be either the 'whirring arrow' or the 'creaking wing' depending on how one interprets the constitution of the text before elision. As we have seen the swan could even be 'singing of the whistling arrow in sad strains'. This would be a good description of Ovid in *Tomis* on certain occasions. On certain other occasions the poet would be singing in sad elegiacs of his harsh syllabic lengths and greying plumage (technical talent succumbing to age) or of the sounding wing [of a dove]⁵³ (i.e. prophesying or describing nature)

As a final example of Ovid's sequinning of the text we suggest that the word 'penna' is also chosen because its equivalent Greek word is 'ῥίον'(R[H]ION) in the meaning of 'a spur of land'. Not uncoincidentally, it is Ovid who is the sole source for this nuance of 'penna' (*Met.* 13.724). 'If we now introduce 'ῥίον' into the text in place of its Latin equivalent (just as we did with 'ὦ μοι') we find the following arrangement of letters: 'tempora RION et dura canens' = 'tempor[a]ARION et dura canens ...' = 'and Arion, singing

⁵³ All could be defined as 'pennam canentem'

of hard times ...' Remarkably the text reconfigures itself to produce a very exact summary of the narrative. It also aligns Arion appropriately with the swan and its swan-song.

Bibliography

- Barchiesi, A. (1997b) *Endgames: Metamorphoses 15 and Fasti 6* in eds. Roberts D, Dunn F., Casson, Lionel (1995) *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (paperback edition) Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
- Covacef, Petre (1998) *Despre un tumulus la Constanța (Un răspuns tehnic la o întrebare a D-lui Dan Slușanschi)* in *Pontica* 31 (1998) pp. 261-264
- Cox, Arthur N., ed. (1999) *Allen's Astrophysical Qualities* (4th ed.). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Crumlin-Pedersen O. (1966) *Two Danish Side Rudders' The Mariner's Mirror* 32 (1966) pp.251-26
- Gerling, Claudia (2015) *Prehistoric Mobility and Diet in the West Eurasian Steppes 3500 to 300 BC* (De Gruyter)
- Inscriptiones Graecae
- Le Bonniec, Henri (1969) *Les Fastes d'Ovide' in Orpheus* 16 (1969) www.livescience.com
- Newlands, Carole E. (1985) *Playing With Time*
- Polak, Marinus (2004) *An early roman naval base at Vechten (prov utrecht / nl): facts and fiction* in *Honesta Missione: Festschrift Für Barbara Pferdehirt* (Römisch-Germanische Zentralmuseum (Hrsg.) pp. 69-98
- Ramban, *Commentary on the Torah. Deuteronomy*, translated and annotated with index by Ch.B. Chavel, New York (1976)
- Samus, N. N.; Durlevich, O. V.; et al. (2009) *'VizieR Online Data Catalog: General Catalogue of Variable Stars*
- Stefan Maria-Magdalena, Stefan, Dan and Sirbu Valeriu: *Tumuli, Roads and Plots. Decoding the Monumental Funerary Space of the 4th-3rd Centuries BC Kallatis*. *Journal of Ancient History and Archaeology* 4.1 (2017): fig. 7 p.59
- The Brightest Stars (2019) (online essay)
- The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles (1973)
- Wikipedia 'Vega' Article