

**Ovid's *Fasti*:
History Re-Imagined**

by

Katherine Ongaro
Bachelor of Arts, Brock University, 2009

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of the Requirements for the Degree of

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines the eroticization of historical and political narratives from Ovid's *Fasti*, particularly the capture of Gabii (2.687-710), the rape of Lucretia (2.721-852) and the Aristaeus narrative (1.363-390). I argue that Ovid's eroticization of these narratives is a response to the political pressure to write poetry in support of Augustan ideology. These narratives about military conquests and moments of great political change are imbued with epic themes and Augustan ideology. Yet, Ovid transports these narratives into elegy, which is a genre that defines itself as distinct from imperial and public domain. Ovid's asserts poetic autonomy by re-envisioning historical narratives and political ideology in a manner suitable to his elegiac concerns. His version of history does not reflect Augustan ideology and, at times, is starkly opposed to it. I argue that Ovid's re-imagining of these narratives asserts the freedom of the poet as an autonomous storyteller.

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INTRODUCTION

Politics and Poetry

In 31 BCE when Augustus defeated Mark Antony at the Battle of Actium and solidified his own power, the political landscape of Rome was significantly altered.¹ After the devastation and destruction of civil war, Augustus' leadership purported to offer a return to stability, peace and renewed morality. This change in leadership did not only alter the political landscape, but also the social and cultural atmosphere as Augustus' program of cultural renewal encompassed building programs, literature and legislation.² Augustus' control extended beyond the political realm in 2 BCE when he was named *pater patriae* (Father of the Fatherland) by the senate, which also placed him in the role of *paterfamilias* (Father of the Family).³ As *paterfamilias* of the state, one of Augustus' chief social concerns was the perceived lack of morality in amatory affairs. From 18 BCE to 9 CE Augustus passed and modified legislations attempting to curb adultery, as well as promote marriage and childbearing.⁴ The *paterfamilias* traditionally had the authority to regulate the private, amatory lives of those included in his family. Augustus' marriage and adultery legislation usurped the traditional responsibilities of the private

¹ Augustus was technically Octavian at this time, since he did not receive the name Augustus until 27 BCE. For ease of comprehension, however, I will refer to Augustus throughout this thesis as Augustus, not Octavian. After Julius Caesar's assassination, Augustus, Mark Antony and Lepidus formed a political alliance. Augustus' defeat of Mark Antony ended this alliance and marked the beginning of the imperial period of Roman history.

² Augustus' program of cultural renewal refers to a series of religious and moral reforms initiated by the emperor. See Galinsky (1996) for a detailed overview of Augustan culture. In an examination of Augustan art and architecture, Zanker (1988) illuminates some of Augustus' main concerns. Cooley (2003) explores source material including poetry, prose and law codes from the Augustan Age to articulate the ideology of this period. Woodman and West (1984), as well as Powell (1992) discuss Augustan politics from a literary perspective.

³ See Cooley (2003, 194) for a discussion of this title. Cooley argues that this title "suggested the close, familial relationship between Augustus and the people, as well as his paternal authority over them".

⁴ There were two main laws concerning marriage, the *lex Julia de maritandis ordinibus* (Julian law on marrying categories) of 18 BCE and the *lex Papia Poppaea* of 9 CE, which relaxed the severity of the first law. There was also the *lex Julia de adulteriis coercendis* (Julian law on restraining adulteries). See Cooley (2003, 353-67) for a detailed overview of these laws and Williams (1962) for poetic responses to these laws.

paterfamilias and placed these responsibilities in the hands of the emperor. It is within this landscape of great political change, tentative hope for the future and the intrusion of the state on private affairs that Ovid (c. 42 BCE- 17 CE) composed poems on a variety of subjects and in a variety of genres.⁵ The focus of my thesis will be the *Fasti*, which is arguably one of his most complicated and challenging poems.

Written in the later portion of his life, Ovid's *Fasti* is essentially an aetiological poem set to the format of and commenting on the Roman calendar. It addresses the Roman calendar in chronological order with each book discussing the events of a single month. The poem, however, concludes with the sixth book, the month of June.⁶ The *Fasti* is an agglomeration of narratives concerning the origins of stars and constellations, celebrations of various anniversaries and festivals, descriptions of monuments and their significance as well as narratives from Greek mythology and legendary Roman history. It deals with mythological material, as well as contemporary religious rituals and events. The varied nature of this subject matter is a reflection of the Roman calendar itself. The Roman calendar was not a stagnant record, it was flexible and incorporated new festivals regularly.⁷ Robinson calls the Roman calendar the heart of Rome because it concerns religion, history and tradition, which are all central to Roman identity.⁸ As

⁵ Ovid's known corpus of work includes the *Amores*, *Heroides*, *Medea* (a lost tragedy), *Ars Amatoria*, *Metamorphoses*, *Fasti*, *Tristia* and *Ex Ponto*.

⁶ In the *Tristia* (2.552) Ovid states that his fate has interrupted his work on the *Fasti*. Ovid's mention of an interruption is likely a reference to his banishment from Rome to Tomis on the Black Sea in 8 CE. There would, however, have been ample time for Ovid to complete the remaining six books. Littlewood (2006, xix) argues that at some point Ovid decided not to continue with the second half of the year and imposed an internal structure on the six surviving books, which thematically linked books 1 and 6. It could be argued that the *Fasti* survives in a deliberately truncated form to mirror Ovid's exile. Feeney (1992, 19) argues that silent second half of the *Fasti* has as much to say about constraints set upon the poet's speech as the vocal first half.

⁷ Beard 1987, 7. She compares the Roman calendar to a modern carnival procession, in which there is a jostling of banners and a different appearance from one position to the next as people drop in and out of the main line.

⁸ Robinson 2011, 9. Beard (1987, 7) makes a similar argument, stating that "each festival, with all its different associations, presented and represented a picture of Romanness – linking past with the present, and bringing together apparently diverse aspects of the Roman religious and cultural tradition".

such, Ovid's combination of such diverse subject matters within one poem reflects the varying social, political and cultural concerns of the Roman calendar.

The diverse nature of the *Fasti* is also reflected in its generic identification. Metrically the *Fasti* belongs to the genre of elegy since it is written in elegiac couplets.⁹ Yet, Roman love elegy is generally known for its small scale, private nature and preoccupation with amatory themes, which hardly describes the *Fasti*. Miller summarizes the odd relationship between the *Fasti* and elegy. He states "Ovid characterized the *Fasti* as a "greater" sort of elegy (*Fasti* 2.3, 4.3, 6.22) – in scope, in length, in its sacral, national and Augustan topics – but it nonetheless continues to define itself, as did love elegy, in opposition to heroic epic's martial subjects".¹⁰ In addition to expanding the boundaries of elegy, Ovid incorporates aspects of other genres into the *Fasti* as well. Hinds argues that Ovid draws on the works of Hellenistic poets, primarily Callimachus and Aratus, in his search for explanations of religion, ritual and astronomy.¹¹ As such, the *Fasti* is a generic compilation, which includes influences from Hellenistic poetry, traditional love elegy, the weighty themes of epic and historical narratives.

Arguably, the unusual nature of the *Fasti* caused the poem to be ignored, particularly by literary scholars, until recently. Wilkinson, for example, called the *Fasti* a "jumble of astronomy, history, legend, religion, superstition, scholarship, guesswork, and antiquarian lore".¹² Recent scholarship, however, has revisited the *Fasti* and found merit in its unique subject matter.

Scholars such as Newlands, Barchiesi, Feeney, Boyle, Hinds, Robinson, Littlewood, Green and

⁹ Elegy is defined by its metre, which involves the alternating sequence of a dactylic hexameter and pentameter. For an overview of Latin love elegy including its metrical structure, history and themes see Miller (2004) and Veyne (1988, 1-14).

¹⁰ Miller 2002, 181. Miller (181) also states "Ovid acknowledges the strains that his poem's weighty content sometimes places on his verse, and that his elegies are flirting with epic grandeur". Hinds (1992), Barchiesi (1997, 47-78) and Fantham (1998, 4-25) also discuss Ovid's use of genre in the *Fasti*.

¹¹ Hinds 1992, 113-4. He argues that Ovid's explanations of religion and ritual in the *Fasti* are indebted to Callimachus' *Aetia* and his preoccupation with astronomy indebted to Aratus' *Phaenomena*. Harrison (2002, 85) notes the influence of Callimachus and Aratus in Ovid's opening lines of the *Fasti*.

¹² Wilkinson 1955, 241-2.

Fantham have breathed new life into this poem. This revival of scholarship on the *Fasti* has seen a re-examination of the poem's literary merit and the recent publication of commentaries on its individual books.¹³

I will not provide an exhaustive overview of the current research on the *Fasti*, but instead concentrate on one of the most highly contested aspects of scholarship surrounding the poem: Ovid's attitude toward Augustus and his politics in this poem.¹⁴ Any work about the Roman calendar is inherently infused with political relevance because of the importance of the calendar to national identity. Boyle outlines the importance of the calendar to Roman identity by stating that to control time in Rome was not only to control Rome, but also the concept of *Romanitas* (Romanness). In the Republic, Roman pontiffs decided the *dies fasti et nefasti* (days suitable and not suitable for the courts), proclaimed new state *feriae* (rest days) and allowed or shortened the months, all of which dictated the rhythm of legal, commercial and political life.¹⁵ In addition, the calendar acquired greater political significance under Julius Caesar and Augustus, since they both re-organized the calendar and incorporated festival days that commemorated their own achievements.¹⁶ The political significance of the calendar has led most scholars to acknowledge that Ovid interacts with Augustus and his politics to some degree throughout the *Fasti*.¹⁷ The nature of his political engagement, however, is debated. There are some who believe that Ovid's decision to write about the calendar demonstrates support of the Augustan regime. In contrast, there are those who argue that his decision to write about the calendar demonstrates a voice of

¹³ Recent commentaries have been written on most books of the *Fasti*. Green (2004) writes a commentary for book one, Robinson (2011) for book two, Fantham (1998) for book four and Littlewood (2006) for book six.

¹⁴ Both Fantham (1995a and 1995b) and Myers (1999) have recently published general overviews of research on the *Fasti*.

¹⁵ Boyle 1997, 8.

¹⁶ For the political significance of the calendar in the Augustan Age see Wallace-Hadrill (1987) and Beard (1987).

¹⁷ A possible exception to this statement is McKeown (1984, 177), who argues for a literary interpretation of this poem, rather than political. He states "I shall argue that, however serious and well-integrated the dedication to Augustus and various encomia of him in the body of the poem may be, the *Fasti* as a whole was inspired primarily by the literary tradition and not conceived as a eulogy of the emperor and his regime".

opposition against Augustan reforms. Robinson summarizes this debate stating, “for some it is unthinkable that Ovid could be undermining his praise of Augustus; for others it is equally unthinkable that he could be sincere”.¹⁸ I will briefly outline the arguments of various scholars from both sides of this issue.

In general, supportive readings of the *Fasti* view the poem as an Ovidian attempt to praise and flatter Augustus to some degree. Fantham argues for a supportive interpretation of the *Fasti* stating that Ovid would have never begun this poem if he disliked the role of imperial celebrant.¹⁹ She encourages scholars to appreciate the skill of Ovid’s poem without attempting to find a second and subversive reading.²⁰ Herbert-Brown also argues that the primary voice in the *Fasti* is one of support. She states that it is difficult to believe that Ovid would have chosen to set to verse something as problematic as the Roman calendar unless he was receiving extraneous pressure to praise Augustus.²¹ It is certainly possible to argue that Ovid would have been under pressure to praise Augustus after the political mistake of the *Ars Amatoria*.²²

Feeney, by contrast, argues that there is both a voice of protest and affirmation in the poem. He states that choosing to listen to only one of those voices robs the poem of its ideological texture.²³ That being said, his own argument suggests a critical attitude towards Augustus. He focuses on Ovid’s preoccupation with enforced silence and the punishment of speaking out of turn in book two of the *Fasti*. Hinds argues that Ovidian passages about

¹⁸ Robinson 2011, 10.

¹⁹ Fantham 1995, 49. She argues that Ovid must have believed that he could celebrate the emperor while writing an artistic, complex and entertaining poem.

²⁰ Fantham 1995, 58.

²¹ Herbert-Brown 1994, 1. Herbert-Brown (1994, 26) compares Verrius Flaccus’ marble inscription of the calendar (*Fasti Praenestini*) to Ovid’s composition of the *Fasti*. She concludes that both Ovid and Verrius were attempting to celebrate the most prolific record and proof of Augustus’ pre-eminence in a new way.

²² The *Ars Amatoria* is a poem that instructs young men (books one and two) and young women (book three) on how to conduct love affairs. Clearly this poem is contradictory to Augustan moral reforms and is given as one of the reasons for Ovid’s exile in 8 CE (Cooley 2003, 99).

²³ Feeney 1992, 6. Hinds (1987, 26) expresses a similar concern for the possibility of multiple interpretations within the poem. He states that literary interpretations vary depending on individual interpretations of Augustan politics.

Augustus often can be read as evidently true arguments or evidently absurd ones. He argues that Ovid takes apparently passive praise of Augustus and transforms it into effective rhetoric of subversion.²⁴ Newlands argues that Ovid manipulates the calendar in a manner that questions the political manipulation of time.²⁵ She argues that Ovid manipulates his version of time by downplaying some events, and emphasizing others. For Newlands the *Fasti* expresses disenchantment with a political system that guarantees neither the peace nor freedom for an elegiac poet to flourish.²⁶ Barchiesi also argues that Ovid's choice of the calendar as his subject matter is controversial. He states that Ovid "picks out the weak points in Augustan discourse...and thus shows that there is still someone who is capable of clearly seeing the connection between political persuasion and the remodelling of the Roman identity".²⁷ For many of these scholars the voice of criticism within the *Fasti* outweighs the voice of support.

My own argument about the *Fasti* is particularly influenced by the arguments of Feeney, Newlands and Barchiesi. I agree that Ovid's *Fasti* does not demonstrate overwhelming support of Augustan ideology. I focus on specific political and military narratives within the poem, mainly the capture of Gabii (2.687-710), the rape of Lucretia (2.721-852) and the Aristaeus narrative (1.363-390). For all of these narratives Ovid relies on the reader's prior knowledge of Livy's and Vergil's versions of the same narratives. He provides condensed variations of these narratives and often omits key elements of the stories. I argue that Ovid has re-imagined these narratives erotically and transported them into an elegiac context.²⁸ By re-imagining these

²⁴ Hinds 1987, 29. Hinds' argument concerns the Ovidian corpus of works, not only the *Fasti*. He cites *Met.* 15.750-8 as an example of praise for the imperial family that can easily be understood as irony.

²⁵ Newlands 1995, 12.

²⁶ Newlands 1995, 18. Boyle (1997, 24) expresses a similar argument about Ovid's desire for authorial control. He states that Ovid exposes the imperial cultural evolution for the arbitrary construction that it is and reasserts the cultural centrality of the *carmen* (poem).

²⁷ Barchiesi 1997, 256.

²⁸ Although the rape of Lucretia is inherently an erotic narrative, I argue that Ovid's version of this narrative particularly emphasizes the sexual content.

historical and politically significant narratives erotically, Ovid asserts authorial control over this subject matter and demonstrates the ability of the poet to re-envision narratives in an alternate manner.

During the Augustan Age, there was undoubtedly political pressure on poets to compose works in support of Augustan ideology. This is demonstrated through the sudden emergence of Latin love elegy at this time. This genre defines itself in opposition to the public themes of epic and history. It brings poetry into the realm of the private and individual at a time when Augustus is creating legislation to regulate private life. Elegy responds to this invasion of the state into private affairs by creating clear distinctions between public and private affairs, as well as redeploing the themes of public poetry in a new genre. Although elegiac poetry formally distances itself from the military and political themes of epic, it also appropriates and redeploys them.²⁹ The relationship that elegy has with epic is undoubtedly paradoxical. Elegy insists on its marginalization from epic and the world of public glory, while also incorporating public themes into its genre. This relationship is illustrated, for example, in the elegiac motif of the *militia amoris* (soldiers of love). Elegists reject the public glory of a military career, but justify their rejection by likening the toils of a soldier to the toils of a lover. In *Amores* 1.9 Ovid states that every lover is a soldier and Cupid has his own camps (*militat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido*, 1.9.1). This comparison between the life of a soldier and the life of a lover highlights the relationship between epic and elegy. Elegy distances itself from the public themes of epic, but also incorporates these themes and redeploys them as elegiac motifs.³⁰

²⁹ Roman epic is narrative poetry generally known for its weightiness both in subject matter and length, as well as its public nature and martial themes. For a discussion about Roman epic see Boyle (1993) particularly Boyle's introduction to this compilation.

³⁰ The relationship between elegy and epic will be discussed in further detail beginning on page 32.

Ovid's re-imagining of historical narratives in the *Fasti*, however, extends the scope of elegy further than encompassing epic themes. Although both history and epic focus on martial and public themes, the incorporation of historical themes into elegy is something different than the incorporation of epic. In his fourth book Propertius approached this concept of broadening the scope of elegy to include aspects of public genres such as aetiology and history. The third poem of this book is written entirely from the perspective of a woman, Arethusa, writing a letter to her husband, who is on a military campaign. This poem marks a departure from the elegiac norms of writing about war. Wyke argues that the man in this poem fulfils the role the state requires of him: at war, abroad, implementing Augustus' frontier policy.³¹ Nevertheless, the elegiac woman in this poem erotically re-imagines these aspects of historical reality. Arethusa calls her husband's shoulders *tener* (delicate, 4.3.23) and his hands *imbellis* (unwarlike, 4.3.24). She also studies the geography of the Roman empire and path of the Augustan campaign only to ascertain when her husband will return to her (4.3.35-40). This example from Propertius 4 demonstrates the relationship between history and elegy. Propertius expands the boundaries of elegy to incorporate historical events, but re-imagines aspects of those events erotically.

Ovid's treatment of historical narratives within the *Fasti* is a continuation of this elegiac practice. Ovid appropriates and re-imagines historical and politically significant narratives in his elegiac poem. These narratives about military conquests and moments of great political change are normally assigned to the public literature either in epic poems or historical works. In addition, these narratives about military victories, paradigms of female chastity and regeneration after war are also imbued with aspects of Augustan ideology. By re-imagining these narratives through an elegiac lens Ovid presents alternate versions of these narratives. He challenges the

³¹ Wyke 2002, 87. She compares this poem to Propertius 3.4, in which the male lover-poet remains within the gates of Rome and imagines watching the triumphal return of the army in the embrace of his beloved.

accepted versions and demonstrates a desire for control over poetic matters. At the same time that imperial control is extending to literature, Ovid extends the reach of elegy to encompass imperial concerns. Fox argues that Ovid's alternate versions of historical material undermine the seriousness of the original versions.³² Certainly Ovid undermines the respectability of several female characters that normally represent Roman chastity and virtue, including Lucretia and Vesta. In addition, Ovid's re-imagining of these narratives asserts poetic license to imagine characters and situations erotically. I will identify and examine this argument in three narratives within the *Fasti*, all of which are eroticized versions of military and political stories.

In my first chapter I will discuss Ovid's story about the capture of Gabii, which is a narrative from Rome's legendary history. Livy tells a version of this narrative in *Ab Urbe Condita (From the Founding of the City)*, but he focuses on the trickery of Sextus and his father, Superbus. Ovid transforms this story about a strategic military conquest into a story about erotic domination. Scholars have noted Ovid's eroticization of this narrative before, but it has been passed over as simply a preview of Sextus' rape of Lucretia.³³ I will argue that Ovid's eroticized version of this military story demonstrates the relationship between private and public matters in elegy. Although this is a historical story about a military victory, Ovid appropriates it into his elegiac poem. He asserts elegiac control over this historical narrative by transforming it into a story about erotic domination. Ovid eroticizes this narrative through the inclusion of a *locus amoenus*, which in the *Metamorphoses* and the *Fasti* becomes a narratological cue for sexual violence. He also eroticizes the narrative by substituting lilies for poppies in his description of Superbus' actions. Unlike poppies, lilies are often associated with erotic narratives. Finally,

³² Fox 1996, 212.

³³ Fox (1996, 210-11) mentions that the capture of Gabii is a condensed version of Livy's narrative, but does not examine the narrative. Keegan (2002, 146) states that his analysis will bypass the Gabii narrative since Ovid's version is similar to Livy's. Murgatroyd (2005, 188-90) discusses the narrative in some detail, yet he concludes that it is an eroticized preamble to Lucretia's rape narrative.

Ovid's description of the conquered in this narrative likens them to victims of sexual domination. The military victor, Sextus, becomes the sexual aggressor and the citizens of Gabii become the victims of his erotic aggression. By outlining the elegiac motif of appropriating epic themes, this chapter will establish the relationship between historical narratives and elegy.

I return to the correlation between private and public matters in my discussion of the Lucretia narrative in chapter two. This narrative is also from the legendary history of Rome and is significant because of the political change inspired after Sextus' rape of Lucretia. Livy tells a version of this narrative that focuses on the ensuing political change and Lucretia's role as a paradigm of virtue. In contrast, Ovid focuses on the sexualized image of Lucretia and the sexual violence of the narrative. Although several scholars have argued for Ovid's eroticization of this narrative, the impact of this eroticization has not been fully explored.³⁴ I argue that Ovid's presentation of an alternate, elegiac version of this historical narrative demonstrates a concern for poetic autonomy. I define poetic autonomy as the freedom of the poet to choose his own subject and the manner of presenting it. Ovid asserts the freedom of the poet to present an eroticized version of events and characters, even if these eroticized versions do not demonstrate support of Augustan ideology. Eroticization of this narrative occurs in Ovid's emphasis on household boundaries and their relation to the elegiac motif of the *paraclausithyron*. Ovid also eroticizes the descriptions of Lucretia and likens her to other elegiac mistresses, who are similarly described. Throughout the narrative, Ovid also emphasizes the passivity of silence and power of speech. Lucretia's silence allows her appearance and intentions to be erotically re-envisioned by

³⁴ Newlands (1995, 146-74), Fox (1996, 210-17), Murgatroyd (2005, 191-200) and Keegan (2002, 146-52) all argue for Ovid's eroticization of this narrative. Newlands (148) argues that Ovid highlights the sexual violence at the heart of Roman history in his version of the narrative. Newlands and Keegan discuss the gendered focus on speech and silencing in this narrative, which will be discussed further on page 41. Fox (212) argues that Ovid's elegiac version of the Lucretia narrative undermines that outrage of Livy's version. Murgatroyd (193) argues that Ovid's elegiac version of this narrative provides a more personal and amatory side of the story.

the speaking male characters. I will relate Lucretia's silence to other characters who are also silenced in book two of the *Fasti*. In my examination of this narrative I will identify Ovid as sympathizing with two different characters. Ovid, as the narrator, invites the audience to deconstruct and erotically re-envision Lucretia through Sextus' eyes. In these scenes Ovid, like Sextus, plays the elegiac role of the powerful lover. Lucretia's silenced form, however, also correlates to the series of silenced artists in the *Metamorphoses*.³⁵ As such, Ovid's preoccupation with silencing throughout book two of the *Fasti* could also demonstrate an anxiety about the freedom of expression. The eroticized Ovidian version of this narrative asserts the freedom of the poet to re-envision history and the anxiety of not being able to do so.

In my third chapter I take a slightly different approach to the established correlation between elegy and history. This chapter concerns the story of Aristaeus that is told in Vergil's *Georgics* as well as Ovid's *Fasti*. Although there is plenty of scholarship concerning Vergil's Aristaeus narrative, the Ovidian version has remained relatively unexplored.³⁶ This is not a narrative from the legendary history of Rome, but it relates to my theme of elegiac redeployment of historical narratives as it concerns Augustan rhetoric of Roman regeneration after the devastation of the civil war. I argue that Ovid exploits two unresolved issues arising from Vergil's version of the story: the necessity of death for rebirth and the dangers of sexual aggression. He achieves this exploitation by placing his version of the Aristaeus narrative within a discussion about the injustice of animal sacrifice and prior to the comedic story about Priapus' attempted rape of Lotis. Aside from exploiting the unresolved issues within Vergil's narrative, Ovid also highlights their connection to the civil war and Augustus' program of renewal,

³⁵ One example of a silenced artist in the *Metamorphoses* is Arachne (6.1-145).

³⁶ Some of the scholarship concerning Vergil's *Georgics* will be discussed within the third chapter. Green (2004, 171) discusses Ovid's Aristaeus narrative in his commentary on book one, but he concludes simply that Ovid's version supports both a positive and negative reading.

particularly through the correlation between sexual and political power. Sexual aggression plays a role in the Aristaeus narrative when Aristaeus' attempted rape of Eurydice has several devastating consequences. Ovid juxtaposes the serious consequences of sexual aggression in the Aristaeus narrative with the comedic result of Priapus' failed sexual attempt. I will argue that sexual aggression represents imperial ambition, thus the failed sexual attempt of Priapus in this narrative mocks imperial ambition. In his Aristaeus narrative, Ovid re-writes the Vergilian narrative in a way that asserts the freedom of the poet to question political ideology. Ovid uses his elegiac re-envisioning of this narrative to question Augustus' renewal of Rome.

Through an examination of these examples I will argue that Ovid's eroticization of political and military material in the *Fasti* is a way of exerting poetic autonomy. In Augustan Rome, the imperial reach extended beyond the confines of public politics and into the private sphere. Ovid mirrors this imperial ambition by expanding the reach of elegy to historic and political narratives. By placing these narratives in a genre that defines itself as distinct from imperial and public domains, he asserts control over representing history. Ovid's version of history is presented in a manner that does not reflect Augustan ideology and, at times, is opposed to it. By transporting the world of politics and history into the bedroom, Ovid asserts the freedom of the poet as an autonomous storyteller.

CHAPTER ONE

The Capture of Gabii

We must not think that by saying yes to sex, one says no to power.

- Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*

I. Introduction

Elegy regularly represents the affairs of the bedroom as separate from the public concerns of epic and history. Elegists excuse themselves from the public glory of writing epic or fighting in battle by insisting that both they and their poetry are ill suited to such a lifestyle. This distinction created between public and private affairs is misleading, however, since elegy regularly appropriates epic themes and redeploys them. In this chapter I will argue that Ovid eroticizes his version of the martial story about the capture of Gabii (2.687-710). After failing to capture Gabii through siege, Tarquinius Superbus sends his youngest son to Gabii feigning to be a refugee. Superbus intends to use his son's infiltration of this city as a means to capture it. Once Sextus has gained the trust of the townspeople, Superbus sends a secret message to his son by chopping off the tops of flowers in his garden. His son interprets this message, kills the leading men of the city and hands the defeated city to his father. By comparing Ovid's highly condensed version of this narrative to Livy's expanded version (1.53-54), I will argue that Ovid eroticizes this narrative.¹

First, I will compare Ovid and Livy's descriptions of the garden in which Tarquinius Superbus enters to give a secret message to his son. Livy describes Superbus and the messenger entering the garden of the house (*in hortum aedium*, 1.54), but does not elaborate on the

¹ See Robinson (2011, 438) for a discussion of Ovid's omitted or condensed sections. The Ovidian version often condenses extended historical or military explanation. For example, Ovid omits the background story of the Gabii campaign, which includes a lengthy siege of the city. Livy, on the other hand, mentions this background story at the beginning of his Gabii account (1.53).

appearance of the garden. Ovid, however, suspends his narrative and inserts an extended description of the garden. He says that Superbus enters a well-tended garden full of fragrant plants with a gentle stream of water cutting through the grounds (2.703-4). I will argue that Ovid's description is a variation of the *locus amoenus*, which is an extended description of a natural landscape. By tracing the development of the *locus amoenus* from its earlier form in Theocritus as a landscape of innocence to its transformation in the Augustan Age, I will argue that Augustan Age poets, such as Ovid and Vergil, shatter the innocence of this landscape by exposing it to sexual violence and contemporary political reality. This association between the *locus amoenus* and sexual violence demonstrates an eroticization of this episode.

I will also examine Ovid's description of the flowers that Superbus cuts down as a message for his son. In the Ovidian version Superbus cuts off the tops of lilies, whereas he severs poppies in Livy's version. Although Ovid's alteration of this narrative might seem insignificant, lilies are regularly associated with erotic narratives. As such, Ovid's substitution of lilies for poppies is another indication of eroticization. Finally, I will examine Ovid's description of the defeated citizens of Gabii and argue that Ovid likens the capture of Gabii to a sexual conquest. Sextus is likened to a sexual aggressor and the citizens of Gabii to victims of sexual aggression.

After demonstrating Ovid's eroticization of this narrative through these examples, I will address the significance of this eroticization. Why would Ovid choose to present an erotic version of the Gabii narrative? This chapter will posit that by re-envisioning this narrative erotically Ovid participates in the elegiac motif of redeploying public themes in an elegiac manner. I will argue that this redeployment of themes demonstrates the elegiac response to political involvement in poetic composition. Ovid presents an eroticized version of a martial event from Roman legendary history to demonstrate poetic autonomy. By presenting this

narrative erotically, Ovid asserts the freedom of the poet not only to choose his own subject, but also the manner of presenting this subject.

II. The Garden Description as a *Locus Amoenus*

Ovid's description of the garden is a version of the *locus amoenus*, which Curtius defines as "a beautiful, shaded natural site. Its minimum components comprise a tree (or several trees), a meadow, and a spring or brook. Birdsong and flowers may be added. The most elaborate examples also add a breeze".² Although Ovid's *locus amoenus* in the capture of Gabii is a garden instead of a wooded area or meadow, it can be classified as a *locus amoenus* because it is a description of nature that includes flowers and a stream. Barchiesi argues that Ovid constructs a landscape, which owes much to the tradition of Theocritus' *Idylls* and Vergil's *Eclogues*. Ovid's landscape is similar to the modern notion of "idyllic" and also builds up disruptive tensions based on violence, lust and humiliation.³ The fragility and innocence of the Theocritean *locus amoenus* constructs a landscape that is prone to violation. Augustan poets, such as Vergil and Ovid, develop tension in this landscape through the juxtaposition of an ideal setting and violent, disruptive actions. Boyle argues that the "pastoral world becomes in Vergil's hands a mirror of Rome's distress, a looking-glass in which the constitutive features of contemporary experience are set against a background of lost ideals and forgotten aspirations".⁴ The irruption of power both political and sexual into this previously idyllic landscape highlights the vulnerability of the landscape. In the following section, I will examine the transformation of the *locus amoenus* from a landscape of innocence in Theocritean poetry to a shattered landscape in the *Metamorphoses*

² Curtius 1953, 195. Although the composition of a *locus amoenus* can vary greatly, Curtius describes the main elements of this motif.

³ Barchiesi 2006, 405.

⁴ Boyle 1975, 106.

and the *Fasti* in order to understand the alteration this landscape experiences in the Augustan Age.

II.i. A Landscape of Innocence: Theocritus (c. 3rd Century BCE)

Gutzwiller argues that “Theocritus is working within a well-established literary/cultural tradition in which the herding world was an emblem of order, harmony and peace”.⁵ Theocritus emphasizes this world of order and peace through his depiction of the harmonious relationship between characters and nature. In *Idyll* 1 this relationship is highlighted through Theocritus’ description of pastoral music, the death of Daphnis and the impact his death has on the landscape. The first idyll opens with a shepherd, Thyrsis, agreeing to tell the story of Daphnis’ death to a goatherd. Gutzwiller argues that the initial speech of Thyrsis and the reply of the goatherd create the impression that there is a harmonious connection between man and nature.⁶ In the opening lines of the poem Thyrsis likens the rustling of the pines to the sound of the pipes (1.1-3). In another comparison between nature and music, the goatherd compares Thyrsis’ song to flowing water (7-8). The similarities between the man-made music and the sounds of nature indicate that there is an affinity between these characters and their surroundings. This relationship is also expressed in Thyrsis’ song about the death of Daphnis.⁷ When Daphnis dies, Thyrsis says that he goes into a stream and water closes over his head (1.140-141). Gutzwiller argues that this description of Daphnis’ death preserves his closeness with nature and provides a semblance of success in his death.⁸ Theocritus also emphasizes Daphnis’ connection with nature

⁵ Gutzwiller 2006, 3.

⁶ Gutzwiller 1991, 84. She argues that Theocritus presents man and nature as interchangeable and almost indistinguishable, which is a different relationship than the ones presented in other Greek bucolic or pastoral poetry.

⁷ Scholars have argued about the cause of Daphnis’ death, which Theocritus does not explain in detail. Yet I agree with Gutzwiller (1991, 97), who argues that the cause of Daphnis’ death is not the purpose of this storytelling. Theocritus distinctly highlights the emotional connection between Daphnis and the other inhabitants of the landscape, including animals, humans and gods.

⁸ Gutzwiller 1991, 100. Some scholars including Ogilvie (1962,109-110) and Segal (1974, 24) argue that this line implies Daphnis literally drowned. I, however, agree with Gutzwiller’s more poetic interpretation of this line.

through the image of a mourning landscape. When Daphnis dies, the foxes, wolves, lions and cattle weep at his death (1.71-5). Theocritus returns to this image of a mourning landscape in *Idyll 7* when the mountains and oaks mourn the death of Daphnis (7.74-5). The Theocritean *locus amoenus* emphasizes a harmonious relationship between man and nature. Although the characters experience moments of emotional intensity, the landscape is able to absorb death in a way that ensures the unharmed continuity of the landscape.

II.ii. A Fractured Landscape: Bion (c. 2nd Century BCE)

The ability of the Theocritean landscape to absorb death and maintain order is particularly evident when compared to the landscape of Bion's *Lament for Adonis*. Both poems concern the death of a young man and emphasize the relationship this man has with his surroundings. Unlike the story of Daphnis, however, there is no indication of harmony between the deceased male and nature in this poem. Similar to Daphnis, Adonis also flows to his death (1.51), but Reed argues that there is no semblance of success in this death because Adonis is portrayed as a helpless boy torn between two powerful goddesses, Aphrodite and Persephone.⁹ Unlike Daphnis who voices his rejection of love at his death, Adonis is voiceless and his death is told entirely by Aphrodite. This poem focuses on Aphrodite's devastation, rather than the continuity of landscape and peace. The rivers, mountains and flowers weep for Adonis, but they also weep for Aphrodite, who has lost her love (1.32-6). Furthermore, there is a concern that the landscape cannot absorb the death of Adonis in the same way as it absorbed the death of Daphnis. In the *Lament for Adonis*, Aphrodite wills the flowers to die in mourning (1.75-76). Even though the flowers do not die as a result, there is a lack of harmony in this death scene. In Theocritus' version, the structure of the pastoral world is able to contain and enclose the

⁹ Reed 2006, 222. This is particularly emphasized in lines 1.54-5 when Aphrodite, Adonis' lover, cedes Adonis to Persephone, queen of the underworld, stating that Persephone is stronger than she is.

characters' grief without adverse effects to the landscape. The intensity of Aphrodite's grief in Bion's poem, however, threatens to fracture the peacefulness of the pastoral world. Hubbard argues that Bion tends to emphasize the primacy of the erotic, in opposition to Theocritus' detachment from passion.¹⁰ Aphrodite's passion for Adonis causes her to lament with such intensity that her grief threatens to disrupt the tranquility of the setting. Theocritus' characters also lament, but their grief does not contain the same raw passion as Aphrodite's grief. Although Theocritean characters experience passion and emotional hardships, in the Theocritean world the maintenance of order and harmony is integral. In contrast, the intensity of Aphrodite's grief reveals the fragility of the *locus amoenus*, which is further exploited in Vergil's portrayal of the *locus amoenus*.

II.iii. Vergil's Shattered Landscape

Vergil exploits the vulnerability of the *locus amoenus* in *Eclogue* 10 through the figure of Gallus, a well-known elegiac poet contemporary to Vergil. Gallus ventures into the pastoral world seeking an escape for his elegiac miseries, but he discovers that his elegiac experiences do not permit him to find comfort in the pastoral landscape. In the same way that Bion's *Lament for Adonis* demonstrated the fragility of the *locus amoenus* to passion, *Eclogue* 10 emphasizes the incompatibility of erotic characters and this vulnerable landscape. In the opening line of this poem, Vergil invokes Arethusa for inspiration (10.1).¹¹ Hubbard argues that Vergil's choice of Arethusa is particularly significant because Arethusa represents the intermingling of poetic influences, as well as implying sexual desire.¹² Similar to Arethusa, the inclusion of Gallus in this eclogue represents the intrusion of elegy and erotic themes into the pastoral world. The

¹⁰ Hubbard 1998, 41.

¹¹ Arethusa was a nymph and a follower of Artemis, whom Alpheus, a river, desired. Although Alpheus chased and attempted to seduce Arethusa, she escaped by transforming into a spring.

¹² Hubbard 1998, 129. Putnam (1970, 344-5) also sees the invocation of Arethusa as potentially threatening to the pastoral world because of the sexual implications of the myth.

generic tension between the elegiac figure of Gallus and the pastoral world is the source of conflict within this eclogue. The pastoral world of Theocritus is a place in which elegy and its preoccupation with erotic themes does not belong.

Conte draws a comparison between Gallus, the elegiac interloper, and Daphnis, the bucolic hero.¹³ Both characters are suffering as a result of passion and Daphnis also invokes Arethusa at his death (*Theo.* 1.117). Vergil is able to transport Gallus, an elegiac poet, into the pastoral world by having Gallus wear the mask of Daphnis. Although there are several similarities between Gallus and Daphnis, the endings of their stories are significantly different. Conte argues that Gallus is merely a guest in this landscape, which is demonstrated through his unattainable appeal to his lover, Lycoris, to share this world with him (10.42-3).¹⁴ The unattainability of Gallus' desire is what distinguishes him as an elegiac figure. Gallus' previous elegiac experiences transform the pastoral world into an expression of his desire instead of a retreat from passion.¹⁵ It is for this reason that at the end of the poem Gallus returns to his elegiac life with the exclamation *omnia vincit Amor, et nos cedamus Amori* (Love conquers all and let us yield to Love, 10.69). With this exclamation Gallus rejects his role as Daphnis and maintains his elegiac qualities. Furthermore, in this exclamation there is the suggestion that *Amor* could also subjugate the pastoral world. The world of pastoral poetry is only comfortable with emotions such as passion and grief in doses that do not pose a threat to the continuity of the landscape. Gallus' emotional intensity as elegiac figure is not able to exist in the world of pastoral poetry.

His exclamation that *Amor* conquers everything reveals his tendency for emotional abandonment

¹³ Conte 1986, 104. He argues that the initial sign of a relationship between Gallus and Daphnis is the similarity between *Ecl.* 10.9-10 and *Idyll* 1.66. Boyle (1975, 144-5) also argues for a relationship between Gallus and Daphnis. Other scholars have argued for a similarity between Adonis (particularly in Bion's *Lament for Adonis*) and Gallus. Both Hubbard (1998, 132) and Leach (1974, 163) argue that Gallus has more in common with Adonis than Daphnis, since both Adonis and Gallus do not quite fit into the pastoral world.

¹⁴ Conte 1986, 108.

¹⁵ The ability to interpret the same landscape as either a sanctuary from sexual advances or the ideal landscape for the realization of sexual desires is addressed further on page 56 in a discussion about Seneca's *Phaedra*.

and recklessness concerning passion. Since his character does not demonstrate the balance and peacefulness necessary for the continuity of the pastoral world, he cannot remain in the Theocritean pastoral world. Thus, Vergil presents sexual desire as a source of fragility in the pastoral world through a juxtaposition of genres.¹⁶

Sexual desire, however, is not the only source of conflict in the Vergilian *locus amoenus*. The *locus amoenus* in Vergil's *Eclogues* is particularly vulnerable to the alien influence of the city. The fractured pastoral world in both *Ecl.* 1 and 9 is a reflection of contemporary political strife and anxieties about the future of Rome. Both the landscape and characters in these *Eclogues* portray the physical and intellectual damage inflicted upon the pastoral world by the intrusion of the city. *Ecl.* 1 opens with a shepherd encountering another character piping under the shade of a tree, which mirrors the opening of Theocritus' *Idyll* 1. In *Ecl.* I, however, Vergil's goatherd, Meliboeus, greets the shepherd, Tityrus, with distressing news of dislocation stating that he is leaving his sweet fields and fleeing his country (1.3-4). The theme of geographical displacement continues when Meliboeus states that an impious soldier will possess his fields because of the discord in the city (1.70-2). In *Ecl.* 9 there is also a discussion between two shepherds, one dispossessed and the other unthreatened. Moeris laments to Lycidas how terrible it is that the stranger, who now owns their farm, could send them away from the land (9.2-4). Undoubtedly Vergil's emphasis on geographical displacement contains elements of political reality, particularly considering the land confiscations of 41 BCE.¹⁷ The discord of the city and chaos of warfare have permeated the protective boundary of the Theocritean *locus amoenus*. The influence of the city and warfare has brought the concerns of the reality, particularly property, into the peaceful world of bucolic poetry. There is also an implication that Meliboeus and other

¹⁶ Conte (1986, 126-7) argues that the aim of Vergil's exploration in *Ecl.* 10 is not to link and blur two poetic genres but to gain a deeper insight into that which divides them.

¹⁷ Boyle 1975, 106.

such characters will not be able to return to the pastoral world from whence they were exiled. In *Ecl.* 1 Meliboeus laments that he must wander to the ends of the earth and questions if he will ever look upon his country's boundaries again (1.64-9). Meliboeus cannot return to this former innocence and *otium* (leisure) because the city has shattered the isolation necessary for a peaceful pastoral world.

The characters of *Ecl.* 1 and 9 do not only experience displacement from the physical aspects of the pastoral world, but they are also alienated from the emotional aspects of this world. Hunter argues that Vergil has made social status and secure rights in land essential for the creation of poetry.¹⁸ As such Meliboeus is no longer able to create poetry because of his dispossession. This inability to create poetry represents an alienation from the emotional and intellectual aspects of the pastoral world. In *Ecl.* 9.51-54 Moeris recalls that as a boy he would rest throughout his summer singing songs, but now he has forgotten all of his songs and even his voice fails him. These lines indicate that the joy of poetry and music, which is an integral aspect of the pastoral world, has been lost. The influence of the city jeopardizes the continuity of everything that characterized the pastoral ideal in Theocritean poetry, including the innocence of the characters, peaceful surroundings and the harmonious relationship between the characters and the landscape. Both the characters and landscape experience a loss of innocence as a result of the loss of seclusion. In both *Ecl.* 1 and 9, Vergil depicts the fragility of the pastoral world and the repercussions of the shattered ideal on the landscape and characters.

¹⁸ Hunter 2006, 265. Hubbard (1998, 53) also makes a connection between pastoral characters and their landscape. He argues that the description of the pastoral world in Vergil becomes a place from which the character has been excluded and will not find again. Boyle (1975, 106) views the city-country polarity in *Ecl.* 1 and 9 as a concern for moral and intellectual impoverishment, as well as a historical fact of geographical displacement and physical violence.

II.iv. Ovid's Shattered Landscape

Like Vergil, Ovid also transforms the *locus amoenus* by building up tensions between the fragility of the landscape and a loss of innocence experienced by the characters. In both the *Metamorphoses* and the *Fasti*, Ovid juxtaposes the serene setting of the *locus amoenus* with sexual desire and violence. Although there are several occurrences of *loci amoeni* in Ovid's works, generally these landscapes are described with an economical use of descriptive language. Despite this brevity of description, the setting is undoubtedly important because of the reoccurrence of stock images and the small degree of variation within the description. Each description contains a secluded location, usually shaded by trees and near a source of water, and an accompanying act of violence. In the *Metamorphoses* Arethusa arrives at a river shaded by willows and poplars when she is approached by Alpheus (5.587-91). When Salmacis sees Hermaphroditus, she hides herself in the woods and watches him enter a pool of water (4.339-345). In the *Fasti* Callisto reaches a dense grove with oak trees and a fountain of cool water when Diana discovers her pregnancy and Callisto is ousted from the virginal group (2.165-6).¹⁹ Faunus attempts to rape Omphale in Bacchus' grove and Tmolus' vineyard, which is described as a cave with a stream at the entrance (2.313-16). Mars becomes infatuated with Rhea Silvia after seeing her sleeping on a grassy bank under willow trees (3.15-18).²⁰ In addition to these examples of Ovidian *loci amoeni*, the *locus amoenus* in the Gabii narrative is described with similar features; Superbus enters a well-tended garden full of fragrant plants with a gentle stream of water cutting through the grounds (2.703-4).

¹⁹ I will discuss Ovid's Callisto narrative in more detail beginning on page 69.

²⁰ I will discuss Ovid's Rhea Silvia narrative in more detail beginning on page 75.

Segal notes that there is a “reoccurrence of almost stereotypical sylvan scenery in the *Metamorphoses*”.²¹ This repetition of scenery without extensive detail suggests that Ovid is more concerned with creating atmosphere than depicting real scenery. Hinds argues that the pattern of ideal landscapes as a recurrent setting for episodes of erotic desire and violence provide a narratological ‘cue’ for such action.²² This is not to say that the landscape itself is threatening, rather the landscape becomes a signpost for narratives involving sexual violence. Hinds argues that “the sense of a threat to harmony immanent in a harmonious setting is a constitutive feature of the landscape tradition at large”.²³ Both Ovid and Vergil exploit the fragility and innocence that is intrinsic in a *locus amoenus*. Vergil fractures the innocence of the landscape and characters within the landscape through the intrusion of political realities and reckless passion. Ovid disrupts the idyllic state of these landscapes through the inclusion of sexual violence. Ovid’s description of a *locus amoenus* in the Gabii narrative also indicates the intrusion of sexual violence into the landscape. Ovid transforms this story about a military victory into a narrative about erotic domination.

II.v. The Garden as an Erotic Landscape

Despite the similarities between the *locus amoenus* in the Gabii narrative and other Ovidian *loci amoeni*, the description of the *locus amoenus* in the Gabii narrative as a garden is unusual. Usually a *locus amoenus* takes the form of an uncultivated landscape, however it is possible for a garden space to become a variation of the *locus amoenus*.²⁴ Since the garden description in the capture of Gabii contains similar features as other Ovidian *loci amoeni*, it can

²¹ Segal 1969, 4-5. He attributes this lack of detail and repetition of landscape to Ovid’s urbanity, as opposed to Vergil’s knowledge of the countryside. I find this argument unconvincing and argue that Vergil and Ovid are using landscape in different ways, which accounts for the variation in their descriptions.

²² Hinds 2002, 131.

²³ Hinds 2002, 131.

²⁴ von Stackelberg 2009, 20-21. Curtius (1953, 200) also argues the *locus amoenus* can enter into poetical descriptions of gardens and cites Flora’s garden in *Fasti* 5.208 as an example.

be considered a variation of this literary motif. In addition, the peculiarity of the setting as a well-tended garden instead of a wild landscape serves to further eroticize this setting through the establishment of defined boundaries.²⁵ If the garden is concerned with boundaries, then it must also be concerned with the transgression of those boundaries. Unlike forests and other natural sites of *loci amoeni*, a garden establishes distinction and separation from its surroundings through boundaries. There is an inherent danger behind the establishment of boundaries because boundaries are obviously designed to deny and grant passage in and out of a specific place. The violation of these boundaries can have damaging effects on the enclosed landscape. In the capture of Gabii, Superbus is not labelled as an intruder in the garden. He does, however, cut off the tallest lilies as a message for his son (2.706). This action threatens the landscape of the garden and highlights the vulnerability of the garden *locus amoenus* to violation. Furthermore, Superbus' entrance into the garden and subsequent damage of the landscape mirrors the destructive actions of his son. Sextus penetrates the city boundaries of Gabii and becomes a danger to the city and its inhabitants. Both Superbus and Sextus circumvent boundaries and cause damage to the enclosed landscapes.

Not only do the boundaries of a garden act as a protective enclosure, but the boundaries also create a separation between those within the boundaries and those not privy to the interior. This separation, as well as the natural fertility of the garden setting, creates a landscape particularly associated with erotic activity. Von Stackelberg argues "the garden was a place where immoderate activity could thrive because its liminality encourages pushing the boundaries

²⁵ von Stackelberg (2009, 96) argues that the Roman garden was particularly concerned with boundaries. Pagan (2006, 24) also argues for the importance of established boundaries in a garden landscape by noting the divine protection of boundaries. Boundaries were guarded by Terminus, god of boundary stones, as well Priapus, who protected the garden boundaries by threatening to rape trespassers. The sexual connotations of violated boundaries will be addressed again in a discussion about boundaries in Ovid's Lucretia narrative beginning on page 42.

of socially acceptable behaviour”.²⁶ The association between garden spaces and sexual activity is evident in Ovid’s story of Vertumnus (*Met.* 14.623-771). The object of Vertumnus’ desire, Pomona, vows to remain a virgin on account of her love of her garden. Vertumnus gains entrance into the garden through various disguises. Finally, in the disguise of an old woman, Vertumnus convinces Pomona to forsake her vows and have sex with him.²⁷ In this story the garden is synonymous with Pomona’s sexuality. At the beginning of the story both the garden and Pomona are desirable, but unattainable.²⁸ The protective boundary of the garden and Pomona’s vow of virginity prevent Vertumnus from satisfying his desire. Once Vertumnus has successfully gained access to the garden, he is also able to realize his desire for Pomona.

This association among the garden landscape, the transgression of its boundaries and erotic activity persists into post-Ovidian literature. Book four of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* emphasizes the vulnerability of the garden to both physical penetration and sexual behaviour. Upon arrival at the Garden of Eden, Satan examines the boundaries of the garden, but he is unable to find an entrance. When Satan leaps over the wall, he is likened to a wolf seeking prey or a thief (4.172-192). Satan’s penetration of these boundaries indicates a danger to the garden and its inhabitants. Tanner argues that Satan’s entrance into Eden is iconographic of his transgressive nature because he defines himself as an enemy to boundaries and limitations, which is emphasized when he teaches Eve to view the limits of Paradise as restrictions on her

²⁶ von Stackelberg 2009, 96. The association between a garden landscape and sexual activity is also evident in ancient sources. Horace states that a youth courts Pyrrha in a grotto among roses (*Hor. Carm.* 1.5.1-3). In the *Pro Caelio* Cicero mentions that Clodia and Caelius were often seen in the same gardens together (36). Von Stackelberg (2009, 98) argues that Cicero’s implication of a sexual relationship through reference of gardens highlights the correlation between gardens and sexual activity.

²⁷ Vertumnus’ entrance into Pomona’s garden has several similarities with Sextus’ entrance into Gabii. Both Vertumnus and Sextus penetrate the boundaries of the landscape through visual deception. Vertumnus disguises himself as an old woman and Sextus displays his scarred back as proof of his estranged relationship with his father to the citizens of Gabii (2.693-8). Both Vertumnus and Sextus, having revealed their true identity, exercise power over the beguiled party. The similarities between these two narratives highlight the conflation of amatory and military domination.

²⁸ Unattainability is often a feature that intensifies the desire of the pursuer in Ovidian rape narratives. I will discuss this further on page 52 in reference to Lucretia’s unattainability.

freedom.²⁹ Not only has Satan transgressed the boundaries, but he corrupts the inhabitants of the garden with his transgressive nature. Through the eyes of Satan, Eden is no longer an enclosed space of joy, but it becomes a walled space, whose boundaries must be circumvented for the realization of true freedom. Satan's ability to corrupt Eve with his transgressive nature is particularly evident when Eve refers to God as 'Our Great Forbidder' (9.815). Satan's physical penetration of the garden boundaries not only damages the innocence of the garden, but also its inhabitants.

Satan does not only represent a threat to the physical boundaries of the garden, but his entrance into Eden has sexual implications as well. Milton describes Eden in comparison to the meadow in which Persephone gathers flowers and the grove of Daphne (4.268-86). In the *Metamorphoses* both of these landscapes are *loci amoeni* and their descriptions are followed by rape narratives.³⁰ Similar to Ovid's use of the *locus amoenus* to prelude sexual violence, Milton is also preparing for violence in a peaceful landscape and for the 'rape' of Eve.³¹ The sexual implications of these Ovidian landscapes suggest that Eden will also become a landscape of sexual violence. The garden in the Pomona narrative and Milton's Eden both suggest a correlation between the garden landscape and the sexuality of an enclosed female. The boundaries of both gardens protect the innocence and chastity of the enclosed women, Eve and Pomona. Violation of the physical boundaries of these gardens represents a violation of the women as well.³² Le Comte argues that the reader should not be surprised when Eve returns to

²⁹ Tanner 1992, 156-7.

³⁰ Persephone is abducted and raped by Hades while picking flowers in a meadow (*Met.* 5.385- 408, *Fast.* 4.420-54). Daphne is chased through a forest by Apollo, but she transforms into a tree before he is able to catch her (*Met.* 1.452-.567).

³¹ Martindale (1985, 315) argues that throughout book nine there is a strong implication that Satan is seducing Eve and the Fall includes a corruption of sexual innocence.

³² Green (2009, 149-180) compares the garden landscapes of these narratives to the chastity of Pomona and Eve. Gentilcore (1995, 110-120) discusses the symbolic relationship between Pomona's sexuality and her garden. Le Comte (1978, 80) suggests that a violation of Eden implies a violation of Eve as well.

Adam and she is described as “deflowered” (9.901) because she has lost her sexual innocence.³³

The purity and innocence of Eve is dependent on the impenetrability of the garden. Thus, gardens in Ovidian and post-Ovidian literature are particularly concerned with boundaries because the breaching of garden boundaries reveals the vulnerability of the garden and subjects its inhabitants to physical and sexual harm.

III. Substitution of Lilies for Poppies

Aside from the erotic connotations of a garden setting, the story of Gabii is also eroticized through the mention of plucked lilies. Once Sextus has successfully infiltrated Gabii, he sends a messenger to his father asking him for advice. Superbus does not speak to the messenger, instead he cuts down the tallest lilies (*lilia summa metit*, 2.706). Ovid follows Livy’s version of this event closely except for his substitution of lilies for poppies. In Livy’s version, Superbus strikes off the tallest heads of poppies (*summa papauerum capita...decussisse*, 1.54.6). The action of cropping vegetation as a message has precedent in Herodotus’ story of Thrasyboulos and Periander (5.92). In this narrative Periander receives advice about governing a city from Thrasyboulos, who cuts off the tops of grain.³⁴ Cropping vegetation as a message does not necessarily suggest any erotic connotations. In the Gabii narrative, however, the cropping of lilies does suggest eroticization because of the sexual implication of plucking flowers as well as the correlation between lilies and erotic stories.

³³ Le Comte 1978, 80.

³⁴ The cutting of vegetation by a ruler can have political implications. See Felton (1998, 42-54) for a detailed discussion about relationship between this action and tyranny. Felton (1998, 44-5) also argues that Livy’s inclusion of poppies represents the decapitation of citizens, which is a necessity for tyrannical rule.

III.i. Plucking Flowers

Aside from a means of covert communication, the plucking of flowers usually contains erotic implications. The plowing of fields or picking of flowers is often a metaphor for sexual activity, particularly the defloration of a virgin.³⁵ Parry argues that there is a correlation between the virginal qualities of an uncultivated field or meadow and the virginal qualities of the victim picking flowers. The virginal aspects of both landscape and character portend violence enacted against both.³⁶ In the *Metamorphoses* picking flowers is such a standard form of danger that Dryope provides a warning for her son before her own metamorphosis saying that he should beware of pool and never pluck blossoms from trees (9.380). In the capture of Gabii, the virginal qualities of plucking flowers are also highlighted through the wordplay of *virga* (2.706), which is the staff Superbus uses to cut the lilies. Felton suggests that *virga* is probably an intentional wordplay because of the similarity between *virga* (staff) and *virgo* (virgin).³⁷ Aside from erotic connotations derived from this wordplay, it is also possible to argue for another wordplay with the double-entendre in the word *virga*. *Virga* can be translated as a rod, staff or branch, which is a suitable instrument for cropping flower heads, but it is also extensively used as a metaphor for the penis.³⁸ The erotic implication of picking flowers along with both possible versions of wordplay with the word *virga* emphasizes the erotic nature of this narrative.

III.ii. Erotic Association with Lilies

In addition to plucking flowers, the substitution of lilies for poppies also suggests the eroticization of this narrative. Ovid's narrative is the only Roman version of this story to include

³⁵ Adams (1982, 83) provides a general overview of significance of this metaphor. Hinds (2002, 133) and Segal (1969, 33) elaborate on the poetic significance of the relationship between picking flowers and the defloration of a virgin.

³⁶ Parry 1964, 269.

³⁷ Felton 1998, 50.

³⁸ Adams 1982, 14-15.

lilies; all others have poppies.³⁹ Ogilvie dismisses this difference stating that Ovid substitutes lilies for poppies for metrical reasons.⁴⁰ It seems unlikely that Ovid could not manipulate the poem in order to include poppies, if he had wanted to mirror Livy's version. Murgatroyd suggests that Ovid chose to use lilies in his version because they have more visual appeal (they are taller than poppies) and they are more specific (the tallest lilies stand for the most eminent men).⁴¹ Although lilies do have visual appeal, I argue that the more significant reason for Ovid's substitution of lilies is their association with erotic narratives. In elegiac poetry lilies are often mentioned in connection to young, desirous characters, who pick these flowers prior to a rape narrative. In Propertius 1.20 Hylas is picking shining lilies and red poppies when the Thynian Nymphs seize him. Persephone is gathering violets and lilies when Dis seizes her (*Met.* 5.392). In the *Fasti*, Persephone's friends are picking a variety of different flowers, but Persephone herself is picking crocuses and lilies when Dis seizes her (*Fast.* 4.442).⁴² Poets also use lilies to describe the appearance of a desired character. Propertius describes Cynthia as having a face whiter than lilies (2.3). In the *Aeneid*, when it is revealed that Turnus will fight with Aeneas, Lavinia blushes, which is described as Indian ivory with a crimson stain, or pale lilies mixed with roses (12.68). When Salmacis watches Hermaphroditus swim, his body moving through the water is described as an ivory statue or bright lilies behind clear glass (*Met.* 4.355). In Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* when Medea is led to the summit of the walls in order to look down at

³⁹ Felton 1998, 49.

⁴⁰ Ogilvie 1965, 206. I find this argument particularly unconvincing since Ovid has used poppies in elegiac couplets previously (*Am.* 2.6.31; *Fasti* 4.151, 532, 547).

⁴¹ Murgatroyd 2005, 189. This explanation for Ovid's substitution of lilies for poppies seems especially weak. Although it is possible to argue that lilies have more visual appeal and are more specific, it seems unlikely that this would be the only reason for Ovid to alter this story.

⁴² The combination of white and red flowers, which is present in these examples, is not usual. It is common for the mix of white and red to represent the blushing or bleeding of virgins.

Jason amid the fighting, her life is compared to the life of a lily (6.492-494).⁴³ The colour of lilies makes them easily comparable to the pale skin of a desired youth. In comparison, elegiac poets use poppies sparingly and usually in relation to their sleep inducing properties.⁴⁴ Thus, these examples highlight the erotic connotations of lilies both as flowers picked prior to a rape narrative and as a way to describe the complexion of a desired youth. Ovid's decision to include lilies in his Gabii narrative instead of poppies indicates an eroticization of this military story.

IV. The Eroticized Defeated

The erotic nature of this conquest is further emphasized through Ovid's description of the defeated. Felton argues that the association of innocence and virginity with lilies also applies to the leaders of Gabii, who are innocent of fault.⁴⁵ Robinson also argues that the substitution of lilies for poppies invites a more active comparison between the people of Gabii, whom Sextus destroys and the delicate lilies, which Superbus destroys.⁴⁶ In the same way that a comparison to lilies or the action of picking lilies portends rape for a myriad of other characters, the people of Gabii will also be victims of erotic domination. Ovid highlights his eroticization of the defeated through his description of the walls as naked of their leaders (*ducibus...nuda suis*, 2.710). Sextus' defeat has left the city naked and bereft of its protection, the prominent men of the city.

⁴³ It is said that Medea is like lilies, whose lives are short and their glory flowers only for a short time. This is likely a reference to the love affair between Jason and Medea, which will be the ultimate source of destruction for Medea. Thus, not only does this comparison of Medea to lilies refer to her desirability, but also the devastation caused by this attraction.

⁴⁴ Ovid mentions poppies in the *Amores* as the seeds Corinna's parrot often ate (2.6). The sleep inducing properties of poppies are mentioned in both the *Aeneid* and *Fasti*. In the *Aeneid*, Dido mentions poppies to Anna when she describes the witch, who guards the shrine of the Hesperides and scatters her slumberous poppies around the area (4.486). In the *Fasti* Ceres feeds Demophoon poppy seeds in warm milk so that he can sleep (4.547).

⁴⁵ Felton 1998, 50.

⁴⁶ Robinson 2011, 450.

It is not unusual for a conquered city to be described as *nuda* (stripped), nor it is unusual for the conquest of a city to be sexualized.⁴⁷ The conquered city and its citizens are likened to passive female victims and the victorious generals to dominant males. In the *Iliad* Troy's walls are compared to the headdress (κρήδεμνα) of a woman (16.100). In his commentary of book 16, Janko states that the breaching of the citadel's walls is compared to a captive woman's headdress being torn off.⁴⁸ In addition, the epithet εὐστέρφανος (well-crowned) is commonly used both of goddesses and cities in Hesiod and Homer.⁴⁹ The interchangeability of this epithet and the comparison of Troy's walls to a headdress both demonstrate the correlation between cities and women. This comparison continues with the capture and destruction of a city. When a city is defeated, the city is depicted as a submissive, captive woman. A relief from Aphrodisias depicts the emperor Claudius kneeling over a half-naked woman, who is meant to symbolize Britannia, in a submissive position.⁵⁰ The personification of Britannia as a naked woman clearly demonstrates the association between captured cities and captive women. Joplin argues that a woman's chastity can be compared to the walls of a city, both are surrounded by prohibitions and precautions. The only way that the walls should be breached or the virginity should be taken is in a manner that ensures the health of the existing political hierarchy.⁵¹ In the personification of cities as women, Sextus' betrayal and capture of Gabii represents his rape of the city. Thus, Sextus' entrance into Gabii and subsequent destruction of the city mirrors Superbus' entrance into the garden *locus amoenus* and his destruction of the lilies. This similarity transforms this

⁴⁷ Cic. *Agr.* 1.5 and Liv. 26.44.6 both use *nudus* to describe a defeated city.

⁴⁸ Janko 1994, 329.

⁴⁹ It is an epithet of Thebes (*Th.* 978, *Il.* 19.99), Mycenae (*Od.* 2.120), Aphrodite (*Th.* 1008, *Od.* 8.267, *Od.* 8. 288) and Hera (*Il.* 21.511).

⁵⁰ See Kleiner (2007, 113) for an image of this relief.

⁵¹ Joplin 1991, 44. I will return to the relationship between womanly chastity and political health in a discussion about Sextus' violation of Lucretia and Tereus' violation of Philomela beginning on page 67.

military victory into an erotic conquest, in which Sextus is the aggressive pursuer and the citizens of Gabii are the victims of his sexual pursuit.

V. The Relationship between Martial and Elegiac Themes

Although several scholars have identified Ovid's eroticization of this narrative, I argue that the significance of this eroticization has not been entirely addressed.⁵² Clearly, Ovid's eroticization of this narrative conforms to the elegiac concerns of the *Fasti* as a whole and prefigures Sextus' subsequent rape of Lucretia. There is, however, a tradition of elegiac poetry incorporating military terminology and themes, which has not been addressed in relation to this narrative. Elegists often begin their work with a *recusatio*, which is a refusal to write poetry of a certain kind.⁵³ In elegiac works the *recusatio* usually is a refusal to write epic poetry. This refusal to write epic poetry is interesting because it suggests that there was some pressure on poets to write a certain kind of poetry. Herbert-Brown argues that Maecenas, and Augustus through extension, pressured poets to write heroic poetry imbued with Augustan themes.⁵⁴ Certainly elegiac motif of refusing to write about public themes suggests that there is some political pressure to do so. Yet, this refusal of epic themes is disingenuous because elegy incorporates and usurps that from which it distances itself. Elegy regularly appropriates military and epic terminology in an elegiac context. Thus, elegists define their poetry as distinct from the public genre of epic, but regularly include aspects of epic in their work. I argue that Ovid's elegiac

⁵² Murgatroyd (2005, 190) argues that Ovid's version of this story makes Sextus even more immoral and formidable, which elicits sympathy for Sextus' victims, both the citizens of Gabii and subsequently Lucretia. Fox (1996, 212) concentrates on the Lucretia narrative and does not assign any significance to Ovid's variations in the Gabii narrative. Robinson (2011, 439) argues that the eroticization of the Gabini serves as a link to the subsequent narrative about the rape of Lucretia. Felton (1998, 52) argues that both Livy and Ovid emphasize the cruel tyrannical nature of Sextus and his father, but in different manners.

⁵³ For example, Prop. 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.9; Ovid *Amores* 1.1, 2.1; Tibullus 1.1, 2.6 and Hor. *Od.* 1.6; 4.2.

⁵⁴ Herbert-Brown 1994, 12. She examines Propertius' refusals in 2.1 and 3.9, which specifically address Maecenas, Augustus' patron of letters. She also argues that although Callimachus is said to have inspired the Roman *recusatio*, it must also be assumed that the Romans would adopt such a motif only if it related to their environment.

transformation of this historical narrative is an extension of this elegiac motif. Before examining Ovid's version of this motif, I will first outline the elegiac tradition of conflating erotic and military themes through several examples, including the reception of divine guidance, being 'soldiers of love' and comparing erotic conquests to military victories.

V.i. Elegy vs. Epic: Divine Guidance

One of the ways in which elegy both incorporates and distances itself from epic themes is through the epic motif of receiving divine guidance. Elegists describe themselves as receiving divine guidance, which inspires them to write elegy as opposed to epic. In 3.3 Propertius dreams that he is on Mount Helicon⁵⁵ and drinking at the spring of the epic poet Ennius, but Apollo appears and redirects his poetic inspiration. Although Propertius rejects the established form of epic inspiration, he justifies his choice of elegiac subject matter through the inclusion of another source of inspiration. This could be seen as elevating elegy to the level of divinely inspired epic poetry or bringing epic down to the level of elegy through mockery of its claim for divine inspiration. Either way, adopting the epic tradition of divine inspiration demonstrates an appropriation of epic themes. In *Amores* 1.1 Ovid also appropriates the epic motif of receiving divine inspiration. He states that he was preparing to write epic poetry, when Cupid intervened and compelled him to write elegy instead by stealing a foot from his poem to form an elegiac couplet (1.1.1-4).⁵⁶ Cupid mocks Ovid stating that Ovid writing epic would be equal to Venus and Minerva exchanging weapons (1.1.7-8). The implication is that Ovid is no more suited to write epic poetry, as Minerva is to carry the torches of Venus. In both Propertius 3.3 and *Amores* 1.1, the appearance of a divine figure urging the poet to write elegy rather than epic both

⁵⁵ This is a reference to Hesiod, who claims that he was divinely inspired to compose the *Theogony* while shepherding on Mount Helicon (*Theo.* 22-3). It also references Ennius, who began his work with a dream that he was on Mount Helicon and was visited by Homer, who inspires him to write his epic of Roman history.

⁵⁶ See Barsby (1973, 41) for further discussion about the elegiac couplet in this poem.

distances the two genres from each other and illuminates their similarities. The poet rejects the composition of epic, but appropriates the epic tradition of receiving divine inspiration into elegy.

V.ii. Elegy vs. Epic: Soldiers of Love

The elegiac appropriation of epic or military themes is also demonstrated through the *topos* of elegists as ‘soldiers of love’. Elegists reject the traditional glory of a military career, but justify their rejection by likening the toils of a soldier to the toils of a lover. In his first elegy, Tibullus rejects military service in favour of a life of love and rural *otium* (1.1.75-8).⁵⁷ For the elegiac poets claiming to be soldiers of love (*militia amoris*) and rejecting traditional military service was a defining feature of the poetic program. Gale argues that Tibullus’ use of this *topos* “relies on the fact that love is both like war (and therefore the elegist is as good as the soldier/politician and the epic poet) and unlike war (which is rejected in favour of the life of peace, love and *otium*)”.⁵⁸ Although the elegiac poet rejects war and military service, which are the traditional topics of epic poetry, the poet ultimately usurps that which he rejects through the appropriation of epic subject matter into erotic narratives. The private struggles of the bedroom rival the public glory achieved through military service. In 2.1 Propertius states that struggling naked with Cynthia compels him to compose long *Iliads* (2.1.13-14). The comparison of struggling with Cynthia in bed to the battles of the *Iliad* challenges the glory associated with military battles. Gale argues that this comparison claims for elegy a status equal to epic and mocks traditional morality.⁵⁹ This conflation of military and amatory themes allows the subject

⁵⁷ Cairns (1979, 33-4) argues that this rejection of the soldiering life is primarily a literary gesture and not a political stance. As Herbert-Brown (1994, 12) has argued, however, the *recusatio* could also be a reaction to the political pressure to write about certain themes.

⁵⁸ Gale 1997, 79.

⁵⁹ Gale 1997, 81. Stahl (1985, 171) also argues that Propertius assigns the subject of this poem, his love for Cynthia, with the same importance as epic and history.

matter of elegy to rival the weighty matters of epic. By attempting to distance itself from epic, the genre of elegy actually appropriates its themes and presents itself as equal to epic.

V.iii. Elegy vs. Epic: Erotic Triumphs

Much like the comparison Ovid creates between the military victory over Gabii and an erotic conquest, elegists also appropriate military themes into their discussions about erotic conquests.⁶⁰ The connection between military and amatory conquests is not surprising considering that both conquests involve the desire for domination. There are similarities between the victorious party in a military conquest and the dominant pursuer in a rape narrative. Just as there is a correlation between the defeated party of a military conquest and the victim in a rape narrative. The Daphne and Apollo narrative in the *Metamorphoses* (1.452-567) purports to offer an alternative to the conflation of military and amatory conquests. The story begins with Apollo, who has just defeated the Python, questioning why Cupid possesses a bow. Apollo claims that these weapons are better suited for his shoulders rather than the shoulders of a boy (1.456-62). The competition between Cupid and Apollo results in Cupid shooting Apollo with his arrows and causing Apollo to desire Daphne. The argument that Apollo and Cupid have concerning the rightful owner of the bow (1.452-67) implies that the bow is either a weapon suitable for epic killing and hunting or for desire, but not both. Yet the conclusion of this narrative highlights the inseparability of these possibilities. Although Daphne escapes Apollo's advances through her transformation into a laurel tree, Apollo decides to crown victorious generals with laurel wreaths (1.560-1). The laurel becomes a symbol of Apollo's erotic conquest of Daphne, as well

⁶⁰ The elegiac conflation of military and amatory themes is particularly evident in the following poems. In 2.14 Propertius compares the conquest of love to a military victory stating that the girl is his spoil of war (2.14.23-4). Both Propertius and Ovid emphasize the correlation between erotic and military domination in their descriptions of amatory triumphs. An elegiac triumph functions similarly to a military triumph, which is designed to praise a victorious general and display his captives. In *Amores* 1.2, Ovid describes Cupid leading a military triumph with lovers as his captives. In Propertius' version of the elegiac triumph, the poet is the victorious leader of the triumph (3.1.9-12).

as a symbol of military victories for Roman generals. This story demonstrates the ability of elegy and elegiac themes to incorporate the public and martial themes of epic.

VI. Conclusion

The relationship that elegy has with epic and other public genres is twofold. First, elegy creates a clear distinction between public and private matters by refusing to discuss matters suitable to public genres. Elegy, however, departs from this self-imposed marginalization by appropriating themes from epic. As I have mentioned in my discussion about the elegiac *recusatio*, the relationship between elegy and epic is a reflection of Augustan politics. Galinsky argues that Roman elegy is a product of its cultural ambience and although its relationship with Augustan themes is multi-dimensional, it is consistently in dialogue with these themes.⁶¹ It seems more than coincidental that the sudden emergence of elegiac poetry occurs at the same time that Rome is undergoing great political upheaval. In particular the private and personal nature of elegy seems to have some relationship with the political landscape. Epic is a public genre, which strives for longevity and concerns topics far removed from the private life of the poet. In contrast, elegy prides itself on its small scale and concerns the private affairs of the poet. Although the private life described in elegy is not likely the factual life of the poet, the emphasis on the personal, introverted nature of the genre is significant. Elegy brings poetry into the realm of the private and individual at the same time that Augustus is creating legislation to control private life. Feeney argues that “Augustus’ attempt to promote traditional Roman values clashed head-on with traditional Roman values, by obtruding the government into the *paterfamilias*’ area of responsibility, and turning matters traditionally considered private into the subject of public

⁶¹ Galinsky 1996, 270. Galinsky focuses on Tibullus and Propertius in his discussion about Roman elegy. He cautions that elegy’s concern with Augustan themes should not be simplified into a consistently anti-Augustan view.

purview”.⁶² This elegiac emphasis on the private and amatory (albeit fictive) lives of the poets demonstrates a desire for control. Not only do elegists refuse to write on the public themes favoured by the emperor, but they write about their private, amatory lives instead. They assert control over this aspect of their lives and identify it as something separate from the concerns of the emperor. Elegy’s appropriation of epic themes further demonstrates an assertion of control. The elegist resists imperial control over his poetic choices even if his poems contain aspects of epic, a public genre. It is this concept of the poet asserting poetic autonomy through the elegiac redeployment of epic themes that applies to my argument about Ovid’s eroticization of the Gabii narrative.

Even though Livy is a historian and not an epic poet, the opposition that I have established between elegy and epic is nevertheless relevant to this discussion. In contrast to elegy’s private and amatory themes, epic is largely concerned with public and martial themes, which applies to Livy’s historical work as well. Livy’s version of the Gabii narrative highlights the tyrannical nature of both Sextus and his father.⁶³ His chief concern in *Ab Urbe Condita* is morality, both the decline of morality and the need for its regeneration.⁶⁴ This concern for morality is evident in Livy’s description of Superbus’ plot to capture Gabii. Livy states that Superbus resorted to an un-Roman plan of deceit and trickery (1.53.4). Ovid’s version has little concern for morality or the martial strategies for capturing a city. His transformation of this martial narrative into an erotic conquest correlates to the elegiac tradition of appropriating military themes.

⁶² Feeney 1992, 3.

⁶³ Felton (1998, 52) argues that Livy particularly highlights the cruelty and paranoia of a tyrant in this episode.

⁶⁴ Galinsky 1996, 281. This is particularly evident in the preface of Livy’s work, in which he describes the gradual relaxation of morality resulting in the vices of the present day (pref. 9).

Not only does Ovid transport this historical narrative about a military victory into his elegiac poem, but he also re-imagines this military victory as an erotic domination. This transformation demonstrates a desire for poetic autonomy. Historical narratives, particularly ones concerning military victories, are generally assigned to public genres, either historical works or epic poems. Ovid's elegiac version of this narrative demonstrates the power of the poet to re-envision narratives, even those belonging to a public genre. Ovid challenges elegy's self-imposed marginalization to the private, amatory affairs of its poets and incorporates legendary Roman history into his elegiac poem. By incorporating this historical narrative Ovid asserts his poetic autonomy. He responds to the political pressure to write literature on martial themes by incorporating those themes into his elegiac poetry. This chapter, therefore, has demonstrated that Ovid eroticizes his version of the Gabii narrative. He includes a *locus amoenus*, which he regularly associates with rape narratives. He substitutes lilies, which have erotic connotations, for poppies within this narrative. Finally, he likens the defeated citizens of Gabii to sexual victims. Ovid's erotic transformation of this narrative establishes the correlation between public and private themes in elegy. He transports the public themes of historical narratives into the private world of elegy, which demonstrates the freedom of the poet to re-imagine narratives.

CHAPTER TWO

The Rape of Lucretia

The death of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world.

- Edgar Allan Poe, *The Philosophy of Composition*

I. Introduction

Fundamental political events in legendary Roman history occur after the rapes and deaths of beautiful women. The foundations of Rome are built upon the rapes of women such as Rhea Silvia, Lucretia and the Sabine women.¹ This correlation between sexual violence and political action is central to the story of Lucretia, which will be the focus of this chapter. The rape of Lucretia leads to the expulsion of the kings and the foundation of the Republic. The story begins with a group of young men drinking and each boasting about the superior virtue of his own wife. They decide to visit their wives in order to determine whose wife is the most virtuous. Unlike the daughters-in-law of the king, the men discover Lucretia dutifully spinning wool with her maidens and declare her to be the most virtuous wife. Among these men is Sextus, who desires Lucretia upon seeing her and returns to her house later to rape her. After revealing Sextus' crime to her husband and father, Lucretia kills herself. Brutus, one of the men privy to Lucretia's suicide, rallies the men for revolution and initiates the expulsion of the kings.

Although both Ovid and Livy tell the same basic story of Lucretia (*Fasti* 2.721-852; *Ab Urbe Condita* 1.57-59), the focus of their narratives is entirely different. Livy focuses on Brutus' reaction to Lucretia's death and the ensuing political change. In contrast, I will argue that Ovid

¹ Keith (2000, 101-31) discusses the correlation between Roman foundation narratives and sexual violence. Keith (102) states that "at crucial moments in the legendary history of Rome the rape and death of a woman set into motion events leading to the establishment of political institutions central to the Roman state".

eroticizes this political event by transforming Lucretia into a sexualized object of desire and focusing on the sexual violence of the story. Livy's version also includes sexual violence, but the focus of his narrative is Lucretia as a symbol of chastity and Brutus' call for revolution. In contrast, Ovid transforms Lucretia into an elegiac woman, an object of desire, and likens her to other females in book two, who also experience sexual violence and silencing. I will demonstrate that Ovid eroticizes this narrative by focusing on three reoccurring themes within this narrative.

The first theme I will discuss is Ovid's emphasis on household boundaries, particularly as symbolic of female chastity. The transgression of household boundaries endangers the sexual modesty of female characters within the boundaries. I will argue that Ovid emphasizes the sexual significance of violated boundaries throughout his narrative, which relates to the elegiac motif of the *paraclausithyron*. The second theme I will discuss is the visualization of Lucretia in Ovid's version of this narrative. Both the initial description of Lucretia and Sextus' re-imagining of her appearance focus on the physical attributes that incite lust in her viewers. I will argue that this manner of describing Lucretia highlights her desirability and likens her to other elegiac mistresses, who are described similarly. Finally, throughout this narrative Ovid focuses on the correlation between the power and speech. Various male characters describe Lucretia's actions and re-envision Lucretia in a manner suited to their desires. I will argue that the voyeurism of the male characters in Ovid's version emphasizes the passivity of a viewed character, who is able to be re-envisioned by speaking characters. Ovid highlights the connection between speech and power through a reference to Procne at the conclusion of his Lucretia narrative. I will discuss the correlations between Ovid's Lucretia narrative and his Procne and Philomela narrative in the *Metamorphoses* (6.401-674). Since speech and silencing is a reoccurring theme throughout book two, I will also examine other narratives in book two and the beginning of book three of the

Fasti that concern the vulnerability of silence. By examining these three themes in the Ovidian version of the Lucretia narrative, I will argue that Ovid has eroticized his narrative and transposed it to an elegiac genre.

Scholars have argued that Ovid focuses on speech and silencing in this narrative previously. Feeney argues that book two of the *Fasti* is particularly concerned with the regulation of speech.² Newlands argues that speech is gender-coded in this narrative. Men control language and women are silent, which allows women to become political symbols.³ Keegan also argues for a gendered reading of silence in the *Fasti*, particularly in book two.⁴ My own argument touches on the gendered aspect of silencing, particularly as it relates to Ovid's re-imagining of Lucretia as an elegiac woman and Sextus as an elegiac lover. Nevertheless, I am more concerned with the political ramifications of Ovid's treatment of Lucretia and her silence than gender. I argue that Ovid's eroticization of this narrative demonstrates a desire for poetic autonomy. Ovid transforms a political narrative about the overthrowing of the kings and foundation of *libertas* (freedom) into an elegiac narrative. He destabilizes Lucretia's traditional role as the paradigm of virtue and de-emphasizes the political importance of her suicide. This transformation highlights the ability of the poet to re-imagine history. By re-imagining this politically important historical narrative as an elegiac story, Ovid asserts control over history in a private genre. I will first examine Ovid's eroticization of this narrative and then discuss the significance of his version.

² Feeney 1992, 10-12. He argues that the Lucretia narrative is part of Ovid's exploration of silence, speech and *libertas* (freedom).

³ Newland 1995, 148.

⁴ Keegan 2002. In particular, Keegan addresses Lucretia's silence on pages 146-152.

II. Transgressed Boundaries

Like Sextus' transgression of city boundaries and Superbus' entrance into the garden in the Gabii narrative, the violation of boundaries in Ovid's Lucretia narrative also suggests sexual activity.⁵ Ovid describes several transgressed household boundaries throughout this narrative, including the unguarded door of the palace, Sextus' entrance into Collatia and Sextus' entrance into Lucretia's house. These descriptions relate to the elegiac motif of the *paraclausithyron*, which also associates the transgression of boundaries to erotic activity.

II.i. The Unguarded Door

When Sextus and his companions arrive in Rome to visit their wives, they find their wives engaged in merriment and drinking. In Livy's version the women are at a luxurious banquet with friends (1.57.9). Ovid describes the women as keeping watch over their wine with their necks draped in garlands (2.739-40). Ovid's description of these women is slightly more suggestive than Livy's version particularly because of his inclusion of wine. Robinson argues that regardless of how acceptable this behaviour might have been in Ovid's time, it certainly makes a stark contrast between Lucretia, who is weaving with her maidens, and these women.⁶ Ovid emphasizes the scandal of this scene further by stating that no one was guarding the door (*custos in fore nullus erat*, 2.738). Lee argues that the absence of a guard implies that the women had persuaded a servant to open the wine cellar and that the servants were also having a celebration themselves so they were not watching the door.⁷ I argue that this passage should be understood less literally. Ovid's remark about the unguarded door represents the chastity of the women. Like the threshold of the house, they are not guarding themselves against sexual attention. The

⁵ Sextus' violation of city boundaries was addressed on page 23.

⁶ Robinson 2011, 470. He also argues that Ovid's description of garlands around the necks of these women is more suggestive than Livy's description of a luxurious banquet. He argues that this detail indicates the garlands have slipped from the wearer's head to their neck over prolonged periods of revelry.

⁷ Lee 1953, 110.

depiction of these women as inviting sexual attention is reflective of the unrestrained appetite of a tyrant, in this case Sextus.⁸ His inability to control his own desires is reflected in his inability to conduct his household modestly. Ovid's description of the unguarded boundary of the household serves to eroticize this narrative.

II.ii. Collatia

The unguarded door is not the only mention of household boundaries in the Ovidian narrative. The sexual implications of an unguarded or transgressed household boundary are also evident in Ovid's description of Sextus' return to Collatia. In lines 785-6 when Sextus returns to Lucretia's house, Ovid states that the bronze gate of Collatia received the youth, while the sun prepared to hide his face. In comparison, Livy describes Sextus arriving in Collatia with one companion (1.58.1) and does not specifically mention gates or doorways. The description of Sextus arriving in Collatia with a friend in Livy's version makes him significantly less threatening to the household than arriving alone. In addition, Ovid's description of the sun hiding its face also suggests imminent reprobate action. This description is not particularly concerned with creating a realistic setting for the audience to view, rather an atmosphere of foreboding. Parry argues that the sun is generally a threat to lovers because it is able to see everything including shameful or indecent acts.⁹ In the *Iliad*, for example, Zeus fashions a golden cloud around himself and Hera, so that no one, not even Helios, can see them having sex (14.341-45). In the *Metamorphoses* Jupiter creates clouds to hide his pursuit and rape of Io (1.597-600). In both of these examples the pursuer obscures the view of the sun and others in order to hide his sexual deeds. In Seneca's *Thyestes* the sun refuses to shine because of the atrocities Atreus has

⁸ The identification of Sextus as a tyrant and the qualities that are usually associated with tyrants will be addressed later in this chapter.

⁹ Parry 1964, 277. Robinson (2011, 487) also argues that Ovid's description of the sun hiding its face suggests that the sun does not want to witness the impending crime. He also suggests a connection between this description and Sextus' nighttime assault on Gabii.

committed. When Atreus is formulating his plans he states that he will continue even though the day has departed and the sky is vacant (891-2). Furthermore, when it is revealed to Thyestes that he has unknowingly consumed his children, he asks if it was this deed that drove the day back against the dawn (1035-6). The absence of the sun or stars is an inversion of nature and represents the overturning of natural norms. When Sextus enters Collatia and the sun hides its face it is both a reference to the subsequent rape and the horror of these actions. It emphasizes Ovid's eroticization of this narrative through the foreshadowing of both the sexual aspect of Sextus' plan and the subsequent violence.

II.iii. Lucretia's House

In addition to Ovid's sexualization of Sextus' entrance into Collatia, he also eroticizes Sextus' entrance into Lucretia's house. Ovid describes Sextus, an enemy disguised as a guest, entering the *penetralia* of Collatia (*hostis ut hospes init penetralia Collatini*, 2.787). In Livy's version of this scene, Sextus is led into the guest room (*in hospitale cubiculum deductus esset*, 1.58). There are significant differences between these two versions of Sextus' entrance. One difference is the specific mention of Sextus' disguise as a guest in Ovid's version. The line *hostis ut hospes* is included in both versions of this narrative, although Ovid changes the placement of this line. In Livy's version Lucretia calls Sextus *hostis ut hospes* as she is reiterating Sextus' rape to her father and husband (1.58.8). In contrast, Ovid takes this line out of Lucretia's mouth and places it within the earlier narrative.¹⁰ Ovid's inclusion of this phrase earlier in the narrative reveals Sextus' deceitful nature at the beginning of the story and allows the audience to be informed of this danger before the characters. By including this line during Sextus' entrance into

¹⁰ Robinson (2011, 487) notes that both Ovid and Livy use this line. He argues that Ovid's placement of this line in his own narrative as opposed to within Lucretia's speech indicates that his Lucretia is much less rhetorical than Livy's Lucretia. The differences between Lucretia's final speeches in the two versions will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

Lucretia's house, Ovid also highlights a comparison between Sextus' transgression of this boundary and his entrance into Gabii. In both narratives he penetrates the boundaries of the landscape through deception. He appears as a friend, but harbours devious intentions against those offering him hospitality. In both episodes once Sextus has permeated the boundaries he reveals his true purpose and achieves his original desire. In the same way that Sextus' entrance into Gabii and his subsequent capture of the city is sexualized, Sextus' entrance into Collatia and subsequent domination of Lucretia is also sexual. When his real motives are revealed, Sextus turns the inhabitants into sexually passive victims, whether figuratively as in the capture of Gabii or literally in Sextus' rape of Lucretia.

Ovid and Livy also differ in their descriptions of the household area, in which Sextus is admitted. In Livy's version of this scene, Sextus is led into the guest room (*in hospitale cubiculum deductus esset*, 1.58). In contrast, the Ovidian version describes Sextus entering the *penetralia*, which has more impious connotations than Livy's *in hospitale cubiculum*. The *penetralia* refers to the innermost area of a structure, in particular it can refer to the innermost part of a temple. The religious connotation of this word highlights Sextus' inappropriate behaviour and suggests that this is a religious violation. Not only is he overstepping the boundaries of the normal guest-host relationship, but also he is overstepping the boundaries of religious morality. Both the inner area of the house and Lucretia herself are off-limits to Sextus. As such his transgression of both social boundaries is a severe violation. There are also sexual implications in the use of the active or passive verb to indicate Sextus' movement into the house. In Livy's version Sextus is passively led into the room. The use of the passive verb leaves the command of the house and the action firmly in the control of the hostess. In Ovid's version Sextus initiates his own action into the house, suggesting a forceful and commanding presence.

In addition, the verb *ineo* could imply sexual activity. Adams states that *ineo* could be used of sexual entry, although he cautions that this use of the verb requires the specialization of a general verb.¹¹ I argue that *ineo* likely has sexual implications in this passage because of the sexual nature of the narrative as a whole. Ovid's description of household boundaries represents the chastity of the women within the house. For the king's daughters-in-law the absence of a guard at the threshold of their dwelling indicates their sexual immodesty. Sextus' transgression of both the boundaries of Collatia and Lucretia's house is sexualized. This eroticization is indicated through the description of the sun hiding its face, the similarities between this narrative and Sexus' entrance into Gabii, as well as his entrance into the *penetralia* of the household.

II.iv. The *Paraclausithyron*

Ovid's concern with boundaries and doorways also eroticizes this narrative through its correlation with the elegiac motif of the *paraclausithyron*. The *paraclausithyron* is a motif in which a speaker enacts the role of *exclusus amator* (lover locked out), depicting himself as locked outside his beloved's door, where he laments their separation and beseeches the agent of his exclusion (door guard, door or the girl herself) to take pity on him and let him in.¹² In poem 1.2, for example, Tibullus includes a *paraclausithyron*, in which a man guards Delia's door. Tibullus laments his sorrow at the guarded door in hopes that either Delia will sneak out and join him or she will receive him into her chambers. Ovid alludes to the *paraclausithyron* in book one of the *Fasti*, when Ovid and Janus have a discussion and Janus refers to himself as a *ianitor* (1.137-40). Green argues that the term *ianitor* has love-elegy overtones, where it usually refers to the doorkeeper who guards the elegiac mistress.¹³ This discussion between Ovid and the *ianitor*

¹¹ Adams 1982, 190.

¹² James 2003, 295.

¹³ Green 2008b, 182. Green cites several examples of elegiac works that refers to the *ianitor*, including *Am.* 1.6; *Ars* 2.260, 3.587; *Prop.* 4.5.

recalls another occasion in which Ovid conversed with a *ianitor* in *Amores* 1.6. The association between these two instances is further emphasized through the reference to war and closed doors. At 1.277 Ovid asks Janus why he hides in times of peace and why his doors are open when arms have been taken up.¹⁴ In *Amores* 1.6.27-30 Ovid also references closed doors in times of peace by stating that it is useful to have a closed door when cities are under siege, but there is no reason to fear arms in a time of peace. Green argues that the correlation between these two discussions indicates Ovid's consciousness of his previous work.¹⁵ Certainly this correlation does reflect a self-awareness and desire to return to prior themes, but it also emphasizes the relationship between doors and sources of danger. The door is a barrier, which is able to prevent hostility from violating its threshold and protect those on the interior. Ovid eroticizes the Lucretia narrative by highlighting household boundaries throughout his narrative. The transgression of these boundaries suggests sexual activity because of the correlation between boundaries and the elegiac motif of the *paraclausithyron*. Sextus' entrance into Collatia and Lucretia's house, as well as the unguarded door of the palace emphasize the sexual danger of a transgressed boundary.

III. Visualization of Lucretia

Aside from the eroticization of transgressed household boundaries, Ovid also eroticizes this narrative through the visualization of Lucretia. Ovid directs the gaze of the characters and audience in his descriptions of Lucretia, which creates a sexualized image of Lucretia. This visualization of Lucretia occurs in the initial description of Lucretia weaving with her maidens and in Sextus' re-imagination of her appearance. It should be clarified that Ovid's role differs in

¹⁴ See Green (2000, 302-9) for a detailed overview of the debate surrounding Janus' answer to this inquiry.

¹⁵ Green 2008b, 184.

this section about visualizing Lucretia and the subsequent section about Lucretia's silence. In this section, Ovid, as the narrator, invites the audience to visualize Lucretia through Sextus' eyes. Ovid, along with Sextus, plays the role of the powerful lover in transforming Lucretia into a sexualized object of desire. This is not necessarily a reflection of Lucretia's desires, it is a fiction imposed upon her form by the desirous gaze of the male characters. I argue that Ovid asserts poetic autonomy by destabilizing Lucretia's image as the epitome of chastity. He demonstrates control over her visualization and forces the audience to see her as an elegiac mistress. In the subsequent section, the powerful lovers, Sextus and Brutus, both silence Lucretia. Ovid's preoccupation with silencing in both the *Metamorphoses* and book two of the *Fasti* suggests some anxiety about not being able to speak. In his descriptions of Lucretia, therefore, Ovid expresses both the freedom of the poet to re-imagine characters and an anxiety about freedom of speech.

III.i. Lucretia Weaving

When Sextus and the other men first see Lucretia awaiting her husband's return, the audience voyeuristically partakes in this viewing. Keegan argues that the desiring gaze of the poet, characters and audience is a tangible presence, which sets the Ovidian version apart from Livy's story.¹⁶ In Ovid's version the poet, characters and audience all participate in watching Lucretia, whereas Livy's description of Lucretia keeps the audience removed from the story. Livy states that the men find Lucretia in the house busy with her wool and her maidens are busy around her (1.57). In Ovid's version, Lucretia is also weaving, but the audience and spying men are privy to Lucretia talking with her companions and dissolving into tears. Both Livy and Ovid insinuate that the men are viewing Lucretia without her knowledge. This action alone suggests

¹⁶ Keegan 2002, 149.

that the men are outstepping their normal bounds and perhaps viewing something forbidden, but Ovid's description reveals a more intimate and vulnerable side of Lucretia to the audience.

Ovid further highlights the intimacy of viewing Lucretia in this manner through his description of her surroundings. He says that Lucretia is weaving with her companions busy around her and baskets of soft wool before a bed (2.741-3). Newlands argues that the description of Lucretia weaving identifies her with elegy. She notes that the three adjectives used in this scene, *mollis* (soft), *exiguum* (tiny) and *tenuis* (refined), are all frequently used to describe the stylistic qualities of elegiac poetry as opposed to epic.¹⁷ Ovid's use of these elegiac words associates Lucretia and her actions with elegy. In addition to the elegiac connotations of the adjectives, Ovid's description of Lucretia's surroundings also suggests sexualization. Ovid describes Lucretia weaving with soft wool placed in front of a bed (*torus*). Although a traditional Roman house would have an ornamental marriage bed in the front hall (*atrium*) of the house, Ovid's description of a bed could be more suggestive because of the sexual nature of this narrative.¹⁸ In comparison, Livy describes Lucretia's location in her house as in the middle of her house (*in medio aedium*, 1.57.9). Livy's description certainly lacks the same suggestion of sexualization, which is present in Ovid's version.

Ovid's eroticized description of this scene may seem odd since weaving was one of the most obvious signs of matronly chastity.¹⁹ Livy's only description of Lucretia depicts her weaving in the lamplight (1.57.9), which is sufficient enough to warrant the title of most virtuous

¹⁷ Newlands 1995, 172. Newlands also includes several examples; Ovid characterizes his elegies as delicate poems (*mollia carmina*, *Tr.* 2.349), Juno refers to the *Fasti* as written in tiny couplets (*exiguos modos*, *Fasti* 6.22), Horace describes elegy as tiny (*exiguos*, *Ars.* 77) and Ovid characterizes Elegy as dressed in the finest garment (*vestis tenuissima*, *Am.* 3.1.9).

¹⁸ Robinson 2011, 475. Newlands (1995, 149) argues that the placement of the wool in front of Lucretia's bed identifies her as a sexual being.

¹⁹ Barchiesi 2001, 37. Robinson (2011, 475) argues that wool working was a strong image of old-fashioned virtue and domesticity, suggesting a woman who devoted her time to her household, and kept herself busy indoors and away from crowds.

wife and offers a stark contrast to the revelry of the other wives. In the *Odyssey* Penelope weaves in order to hold off her suitors until Odysseus returns. Through her actions, Penelope becomes the epitome of the virtuous woman. Ovid retells the story of Penelope waiting for Odysseus in *Heroides* 1, in the form of a letter written to Odysseus from Penelope. Barchiesi argues that Ovid refigures the Homeric model of weaving as representative of chastity and turns weaving into an eroticized action. He argues that for Ovid's Penelope weaving is not an epic-style trick, it is merely the means of beguiling the nights on which she is deprived of her lover.²⁰ Ovid is not the only poet to refashion this image of the virtuous maiden with an elegiac twist. In Propertius 1.3 Cynthia chastises Propertius for his long absence during the night and claims that she spent the night weaving (1.3.39-44). Although both Cynthia and Penelope wait for the return of their lovers, Cynthia is not comparable to Penelope as a figure of chastity. Elegy absorbs the traditional association between weaving and chastity, and eroticizes it. By re-reading the action of weaving through an erotic lens, Ovid sexualizes figures of chastity such as Penelope and Lucretia, as well as actions of chastity such as weaving. With this in mind, I argue that Ovid's description of Lucretia's location in her household suggests an eroticization of this narrative.

III.ii. Chaste *Matrona* or Elegiac Mistress?

Ovid also highlights the eroticization of this narrative by sexualizing his description of Lucretia and her actions. Ovid's description of Lucretia blurs the distinction between proper Roman *matrona* (wife) and elegiac mistress. In contrast, Livy's Lucretia is the idealized version of a proper Roman *matrona*. Newlands states that "Livy depicts Lucretia as a stern *matrona* and

²⁰ Barchiesi 2001, 36.

introduces no details that invite us to see her as a person rather than as an ideal”.²¹ Ovid’s description of Lucretia suggests that he is not concerned with depicting an idealized *matrona*, rather his Lucretia can be viewed as an elegiac interloper. Livy describes Lucretia weaving, but does not elaborate further on this scene. Ovid’s Lucretia, however, speaks with her maidens, expresses grief at her husband’s absence and embraces her husband upon his return. By expanding this description of Lucretia, Ovid is able to sexualize Lucretia’s actions. When Ovid’s Lucretia drops her head into her lap weeping about her husband’s absence, this gesture as well as her tears are described as becoming (2.755-7). The tears and grief of a woman often elicit desire in Ovidian poetry. In the *Metamorphoses*, for example, Cephalus describes Procris’ sadness and grief as beautiful and becoming (7.730-3).²²

Ovid also highlights Lucretia’s desirability in his description of her embrace with her husband. When Lucretia sees her husband she hangs a “sweet burden” (*dulce...onus*, 2.760) on him. In comparison, Livy’s Lucretia does not show any sign of physical affection towards her husband, but she graciously receives the men into the house (1.57.10). In both versions, Lucretia is a dutiful worried wife, but the Ovidian description of her interaction with her husband transforms her worry and relief into sexual incitements. The description of Lucretia hanging on her husband’s neck is not an image of a dignified Roman *matrona*.²³ Ovid’s descriptions of Lucretia view her as a desirable elegiac woman, instead of the proper Roman *matrona* from Livy’s version.

²¹ Newlands 1995, 149. Lee (1953, 116) also views Livy’s Lucretia as the idealized female, rather than a human and sympathetic figure. He calls Livy’s Lucretia “a virtuous prototype of Lady Macbeth”.

²² Tears and grief are also described as becoming in *Ars.* 1.533-4 and *Am.* 2.5.43-44. Robinson (2011, 479) argues that Ovid’s description of Lucretia’s beauty in her grief delays the narrative and allows the young men watching to be captivated by her tears for an entire couplet before Collatinus comforts his wife.

²³ Robinson (2011, 480) argues that this action is unsuitable for a dignified Roman *matrona* and remarks that Livy’s Lucretia cannot even be imagined in such a girlish action.

By altering the way that the audience views Lucretia, Ovid blurs the boundaries between a *matrona* and a mistress, which is a *topos* well known to elegy.²⁴ In 1.5 Tibullus pictures himself and Delia living in the countryside (1.5.22-34). In this fantasy Tibullus does not present Delia as a mistress, which is her normal role, instead Delia acts like a Roman *matrona*. Cairns notes that in the remainder of the portrayal, Delia does all the things that characterize a wife in the Roman conception of that role.²⁵ Propertius also likens his mistress to a proper wife through another comparison to Penelope. In 2.9 Propertius laments that Penelope was able to remain faithful to Odysseus for twenty years while waiting for his return, whereas his Cynthia has left him for another man. Although Propertius finds Cynthia's character lacking in his comparison to Penelope's character and virtues, it is significant that Propertius believes his mistress should be as faithful to him as Penelope. Elegiac poets often represent their mistresses as good Roman wives, or at least desire their mistresses to behave similar to good wives. Though his description of Lucretia, Ovid blurs the distinction between mistress and good wife, which depicts Lucretia as an elegiac woman and adds to the eroticization of the narrative.

III.iii. Lucretia Through Sextus' Eyes

Sextus maps his own desires onto the appearance and actions of Lucretia, which results in her sexualization. He eroticizes both her modesty and her physical appearance as enticements for his subsequent rape. Joplin argues that a chaste woman's body can be seen as fatally seductive.²⁶ This is particularly true for Sextus, who cites Lucretia's modesty as a source of attraction. Livy

²⁴ Both Fox and Robinson argue that Ovid's portrayal of Lucretia as an elegiac woman has some relationship to the elegiac tendency to blur the distinction between *matrona* and mistress. Fox (1996, 212) argues that the respectability of Lucretia as a *matrona* is brought into question by the elegiac tradition of picturing the mistress as a *matrona*. Robinson (2011, 473) argues that Ovid has turned around the elegiac *topos* of picturing the beloved mistress as a proper Roman *matrona* by portraying the most famous *matrona* of all as an elegiac woman.

²⁵ Cairns (1979, 179). In this poem Tibullus describes Delia looking after the household including the crops, vines, offerings to the gods, meals and the care of guests, particularly Tibullus' patron Messalla (1.5.21-34).

²⁶ Joplin 1991, 41. She adds that this attraction to chastity is not necessarily because of the beauty of purity, instead it reflects an attraction to power. This argument is particularly fitting for Ovidian descriptions of chastity and purity because many of these descriptions are followed by a rape, which is certainly an expression of power.

mentions that Sextus was not only attracted to Lucretia's beauty, but also her chastity (1.57.10). Ovid reiterates this idea, but expands and develops Livy's statement. Lucretia's actions of fidelity, such as her tears over her husband's safety, are becoming (*decuere*, 2.757) to Sextus. In addition, when Ovid lists the desirable attributes of Lucretia he specifically states that something incorruptible (*quod corrumpere non est*) about Lucretia pleases Sextus and that the less hope he has, the more he desires her (2.765-6). In these two lines Ovid reveals that Sextus is attracted to very qualities of Lucretia that render her unwilling to consort with him. Desire for the unattainable is not unique to this narrative, modesty is a trait which often intensifies male desire in elegy. In *Amores* 2.14.11-12 Ovid states that downcast eyes cause him to burn with desire. In book two of the *Fasti* Hercules and Omphale arrive at a cave to spend the night before celebrating rites the following day. Ovid explicitly says that they slept on separate couches in the cave because they had planned to celebrate the rites with purity (2.327-30). Faunus becomes sexually aroused at the sight of Omphale and he attempts to rape her during her night of chastity, but this attempt is foiled because he awakens Hercules instead of Omphale (2.345-350). Omphale's desirability is enhanced by her vow of chastity for the evening and the subsequent unattainability of Faunus' desire. In a similar manner, the modesty and unattainability of Lucretia adds fire to Sextus' proverbial flame.

Not only does Sextus sexualize Lucretia's modesty, but also her physical appearance. Livy's only reference to Lucretia's physical appearance is his statement that Sextus is provoked not only by Lucretia's beauty, but also by her chastity (1.57). Ovid, on the other hand, elaborates on Lucretia's appearance and describes her physical attributes twice. Ovid's first description of Lucretia's appearance describes her figure, her snowy appearance, her yellow hair, her artless grace and other attributes as pleasing to Sextus (2.763-64). This description includes few vivid

details about Lucretia's actual appearance. Robinson suggests that focus of the narrative is about Sextus' character and his frenzied passion for Lucretia rather than creating a clear image of Lucretia's appearance.²⁷ The emphasis on Sextus' frenzied lust continues with a second description of Lucretia's appearance (2.771-4).

*sic sedit. sic culta fuit, sic stamina nevit,
neglectae collo sic iacuere comae,
hos habuit voltus, haec illi verba fuerunt,
hic color, haec facies, his decor oris erat.*

She sat so. She was dressed so, she spun the yarn so, her careless hair
hung on her neck so, this was her face, these were her words, this was her
colour, this was her form, this was the beauty of her face.

These two descriptions of Lucretia follow so closely after one another that it is possible they are included for a heightened emotional impact. The repetition and brevity of these descriptions reflect Sextus' emotional state as he becomes steadily more infatuated with the memory of Lucretia. In comparison to the first description, which contains adjectives, such as snowy and yellow, the second description of Lucretia does not contain any specific details about Lucretia's appearance. This description is merely a summary of her body parts. Keegan argues that this dismemberment of Lucretia is a familiar ploy of amatory verse, but the measure of this predator's desire is inversely proportional to the legitimacy of his object.²⁸ Sextus becomes more enraptured with Lucretia as he returns to camp because she becomes even more unattainable. She is not only the faithful wife of his companion, but also he has left Lucretia's house and so she is no longer in his sight. Ovid describes Sextus' lust for Lucretia through a comparison to a storm and its lasting effects. He states that just as after a great gale the surge subsides, but the waves heave from the dying wind, so too, although her pleasing form was now absent, love remained

²⁷ Robinson (2011, 480-1). Robinson argues that Sextus' desire is presented in epic terms. He states that "Sextus is an epic figure who as a lover fails to adapt to the elegiac world". While this is an intriguing argument, I see no reason to take Sextus' frenzied desire for Lucretia out of the elegiac world.

²⁸ Keegan 2002, 149.

(2.775-8). Sextus' preoccupation with Lucretia's appearance highlights the importance of the desirous gaze in this episode. The mere sight of Lucretia causes Sextus to desire her and it is her appearance that he reiterates in his recollections of her.

As Keegan stated, Sextus' dismembering view of Lucretia is not unique to the Lucretia narrative and is common in elegiac poetry. A male viewer often re-figures the appearance of a female and presents her appearance in a sexualized manner. In *Amores* 1.5 Ovid describes seeing Corinna for the majority of the poem as a precursor to sexual intercourse. Greene argues that Corinna is not seen as whole in this poem, rather she is depicted in fragments by the *amator's* controlling gaze.²⁹ Furthermore, Greene notes that the speaker in this poem details Corinna's parts - her shoulders, arms, breasts, belly, flank and thigh, but he does not mention Corinna's head, face or eyes, which are the parts of the body most associated with a person's humanity.³⁰ The narrator focuses on the parts of Corinna's body that are not personal and distinct, which makes Corinna into an object of desire. In this poem, she does not have a voice, personality or thoughts, her description is limited to only those physical attributes which incite lust in the male viewers. Ovid's deconstruction of Corinna's body is similar to Sextus' recollection of Lucretia. Sextus, however, includes more details about Lucretia's face and words because her modesty is also a source of attraction for him. In both Ovidian narratives, the controlling gaze of the lover deconstructs the female body and emphasizes the parts that are most desirable to him.

In 1.3 Propertius describes himself approaching the sleeping Cynthia and he watches her while she sleeps. Cynthia is merely a silent, visual object for this section of the poem. Sharrock

²⁹ Greene 1998, 77.

³⁰ Greene 1998, 83. She argues that the *amator* dehumanizes his mistress not only through his dismemberment, but she is also lifeless because she has been rendered headless in the description. This ability to disassemble and reconstruct the female body in a dehumanizing, sexual manner is a relevant topic even in post-Ovidian artwork. Rene Magritte's *The Rape* is a painting of a woman's face, but the facial features have been replaced by the torso and pelvis of a naked woman. Similar to the literary reconstruction of Corinna's body, this painting dehumanizes the female physical appearance and focuses on the sexual aspects of the body.

compares the elegiac woman to the story of Pygmalion, arguing that both are stories of vivifying the inert material, creating an erotic object and loving the creation.³¹ With this in mind, Cynthia is an object of art and Propertius through his visualization and creation of Cynthia is the artist. The audience is forced to visualize the sleeping Cynthia through the perspective of the narrator as he controls the description and provides the mythological comparanda. Breed argues that “through the narrator’s eyes the poem very strongly imposes a male and erotically charged perspective on its readers”.³² The narrator moulds and shapes Cynthia into an object of desire without her participation in any manner. In a sense, she is merely dough for the poet to fashion into a desirous vision through the sexualization of his gaze. Mulvey argues that “the determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly”.³³ In all of these examples, the poet re-envisioned the female figure moulding her into an object of desire through his description and direction of the gaze. Sextus’ dismemberment of Lucretia’s physical appearance eroticizes the narrative by transforming his desire for Lucretia into a relationship between the elegiac *amator* and the object of his desire, the elegiac woman.

In the *Fasti* the sight of a female is often described as the cause of instantaneous desire and an enticement for sexual action usually without the consent of the female.³⁴ Richlin argues that the emphasis on the beauty and sight of the female form in these narratives suggests that the women are “asking for it” through their beauty.³⁵ King makes a similar argument for Lucretia.

³¹ Sharrock 1991, 49.

³² Breed 2003, 48. Breed argues that the description of Cynthia does not allow for the possibility of pure objectivity because there is a focalization of what it describes. The reader views Cynthia through Propertius’ description and thus the description inevitably reflects his point of view. For an examination of focalization, particularly in ekphrasis see Fowler (1991).

³³ Mulvey 1997, 436.

³⁴ Examples of female physical appearance causing desire and sexual action in the *Fasti* include Lotis (1.415-20), Callisto (2.161), Omphale (2.307-12), Rhea Silvia (3.21-2) and Vesta (6.331-6). The physical appearance of a female is often the impetus for instantaneous desire and sexual action in the *Metamorphoses* as well. For a detailed examination of Ovid’s rape narratives in the *Metamorphoses* see Curran (1984).

³⁵ Richlin 1992, 170. She specifically references the Omphale, Vesta and Lotis narratives in her argument.

He states that although she displays chastity in her traditional activities and naive discourse, her inner erotic desire seeks expression.³⁶ Although Ovid's Lucretia is more emotional in both her grief at her husband's absence and relief at her husband's appearance than Livy's Lucretia, these emotions are imagined to be erotically charged by the viewer, Sextus, and the narrator, Ovid. King's interpretation of Lucretia assumes that Ovid is portraying the thoughts and desires of Lucretia in this narrative, which is doubtful. The vision of Lucretia and her companions is told from the perspective of the men watching her.

Sextus' ability to re-imagine Lucretia's chaste actions as immodest behaviour is comparable to the re-imagining of actions in Seneca's *Phaedra*. In this play Phaedra falls in love with her stepson, Hippolytus. Hippolytus often devotes his time to running through the woods, which reflects his choice of a celibate life (230-2). This chaste action, however, is re-imagined by Phaedra as sexual incitement, since she intends to chase him throughout the wilderness (233-5). Phaedra views the woods as the location to find love and Hippolytus views the woods as an escape from the torments of love. Conte argues that the theme of a lover who searches to find love in the woods can change into that of the lover who tries to escape from love in those same woods.³⁷ A similar erotic redefinition of the same landscape is evident in the story of Daphne and Apollo (*Met.* 1.452-567). Daphne's escape to the woods is an action of chastity, which is re-imagined by Apollo as an erotic hunt. Through these examples it is clear that the same action (running through the woods) can represent different ideas depending on the interpretation of the viewer.

³⁶ King 2006, 212. He argues that her 'inner erotic desire' is evident by her deferred longing (*longas moras*, 2.722), her 'dying' (*morior*, 2.753) and the reoccurrence of armed warriors at siege in her thoughts (2.749-50).

³⁷ Conte (1986, 122). Conte is comparing Phaedra's love of Hippolytus to the plight of Gallus in Vergil's tenth eclogue, since both characters seek the wilderness as a remedy for their amorous woes.

As such, Lucretia's weaving and actions of concern for her absent husband can be understood in various ways depending on the viewer. King's argument that Lucretia's inner erotic nature seeks expression views her actions as sexual enticements. This is not, however, the only way of viewing her actions. In the same way that Daphne's and Hippolytus' escapes into the wilderness could be read as a representation of their chastity or an invitation for a sexual chase, Lucretia's actions are susceptible to erotic redefinition depending on the interpretation of the viewer. Since there has been no indication that the sexualization of Lucretia has been a reflection of her own desires, it seems that the sexualization of Lucretia's appearance, actions and words stems from her desirous viewer, Sextus. Ovid's focus on visualization allows Lucretia's actions and her physical appearance to be transformed into sexual enticements through the desiring eyes of Sextus. This sexualization of Lucretia likens her to an elegiac mistress and contributes to the eroticization of the narrative as a whole. It destabilizes the traditional chastity associated with Lucretia and demonstrates the power of the poet to mould historical figures into alternate versions.

IV. The Vulnerability of Silence

The relationship between the *amator* and his mistress can be described as a relationship between the viewer and the viewed. The viewer is the party with the power to fashion the viewed into a desirous image, which effectively renders the viewed party speechless. The loss of speech that the elegiac mistress suffers as a result of this relationship is generally not a topic of concern for elegists. Ovid, however, is particularly concerned with the vulnerability of silence and the power of speech in both the *Metamorphoses* and the *Fasti*. It is significant that for the remainder of the narrative, Ovid's Lucretia experiences a loss of speech, which Livy's Lucretia does not. I

argue that Ovid highlights the vulnerability of silence both prior to Lucretia rape and in the aftermath of her rape. In these sections of the narrative, Ovid expresses an anxiety about the loss of speech. He emphasizes a connection between this narrative and other narratives about the anxiety of silence including the Philomela narrative in the *Metamorphoses* and several other narratives in book two of the *Fasti*.

IV.i. Lucretia's Silence: Prior to Rape

Lucretia's spontaneous speechlessness in Ovid's version of the rape scene illustrates the difference between Ovid and Livy's views of silencing. In Livy's version, Sextus addresses Lucretia with the words "Silence, Lucretia, I am Sextus Tarquin; there is a sword in my hand; you will die, if you send forth a sound" (*Tace Lucretia, inquit, Sex. Tarquinius sum; ferrum in manu est; moriere, si emiseric vocem*, 1.58). Livy's Sextus expressly forbids Lucretia to speak, but Ovid's Lucretia is not forbidden to speak, she simply loses her ability to do so.

*utque torum pressit, "ferrum, Lucretia, mecum est,"
natus ait regis, "Tarquiniusque loquor."
illa nihil neque enim vocem viresque loquendi
aut aliquid toto pectore mentis habet. (2.795-98)*

When he pressed the bed, the son of the king said "There is a sword with me, Lucretia, and I, Tarquin, am speaking." She said nothing, for she had neither voice nor the strength for speaking nor any thought in her whole body.

There is a significant correlation between Sextus' assertion of speech in these lines and Lucretia's loss of speech. Sextus' strong assertion of his ability to speak and Lucretia's spontaneous silence clearly demonstrates the power relationship between these two characters. Newlands argues that Lucretia's inability to speak demonstrates the gendered power struggle between these two characters. When Lucretia loses her ability to speak, Ovid states that she does not have the strength (*vires*) for speaking (*loquendi*). Newlands argues that the use of *vires* in

this line is suggestive of a gendered power struggle because of the etymological relation to *vir* (man), as well as the sexual pun implicit in *vires*, which can describe the male genitalia.³⁸ In addition to Newland's argument that Lucretia's silence is a result of her femininity, I would add that her silence is also a result of her status as a viewed object. As the active viewer in this narrative Sextus holds all of the power and this is reflected in his ability to speak. The emphasis on speech and its correlation to power is also evident in Ovid's variations of the verb *loquor* (to speak).³⁹ Ovid uses variations of the verb *loquor* at the end of consecutive lines. Whereas the first person active "I speak" (*loquor*) emphasizes Sextus' control over speech, the use of the objective genitive to describe Lucretia's speechlessness highlights her helplessness. Sextus' ability to speak and Lucretia's inability to speak indicates the unequal distribution of power in this scene.

Sextus also asserts his control of the situation in the rape scene through his reference to his sword. In both versions of the rape scene Sextus specifically mentions his sword to Lucretia, which should be understood as phallic imagery. Adams notes that the sexual symbolism of weapons was instantly recognizable in ancient society because the metaphor was so common.⁴⁰ Ovid further emphasizes the sexual imagery of the sword through the inclusion of earlier reference to Sextus' sword. In a particularly suggestive line Sextus rises and draws his sword from a golden sheath before entering Lucretia's bedroom (2.793). Although these references to Sextus' sword emphasize the threat of physical violence which necessitates Lucretia's compliance in this act, the references are certainly suggestive of sexual violence, as well as

³⁸ Newlands 1995, 151.

³⁹ Newland (1995, 150-1) argues that "by placing *loquor* and *loquendi* at the end of two consecutive lines, Ovid emphasizes that speech means power". She argues that Sextus' control of the situation is marked by his first person active use of the verb "I speak" as well as the linguistic encircling of Lucretia's name with Sextus and his sword (*ferrum, Lucretia, mecum est*, 2.795). Robinson (2011, 490) also notes how the word order this line emphasized Lucretia's situation of being trapped between Sextus and his sword.

⁴⁰ Adams 1982, 19.

physical. In the same way that Sextus' capture of Gabii could be understood as his rape of the city, Sextus' rape of Lucretia uses military and sexual domination interchangeably. In Seneca's *Phaedra* Hippolytus' sword also highlights the association between violent and sexual themes. When Hippolytus discovers his stepmother's love for him, he threatens to kill her, which she welcomes (706-12). After seeing her reaction to his sword, however, Hippolytus abandons his sword stating that the contaminated sword must leave his chaste side (714). Clearly there is an association between the sword and sexuality. Hippolytus does not want the sword near him because of the pleasure, both physically and sexually, it could bring to his stepmother. In the same way that Hippolytus rejects his sword because of the sexual connotations it has, Sextus asserts his control sexually and physically in this scene through references to his sword.

IV.ii. Lucretia's Silence: After Rape

In the events following Lucretia's rape, the inability of Ovid's Lucretia to speak continues to indicate her lack of power. After her rape, Lucretia sends a message to her husband and father that they should come to the house. In Livy's version Lucretia delivers two eloquent speeches regarding the events of the previous night and her decision to kill herself. In her first speech she reveals to the men that Sextus raped her and asks them to pledge vengeance on Sextus (1.58.7-8). In her second speech Livy's Lucretia states her intention to kill herself so that "an unchaste woman will never live by the example of Lucretia" (1.58.10). The ability of Livy's Lucretia to deliver two eloquent speeches to her husband and father is a reflection of Livy's literary aims. Since his Lucretia becomes an agent for political change, it is necessary for the men to feel outraged at her violation and pledge their revenge against Sextus.⁴¹ With this in

⁴¹ Several scholars have argued that the ability of Livy's Lucretia to deliver polished and rhetorical speeches reflects Livy's focus on the political change this rape inspired. Fox (1996, 212) argues that the outrage of the men at the rape of a Roman *matrona* is a central aspect of Livy's story and becomes the agent for political change. Lee (1953, 115) also argues that Lucretia's speeches strive for rhetorical effect and create the impression that Lucretia is striking an

mind, it is not surprising that Livy's Lucretia is able to speak eloquently to her husband and father about her rape. Certainly Livy has no reason to portray Lucretia at this moment as a sympathetic and realistic figure. Throughout Livy's version of this narrative Lucretia remains the example of an ideal. Lee argues that Livy "moulds her in granite, not flesh and blood, as a majestic monument for a later and degenerate age to gaze upon with awe".⁴² Lucretia becomes the ideal example of a chaste woman and the symbol of abused power, which results in the expulsion of the kings.

Ovid's Lucretia, on the other hand, is not able to deliver a polished speech about her rape because she remains powerless and subsequently speechless. When the men arrive in Ovid's version, Lucretia is unable to say anything immediately. At first she hides her face in shame and cries abundantly (819-20). Then she attempts to speak three times before she is able to utter a portion of the story (2.823). Even when Lucretia is able to speak briefly, she is not able to finish the story with words, instead she blushes (2.823-8). Lucretia's actions in this section, including her tears and blushing, liken her to an elegiac figure. Robinson argues that abundant tears are expected from such an elegiac figure.⁴³ Furthermore, the blushing of a female often incites lust from a desiring male character. In *Aeneid* 12.70, for example, Lavinia's blushing causes love to rage inside of Turnus.⁴⁴ In addition to these actions, Ovid's Lucretia also differs from Livy's Lucretia in the reasons for her suicide. Unlike Livy's Lucretia, the Ovidian Lucretia does not use her suicide as an example to future women. She merely states that she refuses the pardon offered by her father and husband (2.830). Newlands argues that Ovid's Lucretia dies for personal

attitude instead of speaking from the heart. Also see Newlands (1995, 151) for a comparison between the speeches of Livy's Lucretia and Ovid's Lucretia in this scene.

⁴² Lee 1953, 116.

⁴³ Robinson (2011, 497-8). He specifically compares the tears of Ovid's Lucretia to the tears of Livy's Lucretia. Although Livy's Lucretia briefly cries, her tears are not able to distract her from her polished speech.

⁴⁴ See Robinson (2011, 499), who argues for the association between blushing and desire.

reasons, but her silent passivity permits her death to be re-described as political.⁴⁵ Unlike Livy's Lucretia, the Ovidian Lucretia does not describe her decision to commit suicide as a political decision. She does not express a desire to become a symbol of ideal female chastity.

Nevertheless, Ovid's Lucretia remains powerless even after her death. She remains a viewed object, whose physical appearance and actions are consistently defined not by Lucretia herself, but by the speaking characters.

It is not Lucretia, who deems her suicide as politically important in the Ovidian version, but Brutus. Newlands argues that several of Brutus' actions link him with Sextus including his seizure of the knife and his speech delivered over her body.⁴⁶ I agree with Newlands that there is a connection between Brutus and Sextus, particularly in their use of weaponry and speech to demonstrate power over Lucretia. Just as Sextus' sword represented both physical and sexual domination, Brutus also demonstrates his power through his interaction with weaponry. After Lucretia's death, Brutus seizes (*rapit*) the knife dripping with blood from her half-dead body and vows vengeance (2.837-9). This vivid description highlights the horror of Lucretia's death, as well as fostering uneasiness with Brutus' reaction. Since Lucretia's father and husband have collapsed over her body in mourning, Brutus' actions seem to violate the sanctity of their mourning. In addition, the verb *rapio* has the basic sense of to drag off into captivity and often it denotes sexual aggression.⁴⁷ In comparison to Livy, who describes Brutus drawing the knife from Lucretia's wound (*extractum*, 1.59.1), Ovid's description of Brutus' actions is alarming. In particular, the description of Lucretia's body as half-dead (*semianimi*) suggests that Brutus has begun to manipulate her death to his advantage before Lucretia has died completely. When

⁴⁵ Newlands 1995, 153.

⁴⁶ Newlands 1995, 154. She also notes the similarities between Brutus and Sextus in their ability to use deceit to achieve their goals (Sextus with Gabii and Brutus with the oracle).

⁴⁷ Adams 1982, 175. Robinson (2011,503) also notes that *rapio* is a strong and uncomfortable word to use in comparison to Livy's passive use of *extractum*.

Brutus seizes the sword from Lucretia's body, there is a suggestion of physical as well as sexual violation. Both Sextus and Brutus have a capability for violence that places them in a position of dominance.

In addition to weaponry both Brutus and Sextus also use speech to assert their dominance and control. Sextus uses Lucretia's inability to speak to his benefit at two separate occasions, his re-imagining of Lucretia's appearance and the rape scene. In both occasions Sextus' ability to speak allows him to control the situation and realize his desires. Lucretia's death renders her entirely silent, which allows Brutus to turn her suicide into a political cause. In the same way that Sextus shaped the appearance of Lucretia and Propertius moulded Cynthia into sexualized objects of desire, Brutus shapes the silenced Lucretia into a form suiting his ambition. There are connections, however, between the silence of Lucretia and other silenced figures in both the *Metamorphoses* and book two of the *Fasti*. In this scene, I argue that Ovid also expresses an anxiety about the vulnerability of speechlessness.

After Brutus has vowed vengeance against Sextus, Ovid states that Lucretia seems to move her lightless eyes and stir her hair in agreement (2.845-6). Robinson dismisses this description of the deceased Lucretia by arguing that Ovid has undercut the emotion of this historical narrative by adding an absurd detail.⁴⁸ Yet considering the emphasis on the correlation between speech and power in this section of the narrative, it seems likely that this detail has more significance than Robinson grants it. This is not a neutral description of deceased Lucretia, someone has interpreted her eyes and hair as speaking in a way that Lucretia cannot. The point of view in this description of Lucretia could be Brutus or another character, but it is not Lucretia herself. The description, therefore, is someone interpreting Lucretia's attitude towards Brutus' vow. Once again the silent body of Lucretia has been interpreted in a manner best suiting the desires of

⁴⁸ Robinson 2011, 505.

others. In the aftermath of Lucretia's suicide, her body is carried out of the house, where a group of men have gathered and Brutus calls for a revolution. Livy and Ovid differ greatly on their treatment of this scene. In Livy's version of the story, the focus shifts entirely to Brutus as he urges the men to take up their swords against the royal family (1.59.1-13). In contrast, Ovid maintains the focus of his narrative on the body of Lucretia and neatly sums up the revolution in two lines (2.851-2). Ovid also describes the men carrying Lucretia to her burial while her "wound gapes open" (*volnus inane patet*, 2.849). In this description Lucretia remains an empty (*inane*) visual object for the collective male gaze. Richlin argues that Lucretia ends the story as she began it - merely the object of the gaze.⁴⁹ Clearly the focus of the Ovidian narrative has never been the removal of the kings, rather it is an eroticized variation of the story, which is primarily concerned with the power of speech and the vulnerability of the silent visual object.

IV.iii. Connection to Philomela

The eroticization of Lucretia's rape is particularly highlighted in the closing lines of the story, in which Ovid references the story of Procne, Philomela and Tereus (2.855-6).⁵⁰ It is fitting that Ovid should reference this story because it is also a narrative concerned with erotic domination and silencing. Ovid tells this story in detail in book six of the *Metamorphoses* (6.401-674). In this story Pandion, king of Athens, gives his daughter Procne to Tereus of Thrace for the procurement of an alliance. Procne requests a visit with her sister, Philomela, so Tereus travels to Athens to escort Philomela back to Thrace. Tereus instantaneously desires Philomela, rapes her and rips out her tongue. Tereus tells Procne that her sister died, but she learns the truth from Philomela's weaving. The two sisters plot their revenge on Tereus by feeding him his son.

⁴⁹ Richlin 1992, 172.

⁵⁰ In a discussion about the arrival of spring, Ovid states "yet often you will complain, Procne, that you have hastened too much and your husband Tereus will be pleased with your cold" (*saepe tamen, Procne, nimium properasse quereris virque tuo Tereus frigore laetus erit*, 2.855-6).

Tereus becomes enraged, chases the sisters and all three characters are transformed into birds. Although the end of the story does not relate to the Lucretia narrative, there are several points of similarity between these two stories. There are two sections of the narrative that are particularly relevant to this discussion about the Ovidian Lucretia narrative: Tereus' first sight of Philomela and Philomela's silencing.

When Tereus first sees Philomela he instantaneously desires her. Ovid compares the swiftness of his desire to setting fire to ripe grain or dry leaves or hay (6.456-7). In the same way that the mere sight of Lucretia inflamed Sextus with desire and enticed him to act on his desires, Tereus desires Philomela and plans to act on his desire. In both of these stories the male gaze is a form of visual rape. The gaze becomes a hostile precursor to sexual intercourse and subjects the viewed female to sexualization without her permission or initiation. Tereus projects his own desires onto the actions of Philomela, which creates the illusion that Philomela is acting in a sexually enticing manner. Philomela embraces her father in hopes of persuading him to allow her to visit Procne. While viewing this innocent embrace, Tereus imagines that he is her father and that the kisses and embraces, which she has bestowed upon her father, are actually benefiting him (6.478-82). The gaze of both Tereus and Sextus follows a pattern. First, they view the female and this sight arouses their desire. Then they re-imagine the female in a manner that agrees with their desire, such as Tereus imagining that Philomela is embracing him. Through this re-imagination of the female appearance, the male viewer envisions the female as inviting desire through her actions, appearance and/or words. When Philomela boards Tereus' ship, Tereus' gaze is compared to a captor watching (*spectat*) his prey (6.518). Once Tereus has set his sights on Philomela, her thoughts, appearance and voice no longer matter. The artist, Tereus, sculpts his creation into the image he wants and Philomela becomes a voiceless object of desire.

The Philomela and Lucretia narratives are also linked in their conflation of erotic and political events. Both narratives are essentially stories about political events, either the overthrowing of governmental system or a treaty between two kings, but they become erotically charged narratives about sexual and physical violence. Newlands notes that neither Sextus nor Tereus abide by societal boundaries as they break bonds of kinship and vows of chastity.⁵¹ Lucretia was unavailable to Sextus because she was the wife of his companion and a virtuous woman. Philomela is unavailable to Tereus because she is his sister in law and the unmarried daughter of a king. Philomela's political importance as the daughter of a king is a significant detail in this narrative.⁵² Pandion gave Procne to Tereus with the understanding that this action formed an alliance between them. In this way, there is a significant difference between the body of a king's daughter offered in alliance and the body of a king's daughter taken without permission. When Pandion allows Philomela to go with Tereus, he asks Tereus to guard her by his honour and the ties which bind them (6.498-9). Both Philomela and Procne are objects of exchange between the two kings, but Tereus violates the ties between them when he dishonours the agreement and rapes Philomela. Both Sextus and Tereus disturb the existing political hierarchy by overstepping their boundaries. The ability of both Sextus and Tereus to overstep their political boundaries is a reflection of their tyrannical nature. Uncontrolled appetites, particularly for sex and violence, typically exemplify tyrants.⁵³ Both Tereus and Sextus satisfy

⁵¹ Newlands 1995, 164.

⁵² Joplin (1991, 44) notes the importance of king's daughters by arguing that the exchange of a king's daughter is nothing less than the articulation of his power and the formation of a treaty.

⁵³ See Segal (1994, 259) for a discussion of Tereus' tyrannical nature. Plato identifies the tyrannical nature of a man as the portion that remains after the rest of the soul, the rational, gentle and dominant part, slumbers. This portion of the soul endeavors to satisfy its desires with no regard for shame or reason (*Resp.* 9.571.C). Aside from the tyrannical nature of Tereus, Larmour (1990, 133) argues that Tereus' violent nature also correlates to his identification as a barbarian. Some of Larmour's examples of Tereus' identification as a barbarian include *Threicius Tereus*, 424; *innata libido*, 458; *barbarus*, 515; *barbare*, 533.

their sexual desires without regard for societal boundaries and the possible political repercussions of their actions.

In addition to an uncontrolled appetite, tyrannical rule is also associated with the silencing of others.⁵⁴ Both Sextus and Tereus treat Lucretia and Philomela as voiceless objects of desire prior to their rapes. Furthermore, both women experience a silencing during or after their rapes when they attempt to reveal the rape to others. Tereus cuts off Philomela's tongue when she threatens to tell others about the rape (6.544-60). Lucretia loses her ability to speak as soon as Sextus enters her room (2.797-8) and her silence continues as she is scarcely able to speak to her husband and father when they arrive at her house (2.823-4). Lucretia's silence in the company of her father and husband, however, is a self-imposed silence, unlike Philomela's physical inability for speech. Oliensis argues that "a woman cannot speak publicly, above all of her own violation, without violating the most fundamental rules of decorum".⁵⁵ Lucretia's inability to speak about her rape to her husband and father is a mark of her modesty, but her silence also allows Brutus to speak on her behalf and to interpret her actions. Philomela, on the other hand, threatens to speak about her rape regardless of decorum. Philomela states that she will speak about these deeds having put her own shame aside (6.544-5). Even after Tereus cuts off her tongue and forces silence upon Philomela, she weaves her story. Joplin argues that private, ordinary speech for Philomela is powerless, but her mutilation awakens the conception of speech as action.⁵⁶ Although Philomela does speak out about her rape, it is not the public event, which she had threatened to Tereus (6.546), instead she tells her sister. As seen through the interactions of Dido and Anna in book four of the *Aeneid*, speech between sisters is

⁵⁴ See Segal (1994, 259), who argues that to rape and silence women is the ultimate form of tyranny.

⁵⁵ Oliensis 2009, 85. Newlands (1995, 168) voices a similar opinion stating "Lucretia speaks only in private and in the end sees silence as a form of self-defense, a way of ensuring her place with the social system".

⁵⁶ Joplin 1991, 37.

confidential. Philomela is able to reveal her shame to her sister without loss of decorum. Furthermore, it is not Philomela, who plots revenge against Tereus, but Procne (6.611-19). Thus, both Lucretia and Philomela confide in their close relatives about their rapes and their relatives seek revenge, not the victims themselves. Philomela, however, does willingly participate in the revenge plot, whereas Lucretia does not. The conclusion of both the Lucretia and Philomela narratives results in silencing. In the same way that Lucretia is silenced through her suicide, the transformation of Philomela into a bird solidifies her silence. A comparison of these two narratives highlights the power of speech. In both stories, the speechless female becomes a vulnerable object of desire for powerful tyrants willing to risk everything for the fulfillment of their desires. In both narratives Ovid clearly highlights the loss of identity and power that results from the loss of speech.

IV.iv. Connection to Book Two Narratives

The silencing of Lucretia is not the only narrative about sexual violence and the vulnerability of silence in book two of the *Fasti*. Earlier in book two Ovid tells the stories of Callisto and Lara, who both endure sexual violence and silencing.⁵⁷ Callisto had taken a vow of virginity as a member of Diana's sacred hunting band, but she breaks this vow when Jove rapes her. When Diana discovers Callisto's pregnancy, she banishes her from the hunting group and Juno turns Callisto into a bear out of jealousy. In her bear form Callisto meets her grown son and she is almost killed by his spear, but they are both transformed into constellations. This narrative is particularly concerned with speech in two sections, Callisto's vow to Diana and her inability to speak to her grown son. Although Callisto voices a vow of virginity at the beginning of the story, she is unable to keep her vow. This highlights the powerlessness of the female voice against

⁵⁷ Callisto (2.153-92), Lara (2.583-616). Ovid also tells the story of Callisto in the *Metamorphoses* 2.401-530 in greater detail. For a concise comparison between the two narratives see Murgatroyd (2005, 247-9).

physical and sexual violence. Ovid states that Callisto would have been able to keep her vow if she had not been so attractive (2.161). As with Lucretia, Philomela and several others, the physical attractiveness and unattainability of a female increases her desirability. After her rape, Callisto's violation becomes a source of shame for her. Ovid states that she blushes at being called a maid and tries to delay the bathing (2.168-70). In the same way that Lucretia did not want to reveal her rape, both women feel personal shame even though they are not responsible for breaking their vows. In these narratives the result of revealing rape is isolation from the community. Lucretia isolates herself through her suicide, Philomela is kept in a forest prison and Callisto is banished from the hunting group. Furthermore, the women are silenced, which highlights their separation from their former communities and leaves them vulnerable for others to speak on their behalf. Brutus interprets Lucretia's silence as cause for revolution, Tereus tells Procne that Philomela has died and Callisto is unable to communicate to her son. Ovid states that she growls at her son because a growl was her only form of speech (2.184).⁵⁸ Callisto's second transformation into a constellation saves her from death at the hands of her son, but it does nothing to amend her violation. Juno begs Tethys never to touch the bear constellation with her waters (2. 191-2). Newlands argues that even in her stellar transformation Callisto is denied any form of purification after her rape.⁵⁹ Aside from purification, Callisto's transformation into a constellation immortalizes her as a silent visual object. In the same way that Lucretia's suicide allows her silent form to become a visual impetus for revolutionary action, Callisto's metamorphosis reinforces the passivity of her silenced form.

⁵⁸ Keegan (2002, 141) has argued that Callisto's transformation and silencing is a masculine imperative to dismiss feminine speech as animal-like and express her alienation on physically brutish terms. I agree that Callisto's transformation epitomizes her alienation from society and her subsequent vulnerability, however, I would hesitate to read this episode with the same gendered view as Keegan. A similar transformation and silencing happens to Actaeon in book three of the *Metamorphoses*, when he is transformed into a stag and killed by his own hunting dogs. Although female speechlessness is a general theme in book two of the *Fasti*, the inability to speak is not solely a feminine quality.

⁵⁹ Newlands 1995, 157.

Like Callisto and Lucretia, the nymph Lara also experiences sexual violence and silencing (2.583-616). When Lara learns about Jupiter's desire for the nymph Juturna, she warns Juturna and Juno about his intentions. Jupiter becomes enraged, rips out Lara's tongue and sends her with Mercury to the infernal marshes. During the journey, Mercury rapes her and she bears the Lares. Since there are no other sources which tell this story, Newlands suggests that this Roman myth was invented by Ovid based on the model of Philomela and Procne.⁶⁰ Certainly both stories involve a silencing mutilation and highlight the subsequent vulnerability of speechlessness. The interaction between Jupiter and the other nymphs emphasizes the power of speech. Jupiter calls the nymphs together and asks them to stop Juturna on the end of the riverbank so that he will be able to catch her (2.591-6). Furthermore, Jupiter argues that his *voluptas* (pleasure) will be *utilitas* (profit) for Juturna and the nymphs nod assent to his arguments. Not only does Jupiter's capacity for persuasive speech place him in a position of power, but also he is the only speaking character in this scene. McDonough argues that the wordlessness of the nymph's assent is made starker by the juxtaposition with Jupiter's verbal command.⁶¹ The nymphs do not disagree with Jupiter and this imbalance of power is represented through the ability or inability to speak.

Lara, however, decides not to remain silent and she tells both Juturna and Juno about Jupiter's plan. It is clear that Lara's outspoken nature is not celebrated in this narrative. Almo, Lara's father, had warned her many times to hold her tongue, but she does not (2.601-2). The consequence of Lara's outspoken behaviour is the loss of speech. It is explicitly stated that Lara

⁶⁰ Newlands 1995, 160. Newlands cites Le Bonniec (1969, 90) who believes that this story is a product of Ovid's "erotic imagination". Robinson (2011, 374) tentatively suggests that the Lara narrative is Ovid's own invention, since there is no other extant account of this narrative and Ovid gives 'ancient old men' (2.584) as the source of his story.

⁶¹ McDonough 2004, 359. Murgatroyd (2005, 77) also comments on the contrast between Jupiter's ability to speak and the nymphs' inability. He states that the nymphs agree to betray their own sister because they have been persuaded by Jupiter's self-serving rhetoric.

loses her tongue because she used it immodestly (*non usa modeste*, 2.607).⁶² Lara's immodest use of speech correlates to Philomela's threat that she will speak out regardless of her shame. In both stories female outspokenness represents a woman transgressing the boundaries of accepted behaviour. Furthermore, the silence of Lucretia, Philomela, Callisto and Lara all leave these women bereft of power. Lara's vulnerability is highlighted through her inability to voice her objections to Mercury's actions.

*iussa Iovis fiunt. accepit lucus euntes:
dicitur illa duci tunc placuisse deo.
vim parat hic, voltu pro verbis illa precatur,
et frustra muto nititur ore loqui. (2.611-14)*

The orders of Jove were obeyed. On the way they came to a grove: Then it is said that she pleased the god leading her. He prepared force, she pleaded with her face instead of words, And in vain she attempted to speak with a mute mouth.

There are several significant details in Ovid's description of Lara's rape. Firstly, the location of the rape, as a grove on the way to the underworld, is important. The reoccurrence of groves as landscapes of sexual interactions in both the *Metamorphosis* and the *Fasti* has been discussed in relation to the *locus amoenus* in the Gabii narrative.⁶³ Furthermore, in the same way that the mere sight of a beautiful female initiated other rape narratives, Lara is also described as pleasing to Mercury. Finally, Lara's speechlessness associates her with Philomela and Lucretia. The silence of these women makes them particularly vulnerable to unwanted sexual attention.

Lucretia loses her ability to speak when Sextus enters her bedroom, Philomela is raped for a second time after her mutilation and Lara is unable to escape Mercury's advances. Like Callisto,

⁶² Robinson (2011, 386) makes an interesting comparison between Lara's immoderate use of her tongue (*non modeste*, 2.607) and Jupiter's immoderate love (*immodico amore*, 2.585). He argues that double standards are in operation as Jupiter will not suffer for his lack of restraint and Lara will.

⁶³ This narrative is also connected to other rape narratives in the *Metamorphoses* through the use of the phrase *vim parat* (2.613). Robinson (2011, 388) notes that this phrase is also found at *Met.* 2.576 (Neptune and Coronis); 5.288 (Pyreneus and the Muses); 11.240 (Peleus and Thetis); 14.770 (Vertumnus and Pomona).

Lara attempts to communicate her opinions, but her form of communication is powerless without her voice.

Silencing is also a prevalent theme in Ovid's digressive story about an old woman making offerings to Tacita (2.571-82). The abrupt opening, *ecce* (behold, 2.571) and closing, *exit anus* (the old woman leaves, 2.582) of this narrative could suggest that it is placed into book two without considerable correlation to other narratives. McDonough, however, suggests that this narrative is the literary linchpin joining the preceding and following narratives, as well as participating in the overall theme of speech and silencing.⁶⁴ This narrative follows the Feralia festival and directly precedes the Lara story. In lines 547-56 Ovid describes a time when the early Romans forgot to celebrate the Feralia.⁶⁵ He states that the ancestors left their tombs and took to the streets voicing their displeasure with the living. The obvious connection of this narrative to the old woman performing sacred rites is the ceremonial binding of hostile mouths. The old woman speaks only at the end of her rites and she says, "we have bound hostile tongues and unfriendly mouths" (2.581). Through proper celebration of the Feralia festival, the Romans could avoid incurring the unnatural speech of the dead. McDonough argues that the ghosts in this episode voice their displeasure at the failure of duty towards family, which is a theme throughout book two.⁶⁶ Sextus breaks the bonds of kinship when he rapes Lucretia, the nymphs agree to hand over their sister, Juturna, to Jupiter and Lara disobeys her father's command to hold her tongue. Thus, this narrative of an old woman performing a silencing ritual corresponds to several other stories in book two about the anxiety of speaking out and the vulnerability of speechlessness.

⁶⁴ McDonough 2004, 355. For a discussion about the correlation between these rites and binding tablets see Robinson (2011, 357-60).

⁶⁵ McDonough (2004, 355) argues that the Feralia festival "centers on the small but necessary duties owed to the ancestral dead, whose displeasure will not go unvoiced".

⁶⁶ McDonough 2004, 361.

Lara's narrative concludes with the birth of the Lares, who were generally associated with guardianship of the crossroads and households, not sexual violation and mutilation.⁶⁷ These Lares are the Lares Compitales, which were one of the most important focuses for Augustus' religious revival in Rome. In the *Life of Augustus*, Suetonius states that the Lares of the Crossroads should be crowned twice a year with flowers at the orders of Augustus (31.4). Feeney argues that Augustus added the cult of his Genius to these Lares, so that every *vicus* (neighborhood) in the city had a group of three statues, the Lares Compitales flanking the Genius Augusti.⁶⁸ The presence of these imperial cult statues at the crossroads of every *vicus* meant that the emperor was inserted into the religious framework of the city. This association between the Lares and Augustus also implies that Augustus contributes to the preservation of the crossroads in the same way that the Lares do. Augustus' restoration of the cult of the Lares and the public association between these deities and the emperor certainly emphasizes the significance of these deities in the Augustan program of cultural renewal.

So why would Ovid create such a vicious conception story for these deities? Feeney argues that "by linking these little deities to his fictions about excessive speech, enforced muteness, and rape, [Ovid] transforms them into an ever-present warning of the dangers of using your tongue without restraint".⁶⁹ Feeney ties several stories from book two together with his association among speech, power and sexual violence. I agree with Feeney that these elements are reoccurring themes in this book of the *Fasti* and I also agree that they represent larger

⁶⁷ Newlands 1995, 161. See Zanker (1988, 129) and Feeney (1998, 6) for further discussion about Lares worship.

⁶⁸ Feeney 1992, 12. Both Robinson (2011, 372) and Lott (2004, 110-3) caution that there is only evidence for one *vicus* with worship of the Genius Augusti. Regardless of the specific details it is clear that the Lares, now called the *Lares Augusti*, have a close connection with Augustus. For a detailed discussion of Augustan *vici* reforms, including the connection between Augustus and the Lares see Lott (2004, 81-127). Newlands (1995, 160-1), Robinson (2011, 370-2) and Beard et al. (1998, 185) also highlight the connection between Augustus and the Lares.

⁶⁹ Feeney 1992, 12. Robinson (2011, 376) suggests that supportive readers could see this narrative as Ovid celebrating the deeds of Augustus, however considering the brutal silencing and rape of Lara, mother of the Lares, I find this argument unconvincing.

concerns about freedom of speech in the Augustan Age. Ovid transforms the Lares, which are associated with Augustus, into symbols of divine injustice and silencing. His manipulation of these characters demonstrates the power of the poet to re-imagine characters and narratives. In the same way that Augustus transformed these deities into symbols of imperial piety, Ovid re-imagines them as symbols of divine injustice through their association with the mutilated and raped Lara. He expresses a concern with silencing, which he connects with Augustus, as well as asserting the poetic power to re-imagine politically significant characters in a new way.

IV.v. Connection to Rhea Silvia

In addition to the Lucretia narrative, Ovid demonstrates elegiac control over historical narratives in his version of the Rhea Silvia story at the beginning of book three of the *Fasti*. The location of this narrative is significant. Book two details several rape narratives including those from Greek mythology such as Callisto, as well as those associated with Roman foundation mythology such as Lucretia. Lucretia's rape at the end of book two is directly followed by the rape of Rhea Silvia at the beginning of book three (3.11-24). The placement of these two narratives emphasizes the necessity of sexual violence in Roman foundation narratives.⁷⁰ The rapes and deaths of women such as Rhea Silvia and Lucretia resulted in fundamental political change, however Ovid's versions of these narratives focus on the erotic stimulation for rape rather than the politics. Ovid re-imagines these moments of political importance as erotic stories about lust and the power inherent in sexual aggression. Both Ovid and Livy tell the story of Rhea Silvia, but similar to the Lucretia narrative, their versions have vastly different focuses. Livy swiftly passes over the story of Rhea Silvia. He discredits the story of Mars raping Rhea Silvia by arguing that Rhea Silvia could have named a god as the author of her fault to make it seem

⁷⁰ Connors (1994, 110) notes Ovid's construction of rape and foundation narratives in this section of the *Fasti*.

less wrong (1.4.2). For the remainder of his narrative, Livy maintains his focus on Romulus and Remus, not Rhea Silvia. Livy's doubt concerning Mars' involvement is not found in the Ovidian version of this story. Ovid focuses on the eroticization of the story including the disarmament of Mars and the erotic connotations of the setting.

Ovid opens book three with a request that Mars lay down his shield and spear, as well as loosen his helmet (3.1-2). Hinds argues that a generic reading of this address is virtually guaranteed, particularly in comparison to the elegiac address of Venus at the beginning of book four.⁷¹ I agree with Hinds' generic reading and argue that the disarmament of Mars in this episode adds to the eroticization of the Rhea Silvia narrative. Ovid concludes his address to Mars by stating that Mars will be able to find something to do even though he is unarmed (3.8). This implies that it is necessary for Mars to cast aside his bellicose nature in order to play the role of the desirous male in upcoming Rhea Silvia narrative. As with the Lucretia narrative, Ovid presents an elegiac version of this politically significant narrative to demonstrate the freedom of the elegiac poet to assert control over public genres, such as history.

Not only does Ovid transform Mars into a character suitable for sexual exploits, but his description of the setting as a *locus amoenus* also eroticizes the narrative. Rhea Silvia is described as sleeping on a riverbank under shady willow trees, which is a variation of the *locus amoenus*. Just as the *locus amoenus* in the Gabii narrative was a signpost for sexual violence, this *locus amoenus* is also a narratological cue for rape.⁷² By including a *locus amoenus* in this story Ovid demonstrates the mutability of historical narratives. Unlike Livy who emphasizes the political importance of this event through his focus on Romulus and Remus, Ovid transforms this narrative into an elegiac story. There are several similarities between Ovid's treatment of this

⁷¹ Hinds (1992, 89). Hinds argues further that Mars must disarm in order to nullify his association with epic and participate in the amatory themes of the poem.

⁷² I discussed the Ovidian *locus amoenus* as a narratological cue for rape on page 22.

narrative and his Lucretia narrative. Both narratives are politically significant for the events occurring after the women have been raped. Ovid de-emphasizes these aspects of the narratives and focuses on the sexual content. I argue that his focus on the erotic material demonstrates an articulation of power. Ovid asserts his freedom to appropriate historical narratives into his poetry and present alternate versions of them.

V. Conclusion

In the *Fasti*, the rape narratives in book two and the opening of book three demonstrate the ability of elegy to absorb and transform political narratives. Many of these narratives have political significance either because they are Roman foundation narratives or because of their connection to Augustan reforms. Ovid's version of the Lucretia narrative eroticizes this political event by viewing Lucretia as an elegiac woman and focusing on the sexual violence of the story instead of the political change it inspired. Ovid's transformation of Lucretia into an elegiac woman also destabilizes the traditional chastity associated with her character. This transformation is politically significant because of Augustus' moral reforms and promotion of chaste women. At the same time that the political climate actively encouraged female chastity, Ovid transformed one of the most obvious examples of chastity into an elegiac mistress. Ovid's story of Lara is also politically significant because it associates the guardians of the crossroads, whose cult was closely associated with Augustus, with brutal sexual and physical violence. Finally, Ovid transforms another story from Roman legendary history, the story of Rhea Silvia into an erotic narrative. Ovid's eroticized versions of these narratives indicate a desire for poetic autonomy. Narratives about historical events or political ideology are not usually the subjects of elegiac poetry. Ovid, however, takes these narratives about public matters and transports them

into a genre that defines itself as distinct from both the public and imperial reach. Through this action, Ovid asserts control over his presentation of history and politics. He asserts the freedom of poets to re-imagine historical and political narratives. Ovid's preoccupation with imposed silencing throughout several of these rape narratives demonstrates his anxieties about not being able to speak. As such, his presentation of alternative, elegiac versions of historical narratives demonstrates his ability to speak.

CHAPTER THREE

Aristaeus

I. Introduction

The correlation between rape and power hinges on the desire to dominate another. The sexual aggressor experiences a sense of power arising from sexual activity without mutual consent. If, however, the ability to dominate fails and the pursuer leaves unsatisfied, the balance of power shifts. Since the sexual aggressor is no longer in a position of power, he is humiliated and becomes humorous. Several narratives in the *Fasti* contain a failed rape and have been labeled as comedic stories, including the Lotis and Priapus narrative.¹ In this narrative, Priapus attempts to rape the sleeping nymph Lotis during a party, but his attempt is foiled when a donkey brays which causes Lotis to awaken and flee. Ovid places this ludicrous narrative directly after his version of the Aristaeus narrative (1.363-390) and within a discussion about the injustice of animal sacrifice. The placement of this narrative in relation to the Aristaeus narrative is significant because it allows Ovid to interact with Vergil's expanded version of the Aristaeus story (*G.* 4.317-555). Both versions of the Aristaeus narrative culminate in an *aetion* for the *bougonia*, which is the process of generating bees from the carcasses of cattle.² Aristaeus, weeping over the loss of his bees, asks Cyrene, his mother, what he should do to revive them. Cyrene tells her son to bind Proteus and force him to reveal how to recover his bees. In Vergil's

¹ These episodes of comedic sexual frustration include Priapus and Lotis (1.393-440), Faunus and Omphale (2.303-356) and Priapus and Vesta (6.321-344). Fantham (1983, 185-216) identifies these narratives as comedic.

² *Bougonia* is a well-established belief among Romans, see *Met.* 15.364-7, *Var. R.* 2.5.5, 3.16.4. Furthermore, Greek epithets such as ταυροπάτωρ ('sprung from a bull' - Theoc. *Syrinx* 3) and βουγενής ('born of cattle' - Call. 383.4) suggest an earlier knowledge of this practice. Although Thomas (1988, 196) argues that Varro regards the *bougonia* as a piece of traditional lore because he includes it with Jupiter's metamorphosis into a bull to abduct Europa and presents it as an eastern θαῦμα ('marvel'). Thomas questions the practice of *bougonia* stating "who in the Mediterranean world would kill an ox in order to gain a hive?".

version Proteus narrates the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, who died fleeing Aristaeus' attempted rape. This story and Aristaeus' attempted rape, however, are not mentioned in Ovid's version. Both versions conclude with Aristaeus' successful regeneration of the bee community from the death of the cattle.³ There are two unresolved issues that emerge at the conclusion of Vergil's Aristaeus narrative: the necessity of death for rebirth or renewal and the dangers of sexual aggression. I argue that Ovid exploits these two unresolved issues in his version of the Aristaeus narrative.

In this chapter I will begin by exploring these two issues in Vergil's *Georgics*. I will argue that there are several correlations between this narrative and the civil war including a connection between the bee community and the Romans, Aristaeus and Augustus, as well as the cattle and Italy. If the bee community is representative of Romans and the cattle representative of Italy, the necessity of their deaths for the renewal of the community and rehabilitation of a leader becomes politically significant. I will also explore the issue of sexual aggression in Vergil's *Georgics*. Although Vergil recognizes the necessity of sexual aggression for breeding throughout the *Georgics*, he also highlights its capacity for destruction. The cost of Aristaeus' desire to dominate Eurydice, for example, is the deaths of the bee community and the cattle.

After establishing these Vergilian issues, I will examine Ovid's version of the Aristaeus narrative and demonstrate his exploitation of these issues. Ovid encircles his Aristaeus narrative with a discussion about the injustice of animal sacrifice and the comedic attempted rape of Lotis. I will argue that Ovid's anti-sacrificial sentiments have precedent in both Lucretius' *De Rerum*

³ The narratives, however, differ on the method of regeneration. In Ovid's version Aristaeus is instructed by Proteus to kill one bull and bury it in the ground in order to regenerate the bees (1.377-8). In Vergil's version Aristaeus is instructed by Cyrene, after failing to retrieve this information from Proteus, to kill four bulls and four heifers. He should drain the blood from their throats, but leave the bodies in the grove. Nine days later, Aristaeus should offer poppies and a black ewe to Orpheus, as well as a calf to Eurydice (4.538-47). Green (2004, 176) argues that the reason for this discrepancy is that Ovid sets up his story to explain the first sacrifice of the bull, whereas Vergil does not.

Natura and Pythagoras' speech in the *Metamorphoses*. Furthermore, I will argue that Ovid engages with Vergil's metaphorical use of sacrifice and questions the necessity of death during the civil war for the renewal of Rome under Augustus' leadership. Ovid also interacts with Vergil's issue of sexual aggression. In both the Gabii and Lucretia chapters there is a correlation between political power and sexual domination. Ovid likens Sextus' politically strategic capture of Gabii to sexual domination and his rape of Lucretia results in fundamental political change. As such, I will argue for a correlation between political ambition and sexual domination in the Aristaeus narrative as well. Aristaeus' sexual ambitions and desire for mastery can also represent imperial ambitions. Ovid mocks this desire for mastery in his version of the Aristaeus narrative with the Lotis story. Finally, I will examine the Ovidian juxtaposition of serious (Aristaeus) and comedic (Lotis) narratives. This juxtaposition also occurs in book three of the *Metamorphoses* and in the correlation between the Lotis and Vesta narratives in the *Fasti*. I will conclude that by encircling the Aristaeus narrative with a sympathetic discussion of animal sacrifice and the comedic Lotis narrative Ovid re-imagines Vergil's Aristaeus narrative in a manner that emphasizes the unresolved issues in Vergil's version. Furthermore, he undermines the respectability of Vesta and questions the political rhetoric of a new Golden Age of Rome under Augustus' leadership.

II. Vergil's Aristaeus Narrative – Speaking Metaphorically

Green argues that Ovid clearly relies on the reader's familiarity with the Vergilian version of the Aristaeus story because he provides a condensed version of the narrative.⁴ Since Ovid is engaging with the themes of the Vergilian version, it is necessary to understand the main

⁴ Green 2004, 171. In particular Ovid leaves out Proteus' story about Orpheus and Eurydice, which explains why Aristaeus' bees have died. Furthermore, in Ovid's version Proteus tells Aristaeus how to regenerate his bees, whereas Cyrene reveals this information to Aristaeus after the Proteus encounter in Vergil's version.

concerns of the Vergilian narrative in order to interpret Ovid's alterations.⁵ I will first address Vergil's discussion about the nature of bees, which are likened to humans and Romans in particular. The bee community fights a civil war between two rival kings, after which only one king can remain (4.67-102). The bees are faithfully loyal to their leader because he guards their toils and ensures order throughout the hive (4.210-8). Considering Rome's political turmoil during this period, it is difficult not to see some correlation between the establishment of peace and prosperity after the civil war of the bee community and the political climate.⁶ Furthermore, Vergil seems to suggest a comparison between Rome and these bees particularly through his reference to bees as *Quirites* (4.201), which is the formal title of Roman citizens. Undoubtedly Vergil's use of this word draws an immediate connection between the Roman people and these bees.⁷ The bee community is also characterized by a number of values, which are representative of the Roman ideal. Gale argues "the idealized figure of the yeoman farmer, toiling virtuously at the plough and fighting sturdily when called upon to do so, was a cherished stereotype in Republican Rome".⁸ All of the bees have roles to play in the society marked by their age and abilities. The older bees are in charge of the town and the creation of buildings (4.178-9). The young travel far and wide in search of resources from flowers for the town (4.180-3). This emphasis on productivity is particularly important because for the Romans physical slackness

⁵ Green (2004, 171) argues "since it is impossible to pin down the Vergilian myth, it is equally impossible to assess how Ovid is reacting to the story here". I disagree with this sentiment. The image of renewal after devastation at the conclusion of this narrative highlights a cautiously optimistic outlook. Furthermore, there are unresolved issues within the Vergilian narrative, which are specifically highlighted in the Ovidian rewriting of this story.

⁶ In the fourth book of the *Georgics*, however, it is advised to throw dust on the bees in order to quell the fight and then to determine the winner between the bee kings (4.86-90). The intervention of the beekeeper, obviously, marks a departure from the correlation between the bee community and contemporary Rome.

⁷ Thomas (1988, 184) argues that *Quirites* refers to the entire population and it does not necessarily imply that the bees stand allegorically for Roman citizens. Vergil's use of *Quirites* probably refers to the entire people over whom the emperor rules and not only Roman citizens. Regardless of the specific reference implied in Vergil's use of *Quirites*, clearly the word highlights the conflation between the bee community and the Roman people.

⁸ Gale 2000, 145.

and idleness were often associated with moral weakness and social disorder.⁹ As such there are clear correlations between the community of bees and Romans.

Vergil's bees, however, differ from humans and other beasts in their lack of sexual desire. This lack of passion is significant because one of the central themes in the *Georgics* is the potential for destruction evident in passion. The bees do not indulge in copulation nor do they loosen their idle bodies in love (4.198-9). Nappa argues that this lack of sexual passion alienates the bees from humanity, but their dedication to their community evokes Roman concepts of valour.¹⁰ Instead of succumbing to sexual passion, the bees devote their lives in service (*sub fasce*, 4.198).¹¹ The bees do not waste energy in sexual intercourse, instead they devote themselves entirely to the prosperity of the hive. Thomas notes that the absence of sex distinguishes bees as separate from all other beasts.¹² In book three of the *Georgics* Vergil states that every single race on earth including men and beasts feel passion (3.242-4). In beasts and men, passion can be a dangerous and destructive force. The destructiveness of passion is evident in the bees, who although they lack sexual desire are destroyed by the inability of Aristaeus to control his own desire. Not only does this fact highlight the innocence of the bee community, but also their subordination to and dependence on Aristaeus. Their destruction is directly linked to Aristaeus' actions and his desire to dominate. Furthermore, the metaphorical relationship between the bee community and contemporary Romans means that the death of the bee community is representative of Roman deaths throughout the civil war. Both deaths are a result of the ambitions of a leader either Aristaeus or Augustus.

⁹ Gale 2000, 145.

¹⁰ Nappa 2005, 182.

¹¹ My translation of *sub fasce* as 'in service' does not quite illuminate the subtleties of this phrase. The *fasces* were a bundle carried before a Roman magistrate, which consisted of rods and an axe. Aside from being a symbol of a magistrate's power, the *fasces* were specifically a Roman symbol of power. This strengthens the correlation between Vergil's community of bees and the Romans, as well as indicating the subordination of the bees to a leader.

¹² Thomas 1988, 184.

In addition to the correlation between the bees and Romans, the connection between cattle and Italy strengthens the symbolic resonance of this narrative. In order for the bees to regenerate, it is necessary to slaughter oxen. This image of regeneration at the conclusion of book four stands in opposition to the destruction of the plague, which concludes book three. Gale argues that Aristaeus' success brings the poem to an end on a positive note by returning to ritual piety.¹³ Morgan argues that Vergil presents civil discord in Rome as catastrophic destruction, but destruction that is necessary for the restoration of order.¹⁴ In other words, it is necessary for Rome to suffer destruction so that it might experience new growth. Otis argues that the death of the cattle for the regeneration of the bees represents the triumph of complete allegiance to community over the strife of individualistic passion.¹⁵ The death of the cattle certainly represents the death of a creature driven by passion and the rebirth of the bees, who are immune to passion. This interpretation, however, overlooks the significance of the connection between Rome and oxen. One etymology of the name *Italia* derives the word from the Latin *vitulus* or the Greek ἰταλός, both meaning calf.¹⁶ If there is an association between bovine creatures and Italy, this makes the ritualistic death of this creature more significant. The death of the cattle at the end of the *Georgics* symbolizes the death of Rome and the rebirth of a new order. This death can be understood optimistically as the successful rebirth of Rome, however there is an uneasiness remaining in this interpretation since this death was only necessary as a result of imperial ambitions. Ovid exploits this uneasiness within Vergil's cautiously optimistic conclusion in his version of the Aristaeus narrative.

¹³ Gale 2000, 110.

¹⁴ Morgan 1999, 107.

¹⁵ Otis 1964, 188.

¹⁶ See Morgan (1999, 130-4) for further examination of the correlation between Italy and the ox.

In Vergil's version the renewal of the Rome is mirrored with the rehabilitation of Aristaeus' character. Morgan argues that Vergil's challenge was "to take the appalling civil wars and argue their potential good; but also take a protagonist in these wars, a figure thoroughly implicated in the destruction they caused, Octavian, and rehabilitate him".¹⁷ The search for Augustus within this conclusion of the *Georgics* has led many scholars to associate Augustus with Aristaeus.¹⁸ Lee argues that the contrast between Orpheus as the poetic figure and Aristaeus represents the relationship between Augustus and poets, such as Vergil. He states that Augustus is able to rebuild his civilization once he acknowledges his debt to poets, who understand life and loss more profoundly.¹⁹ Although I agree that a correlation can be made between Aristaeus and Augustus, as well as between Orpheus and poets, it seems unlikely that Vergil is advising Augustus to revere poets. Instead, I argue that the association between these figures concerns their ability to deal with devastation. Aristaeus attempts to rape Eurydice and subsequently loses his bees. Orpheus attempts to save Eurydice, but looks back and subsequently loses his love. Conte argues that the Aristaeus and Orpheus narratives both concern the devastation of loss. Both men lose their most precious possession: the farmer loses his livestock and the poet loses the object of his song, Eurydice.²⁰ Orpheus is unable to alter his condition, he simply mourns for his loss. With this inability to change his circumstances, Orpheus has significant correlation to the poets of contemporary Rome. They express their losses through lamentation in poetry without altering the course of events. In contrast, Aristaeus is able to effect change and restore his own loss. Through his successful appeasement of the angered nymphs and regeneration of his beehive, Aristaeus is rehabilitated.

¹⁷ Morgan 1999, 134.

¹⁸ Scholars who associate Augustus with Aristaeus in some capacity include Lee (1996, 124-5), Gale (2000, 52), Nappa (2005, 213-5) and Morgan (1999, 93-4).

¹⁹ Lee 1996, 124-5.

²⁰ Conte 2007, 139.

After the devastation of the civil wars, Augustus similarly regenerates the state and emphasizes the importance of renewed piety. An integral part of Augustus' program of cultural renewal was religious revival. Zanker notes that Augustan iconography becomes increasingly interested in depictions of animal sacrifice.²¹ One of the reliefs from the *Ara Pietatis*, for example, depicts a bull being prepared for sacrifice. Furthermore, the great triple triumph of 29 BCE was organized so that the first of the three days coincided with the annual festival of Hercules at the *Ara Maxima*, on August 13th.²² It can be argued that the significance of arranging the triumph on this day concerns the loss and sacrifice of cattle, as well as the defeat of Cacus (Evil).²³ Further proof of the association between sacrifice, religious piety and Augustus is the Secular Games of 17 BCE. Augustus transformed the pre-existing Secular Games into a celebration of Rome's renewal. These celebrations included an elaborate sequence of daily and nightly animal sacrifices, which were often led by Augustus himself.²⁴ Green argues that this celebration established a connection between the imperial family, religious revival and Roman fecundity.²⁵ There is a clear association between religious revival, a renewed interest in animal sacrifice and Augustus. Nappa argues that Vergil's discussion of bees and the story about Aristaeus both emphasize the importance of ritual in a community. He states "ritual is one of the means by which the community reasserts its identity and unity and attempts to bridge the distance between itself and the divine".²⁶ The optimism at the conclusion of the *Georgics* offers

²¹ Zanker 1988, 114.

²² Morgan 1999, 133.

²³ In book eight of the *Aeneid*, Evander tells Aeneas the story of Hercules' defeat of Cacus (8.184-279). Cacus is a half-human creature, who incurs the wrath of Hercules after stealing four bulls and four heifers from his herd.

²⁴ Green 2008a, 43. For Augustus' transformation of the Secular Games and focus on sacrifice see Galinsky (1996, 100-6); Feeney (1998, 28-38). Also see Horace's *Carmen Saeculare*, which is a hymn commissioned by Augustus to be performed at the Secular Games. Green argues that lines 49-60 of this poem make a connection between Augustus conducting animal sacrifice and the return of Peace and other virtues (2008, 43).

²⁵ Green 2008a, 43.

²⁶ Nappa 2005, 215.

the Roman community, which has ravaged by the destruction of civil war, the hope for restored peace, regrowth and leadership.

III. Vergil's Aristaeus Narrative – Sexual Aggression

Within the cautiously optimistic conclusion of the *Georgics*, however, there are some serious concerns, specifically the necessity of death for regeneration and the dangers of sexual aggression. Even though there is a rehabilitation of both Aristaeus and the bee community after the *bougonia*, it was necessary for the original bee community as well as the ox to die for this result. In addition, these deaths would not have been required at all if Aristaeus had not attempted to rape Eurydice. Aristaeus' inability to restrain his sexual desire reflects Vergil's concern with the dangers of sexual aggression.

Throughout the *Georgics*, passion is a dangerous and destructive force in both men and beasts. This is particularly evident in Vergil's description of rival bulls engaging in combat over the desire for a female and mastery of the herd (3.215-23). In this description, Vergil emphasizes the destructive nature of passion through the appropriation of military vocabulary and imagery. The bulls use force (*vi*, 3.220), engage in battles (*proelia*, 3.220) and they suffer wounds (*vulneribus*, 3.221). Gale argues that "even the mildest of animals can be transformed into 'warriors' by the terrible power of *amor*".²⁷ This appropriation of military vocabulary and imagery highlights aggression as a destructive aspect of *amor*. Sexual desire and breeding is necessary for growth and continuity, but the aggression of *amor* can be destructive.

In addition to the appropriation of military vocabulary, Vergil also illustrates the destructive potential of *amor* by likening the plague of book three to the infection of desire.

²⁷ Gale 2000, 263.

Thomas argues that the fiery madness of plague (3.511-3) precisely parallels the madness of sexual passion, which is described at 3.244.²⁸ Desire is dangerous because it is able to consume a creature, just like the plague, unless it is restrained and controlled. The destructive nature of sexual aggression also develops from its association with power. Whether the narrative concerns bulls fighting over a female or Aristaeus attempting to rape Eurydice, sexual aggression is seeking to gain domination over another. The desire for mastery over others can also be an expression of political, military or sexual power. As such, Aristaeus' desire for sexual domination can metaphorically represent the imperial ambitions of Augustus.

IV. Ovid's Aristaeus Narrative

Ovid mocks this imperial ambition in his version of the Aristaeus narrative. He encircles his Aristaeus narrative with a preceding discussion about the injustice of animal sacrifice and the subsequent comedic story of Lotis. Both the preceding and subsequent narratives interact with his Aristaeus narrative by illuminating the unresolved issues in the Vergilian version of the narrative. In Vergil's version of the Aristaeus narrative, the animals are representative of Rome, both the land and the people. Their deaths represent the sacrifices that Romans made during the civil war. As such, Ovid's discussion about the injustice of animal sacrifice highlights the cost of the civil war and the damage caused by imperial ambition. In the Vergilian version of the Aristaeus story sexual aggression is a destructive desire for power. The correlation between sexual and political domination, as seen through the character of Aristaeus and his connection to Augustus, is mocked in Ovid's Lotis narrative. I will discuss Ovid's exploitation of both issues beginning with the injustice of animal sacrifice.

²⁸ Thomas (1988, 137) identifies the combination of fire and madness in both the infection of plague (*furiisque refecti...ardebant*, 3.511-512) and desire (*in furias ignemque ruunt*, 3.244).

IV.i. The Injustice of Sacrifice

Ovid's discussion about the injustice of animal sacrifice builds upon anti-sacrificial sentiments previously expressed in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, as well as in book 15 of the *Metamorphoses*. In *De Rerum Natura* Lucretius opposes many religious practices, including sacrifice. Although Lucretius does not present an explicit attack on the practice of animal sacrifice, there are several passages in the *De Rerum Natura* that suggest a critical attitude towards such practices. One such passage is Lucretius' account of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, which concludes with 'so religion is able to inspire terrible things' (*tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*, 1.101). Gale argues that this sacrifice is considered horrific because a human girl is being treated as an animal, but it also demonstrates sympathy towards the sacrificial victim.²⁹

Another example of Lucretius portraying sympathy towards animals is in his description of the relationship between the farmer and his livestock as a 'social contract'. Beasts such as dogs, sheep and oxen commit themselves to human care in return for food without the requirement of labour (5.864-9).³⁰ The idea of a mutual relationship between farmer and livestock suggests sympathy for these animals. Vergil also portrays a partnership between oxen and farmers, but his sympathy for these animals does not exclude them from sacrificial rituals. In line 2.515 cattle are described as the farmer's 'well-deserving oxen' (*meritosque iuencos*), whereas in book three cattle are sacrificial victims, whose death gives pleasure to the onlooker (3.23). Gale argues that this is a striking example of Vergil including a humanizing, sympathetic statement about animals in close proximity to a reference to sacrifice.³¹ Vergil demonstrates

²⁹ Gale 2000, 104.

³⁰ Gale (2000, 101) uses the phrase 'social contract' and also argues that the contract described in 5.869 is problematic since cattle work for their meals and are likely to be destined ultimately for the table or the altar. Lucretius, however, does not emphasize the problematic aspects of this contract, instead he focuses on the relationship between the farmer and cattle.

³¹ Gale 2000, 106.

uneasiness with the sacrifice of cattle because of their relationship with humans, but he does not focus on sympathy towards these animals in the same way that Lucretius and Ovid do.

One of the most sympathetic passages in Lucretius is the story about the mother of a sacrificial calf searching for her slaughtered offspring (2.352-66). In this narrative the mother cow is unable to find peace in nature while searching for her calf because she is desperate to find her missing offspring. Undoubtedly the image of a bereaved mother searching in vain for a slain child anthropomorphizes this scene, which provides sympathy for the mother and indirectly criticizes the practice of animal sacrifice as the cause of the mother's grief. Although Lucretius does not explicitly condemn animal sacrifice, he anthropomorphizes animals throughout *De Rerum Natura*, which elicits sympathy for these animals.

Ovid extends Lucretius' critical attitude of animal sacrifice into a sustained attack on animal sacrifice and meat-eating vocalized by Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses* 15.³² Pythagoras protests the consumption of meat by arguing that eating meat is unnecessary and contributed to the downfall of man. He argues that it is unnecessary to eat the flesh of animals because there are many other options available in nature without requiring the death of another (15.91-93). He also describes a Golden Age with abundant prosperity and peace, during which men did not eat the flesh of animals (15.96-103). Aside from the inhumanity of eating meat, Pythagoras also condemns animal sacrifice. He concedes that some animals such as the sow and goat deserved to be killed because of their consumption of crops (15.111-5). Yet, the Ovidian Pythagoras opposes the sacrifice of other animals such as sheep and oxen. The deaths of these animals are considered

³² It is likely that Pythagoras would have been an attractive figure for Ovid to include in the *Metamorphoses*, an exploration of changing forms, because of the Pythagorean belief that the human soul could reincarnate in any animal species. This Pythagorean belief also makes Pythagoras a logical character to voice an attack on animal sacrifice and meat-eating. See Price (1999, 121-23) for further detail about Pythagorean cuisine.

cruel because of their service to men. Oxen, in particular, toil beside men aiding them to turn the soil and plant crops (15.120-6).

This uneasiness with the sacrifice of oxen has been seen already in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, as well as the *Georgics*. In all of these examples the sacrifice of the oxen is particularly opposed because of the relationship between men and oxen. While both Lucretius and Vergil express anxiety about the sacrifice of oxen, Ovid's Pythagoras has no reservations in condemning the sacrifice of such animals. He concludes his speech by asking men to remember that when they eat the flesh of slaughtered cattle, they are consuming their 'fellow-farmers' (*colonos*, 15.142). Ovid's anthropomorphism of animal victims, particularly cattle, in this passage corresponds to the anthropomorphism of animals in the Aristaeus narrative. In both texts, animals are representative of fellow Romans and subsequently their deaths are seen as wrong. There could be political ramifications with such sentiments considering Augustus' renewed emphasis on sacrifice. Green argues, however, that any political ramifications have been counteracted by placing the anti-sacrificial views in the mouth of Pythagoras.³³ As such, these views are representative of the character and not the poet. Furthermore, Pythagoras explicitly blames mankind for associating the gods with such a practice and falsely believing that the gods would take pleasure in sacrifice (15.127-9). Both Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* and the speech of Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses* 15 contain anti-sacrificial sentiments, which are boldly reiterated in book one of Ovid's *Fasti*.

The Aristaeus narrative in book one of the *Fasti* is placed within a discussion about the origins of animal sacrifice. The placement of this narrative allows Ovid to exploit the unresolved issues in Vergil's conclusion of the *Georgics*. One of these issues is the necessity of death for cosmic absolution and for the absolution of one individual, Aristaeus. The cruelty of animal

³³ Green 2008a, 45.

sacrifice, which was suggested by Lucretius and vocalized through the character of Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses* 15, is boldly expressed by Ovid in the *Fasti*. Green argues that the views expressed in the *Fasti* about animal sacrifice are much more provocative than the views in the *Metamorphoses* because of the one voicing these concerns. He argues “no longer can anti-sacrifice views be explained away as the rant of a discredited and marginalized philosopher”.³⁴ Without the guise of a specific character, these views become more controversial and critical of the contemporary Roman religious customs, which centered on Augustus’ program of religious revival. This program of religious revival concentrated heavily on sacrificial imagery and the increased importance of sacrifices. Aside from the increased political importance of sacrifice and piety, Ovid’s discussion of animal sacrifice can be understood metaphorically as well. In Vergil’s *Georgics* the death of the oxen and bees represents the death of Italy and the Roman people. Ovid’s critical attitude toward animal sacrifice, therefore, can also reflect the devastation of civil war on both the land and people of Italy. The inclusion of these sentiments allows Ovid to question the political rhetoric of renewal after the civil wars. The critical attitude towards animal sacrifice in the *Fasti* is reflective of both a literal and metaphorical understanding of sacrifice.

Before the Aristaeus narrative, Ovid builds up sympathy for sacrificial animals by emphasizing their innocence, particularly through his description of their reluctance and terror.

*Pars, quia non veniant pecudes, sed agantur, ab actu
nomen Agonalem credit habere diem...
an, quia praevisos in aqua timet hostia cultros,
a pecoris lux est ipsa notata metu? (1.323-8)*

Some believe the day has the name Agonal from leading the animals, because sheep do not come, but they are led...Or, because the victim fears the knives foreseen in the water, has this day been named from the fear of the animal?

³⁴ Green 2008a, 46.

By anthropomorphizing the emotions of the animal prior to the sacrifice, Ovid builds sympathy for the animal and voices criticism of the act. In addition, Ovid voices criticism about the practice of animal sacrifice through his description of a Golden Age before foreign offerings and animal sacrifice.³⁵ In these times spelt and salt were enough to win the favour of the gods (1.337-8). Green argues that Ovid's version of the Golden Age in this section creates a tension between natural, indigenous gifts and those of foreign or animal extract.³⁶ In Ovid's Golden Age it was not necessary for humans to kill animals in order to gain the favour of the gods, but moral decline has necessitated death and violence. Since animal sacrifice can be understood metaphorically as well, the end of this Golden Age is also marked by increased violence between fellow Romans in the civil war. This section also invites comparison with the speech of Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses* 15, which also associates a Golden Age with the lack of animal sacrifices. The Ovidian Pythagoras describes the Golden Age as a time when birds, fish and animals roamed freely without fear of capture (15.96-103). In both the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* sympathy for the victims of animal sacrifice is displayed by labeling a previous period without sacrifice as a Golden Age and thus implying that mankind has experienced a moral decline in the interim.

In both the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, animals are divided into those that deserve death and those that do not. Both works identify the sow and goat as animals deserving of their deaths because they destroy crops or vines. In the *Metamorphoses* Pythagoras states that these animals suffered because of their own offenses (*nocuit sua culpa duobus*, 15.115). In the *Fasti*, Ceres

³⁵ The Golden Age is a popular poetic motif, which implies that a prior time period was preferable to the current time period. Although the characteristics of a Golden Age vary by poet and work, in general the Golden Age motif suggests that the current society has experienced a decline. In particular the period of decline is marked by an unharmonious relationship with nature and increase in base emotions such as greed and lust. See Wallace-Hadrill (1982) for an analysis of the Golden Age in Augustan literature.

³⁶ Green 2004, 160.

delights in the sacrifice of the sow because it had destroyed her crops (1. 349-350) and the goat is sacrificed to Bacchus because it has destroyed a vine (1.353-60).³⁷ Unlike Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses* 15, who blames men for assuming that the gods want animals sacrificed to them, in the *Fasti* Ovid places the blame on gods for delighting in and demanding the sacrifice of animals. In both works Ovid departs from animals deserving of their deaths to animals, such as oxen and sheep, that have not committed an offense. In line 1.362 of the *Fasti* Ovid states ‘what was your crime, ox, what was yours, peaceful sheep?’. Sympathy towards the ox has already been displayed in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura* and Vergil’s *Georgics*. In the *Fasti*, however, Ovid clearly juxtaposes this sympathy toward cattle with the Aristaeus narrative. This positioning of the Aristaeus narrative suggests that the Ovidian version of the Aristaeus narrative might not be as optimistic in its conclusion as the Vergilian version.

Green notes that Ovid’s inclusion of this myth has been seen as out of place within a section on animal sacrifice, because it deals with a slaughter not a sacrifice. He justifies Ovid’s inclusion of this myth by arguing that the nymph companions of Eurydice are the beneficiaries of this death.³⁸ There is, however, uneasiness with viewing this death as a sacrifice, because it only benefits Aristaeus through the regeneration of his bees. Furthermore, unlike the sacrifice of the sow and goat, which have done something to upset the gods, the ox is innocent. It is Aristaeus who has upset the nymphs, but he appeases their displeasure through the death of an innocent party. Ovid concludes the Aristaeus narrative with the statement that ‘one life killed gives life to thousands’ (1.380). Green argues that Ovid is deliberately ambivalent in this line, since the line

³⁷ In lines 4.393-416 Ovid discusses sacrificing to Ceres again, but this time he describes several adequate sacrifices to Ceres. He advises that spelt and incense should be sacrificed to Ceres because she delights in little things, as long as they are pure (4.4.412). He also states that a sow can be sacrificed to her, but never the ox because the ox plows the land (4.414-6). Fantham (1992, 48) argues that this version of Ceres contrasts with the Ceres of book one, who is held responsible both for the offering of the pig and for the subsequent development of animal sacrifices. She posits that the reason for this inconsistency is Ovid’s revision of the *Fasti* and his embitterment in exile. Whether this inconsistency is a product of Ovid’s exile or not, the Ceres in book one highlights the cruelty of animal sacrifice.

³⁸ Green 2004, 172.

supports both a positive and negative reading.³⁹ While this line could be understood as an endorsement of the *bougonia*, it also highlights the cost of regeneration. A positive reading of this line is hindered further when Ovid laments “what creature is safe, when even the wool-bearing sheep and ploughing oxen lay down their lives upon the altars?” (1.383-4). This interjection seems to emphasize once again the innocence of these animals and the cruelty of animal sacrifice. Feeney argues that Ovid’s vision of post-Golden Age life seems to stress the divine requirement of humans to treat animals, even their workmates, as helpless agents in the game of communication played out before the altars.⁴⁰ These sentiments of sympathy towards the animal victims of sacrifice continue with Ovid’s list of other animals sacrificed including the horse (385), deer (389), dog (390) and donkey (391).

I argue that the placement of Aristaeus narrative within a framework of sympathetic statements, particularly directed toward the ox, emphasizes the negative aspects of the Vergilian Aristaeus narrative. In Vergil’s version the original bee community and the cattle die through no fault of their own and their deaths are necessary because of the sexual ambition of Aristaeus. Ovid highlights the injustice of their deaths and metaphorically relates these deaths to the civil war. Like the bees and cattle, Romans suffered and died for the ambitions of a leader, Augustus. The Vergilian emphasis on regrowth and renewal is significantly absent from Ovid’s version. Ovid emphasizes the injustice of death and suffering in the Vergilian Aristaeus narrative, which allows him to question the necessity of death for the renewal of Rome.

IV.ii. Comedic Sexual Aggression

Another unresolved issue in Vergil’s Aristaeus narrative is the destructive nature of ambition, specifically sexual ambition. This sentiment is particularly emphasized in Aristaeus’

³⁹ Green 2004, 171.

⁴⁰ Feeney 2004, 12.

attempted rape of Eurydice, which results in her death, Aristaeus' loss of the bee community and eventually the death of Orpheus.⁴¹ Considering the metaphorical relationship between Aristaeus and Augustus, I argue that Ovid's placement of the comedic Lotis and Priapus narrative directly after his Aristaeus narrative is significant. Since Ovid mocks Priapus, the sexual aggressor in his Lotis narrative, he could also be mocking Augustus as a political aggressor. This comedic narrative exists in relation to two more serious narratives, the uncontrolled passions of Vergil's Aristaeus, as well as other Ovidian rape narratives, particularly Lara, Lucretia and Philomela. Ovid's juxtaposition of his Aristaeus narrative and the comedic Lotis narrative re-examines the Vergilian view of passion. The Lotis and Priapus narrative presents sexual aggression as a source of humor for those watching and a source of humiliation for the sexual aggressor. This alternative view of sexual aggression is also highlighted through a comparison between this narrative and Ovid's other rape narratives. The story contains several elements, including attention to visual detail and silencing, seen in other rape narratives within the *Fasti*, but in this narrative these elements are comedic. The narrative focuses on the visual details, which transform the female into a visual object and give the impression that the victim is 'asking for it'. Unlike the rapes of Lucretia or Lara, Lotis is at a Bacchic party with companions in various stages of undress, thus the setting of this attempted rape encourages sexual behaviour. The narrative concludes with the silencing of an outspoken character, but in this narrative the silenced individual is a donkey. In relation to both the concerns of the Vergilian Aristaeus narrative and the serious implications of Ovid's other rape narratives, this narrative presents a ludicrous view of sexual aggression. By mocking sexual aggression and specifically the sexual

⁴¹ Orpheus is killed and dismembered by Thracian Maenads, although this story is not included in Ovid's Aristaeus narrative.

aggressor, Ovid offers an audacious alternative to the Vergilian concerns about sexual aggression.

The introduction and conclusion of the Lotis and Priapus episode indicate that this narrative is comedic. Ovid introduces this story by stating that the origin of sacrificing a donkey is shameful, but suitable to the god (1.392). Even though the story is introduced as shameful, nevertheless it is immediately suggested to be a bawdy, ludicrous narrative through its association with Priapus. It is not unusual for Priapus to be associated with sexual humor. Richlin argues that central to the concept of Roman sexual humour is the character of a threatening male. She argues that this figure is anxious to defend himself by adducing his strength and virility.⁴² This image of a hyper-sexualized male certainly suits the character of Priapus. His virility is highlighted comedically through his form in art as a human with an enlarged penis.⁴³ Priapus' form and virility are certainly emphasized at the beginning of the narrative when Ovid states that the donkey is killed for the stiff (*rigido*) guardian of the countryside (1.391). Green argues that Ovid's description of Priapus as stiff alludes to his erect phallus and prefigures the sexual activity in the preceding narrative.⁴⁴ Through the inclusion of Priapus and the description of his form, the beginning of this narrative already suggests the sexual and comedic nature of the story.

The conclusion of the story indicates further that this is a comedic story, since it ends in laughter. When the braying of a donkey awakens Lotis, the whole grove laughs at Priapus' failure and embarrassment (1.433-8). The closing image of this narrative is a fleeing nymph and Priapus caught with his trousers down. This image of Priapus humiliated fits with Richlin's description of comedic modification. She argues that normal model of the threatening male can

⁴² Richlin 1983, 58.

⁴³ See (Clarke 2007, 184-9) for more information about humor in visual depictions of deities, particularly Priapus.

⁴⁴ Green 2004, 184-5.

be altered so that the male is humiliated and unmanned in order to create laughter.⁴⁵ The conclusion of the narrative is funny because the god epitomizing extreme virility has failed sexually. Frazel argues that “perhaps nothing delighted Roman men more than seeing Priapus himself, the embodiment (literally) of male sexual aggression, degraded and humiliated”.⁴⁶ In the same way that it is humorous to see Priapus, the embodiment of sexual ambition, humiliated, it is also humorous to envision Augustus, the embodiment of political aggression, humiliated. Ovid uses the correlation between a sexual and political aggressor, to mock Augustus. In this way the introduction and conclusion of this narrative suggest that this story is a comedic variation of an attempted rape narrative, as well as a mockery of imperial ambition.

The comedic nature of this narrative is also apparent through the similarities and disparities between this story and other rape narratives within the *Fasti*. Like the rapes of Lucretia and Lara, this erotically charged narrative focuses on the visual details and transforms the female into a visual object.⁴⁷ In contrast to the Lucretia and Philomela narratives, however, the setting of this narrative encourages sexually immodest behaviour. In the story of Priapus and Lotis, although there are several Naiads with their clothing opened inviting sexual attention, Priapus desires Lotis, who scorns him (1.405-20). The first description of the party scene emphasizes the sexualized female body through the description of various nymphs in scantily-clad attire. One nymph has her tunic tucked above her knee, another has her breast showing, another displays a bare shoulder, one drags her clothes through the grass and all of the nymphs are bare-footed (1.407-10).⁴⁸ These descriptions deconstruct the female body into various parts.

⁴⁵ Richlin 1983, 59.

⁴⁶ Frazel 2003, 76.

⁴⁷ I discussed Lucretia’s transformation into a visual object of desire on page 53.

⁴⁸ Several of these descriptions are mentioned elsewhere as invitations for sexual interest, including revealing calves (Cat. 64.129 and Prop. 2.19.15-16) and revealing shoulders (*Am.* 1.5.19, *Met.* 1.501, *Tib.* 1.5.43). See Green (2004, 191-2) for further examination.

Similar to Ovid's description of Corinna or Sextus' re-imagining of Lucretia, Ovid sexualizes the visualization of the nymphs by highlighting the physical attributes that incite lust in the male viewers. Frazel argues that although Ovid seems to describe the role of the nymphs as waitresses, he specifically focuses on their bodies, which suggests that he is actually presenting them as sexual objects.⁴⁹ Although Lucretia and Philomela were transformed into sexual objects through visual descriptions, these women were engaged in activities not suitable to their sexualization. Philomela was pleading with her father to allow her to visit Procne and Lucretia was weaving with her maids. In contrast, the nymphs in this narrative are attending a rowdy party. All of the revelers at this party, including the nymphs, satyrs, Silenus and Priapus are routinely associated with Bacchus and their actions at this festival, including their immodesty and drinking, are appropriate for the occasion.⁵⁰ The change of setting alters the expectations of appropriate behaviour. Unlike the settings of familial life in the Lucretia and Philomela descriptions, a Bacchic celebration suggests immodest behaviour and sexualization of female attendees.

Aside from the sexualization of the other nymphs attending the party, Priapus' desire for Lotis and his subsequent wooing of her is humorous. Green argues that the description of Priapus desiring Lotis and Lotis rejecting him draws on many motifs of love elegy, as Priapus plays the coy lover and Lotis plays the haughty mistress.⁵¹ Priapus desires her, hopes for her, he sighs for her alone, he gives her signs by nodding (*nutu*) and solicits her with signs (*notis*, 1.417-8). Nodding and secretive signs or notes are often mentioned as forms of communication between lovers. In *Amores*, for example, Ovid tells his lover to watch for his nods and his secretive signs

⁴⁹ Frazel 2003, 74.

⁵⁰ Frazel (2003, 73) highlights the regular retinue of Bacchus and also notes that mythologically speaking Priapus and Dionysus are closely related. Diodorus Siculus records a tradition that Priapus was the son of Dionysus and Aphrodite (4.6.1). Pausanias states that the people of Lampsacus call Priapus a son of Dionysus and Aphrodite (9.31.2). Strabo records a tradition that Priapus was the son of Dionysus and a nymph (13.1.12).

⁵¹ Green 2004, 193.

to her (1.4.17-8). By describing Priapus' desire for Lotis in this way, Ovid likens him to the elegiac lover, who entertains the object of his desire with wooing and persistence. Green notes that this portrayal of Priapus as the 'sophisticated lover' creates an amusing inconsistency with the more common animalistic characteristics of Priapus' desire.⁵² Lotis' rejection of Priapus' advances also suggests similarities between this narrative and motifs from love elegy. When Lotis scorns Priapus' advances, her beauty is associated with arrogance. Line 1.419 states 'pride is found with beauty and haughtiness follows a beautiful form'. Both Ovid and Propertius associate beauty with arrogance when discussing Corinna and Cynthia respectively (*Am.* 2.17.7-9, *Prop.* 3.8.35-6). There are elegiac suggestions in both the character of Priapus, as the coy lover, and Lotis as the arrogant mistress. Since the role of Priapus as the coy lover is unusual, this elegiac colouring of Priapus' advances is another source of comedy for this episode.

Consistent with the sexualization of the female attendees and the elegiac reading of Priapus' advances, Lotis is also presented as a sexualized female. At the end of the celebrations when night and wine are making the participants drowsy, Lotis, weary from frolic, rests on the grassy ground under the maple boughs (1.421-4). This passage is abundant with sexual imagery, including the landscape details and the description of Lotis, which prefigures Priapus' attempted rape. Lotis' selection of a grassy resting spot underneath a tree is a variation of the *locus amoenus*. Similar to the Gabii narrative, this description of a natural landscape also portends sexual violence.⁵³ In addition to the landscape, the description of Lotis as weary from frolic (*erat lusu fessa*, 1.424) could suggest sexual activity. Adams argues that *lusus* means unspecified physical play which falls short of intercourse.⁵⁴ Furthermore, *fessa* means to be worn out or weary, but it too can have a sexual implication. As such, the phrase 'weary from frolic' could

⁵² Green 2004, 195.

⁵³ I discussed the Ovidian *locus amoenus* as a narratological cue for rape on page 22.

⁵⁴ Adams 1982, 162.

alternatively be translated as ‘worn out from sexual activity’. Frazel argues that this sexualization of Lotis makes her rejection of Priapus false and thus her actions are actually an invitation.⁵⁵ Whether or not Lotis desires Priapus, the importance of this description is Ovid’s sexualization of Lotis. Also, her initial rejection of Priapus makes her unattainable. Similar to Lucretia and Philomela, the unattainability of a woman increases the desire of her pursuer.⁵⁶ Unlike Lucretia and Philomela, however, Lotis is available and attainable. Unlike Philomela, she is not the daughter of a king and sister-in-law to the sexual aggressor. Unlike Lucretia, she is not the wife of a fellow companion and celebrated for her chastity. Ovid plays on the similarity of transforming the female into a visual object, which occurs in other rape narratives in the *Fasti*, but highlights the absurdity of this correlation. Sex is expected at a Bacchic festival with attendees such as Priapus, the embodiment of male sexual aggression, and nymphs, who are known for their sexual exploits. As such, Ovid’s comparison of this narrative to other serious narratives about sexual aggression highlights the comedic aspect of this narrative.

Another similarity between this narrative and other rape narratives in the *Fasti* is the silencing of an outspoken character. In the same way that the sexualization of female characters was less serious in this narrative, so too is the silencing. As Priapus is preparing to rape Lotis, a donkey brays and wakes up Lotis. Priapus’ attempt is foiled and whole grove laughs at him, which causes him to kill the donkey (1.433-40). This story has several similarities with the silencing of Lara in book two. Both Lara and the donkey use speech to warn the victims of impending rapes and suffer the loss of speech as a result. Yet, in the Lara episode, Lara is brutally silenced and then raped for her disruption of Jupiter’s plan to rape Juturna. In contrast, the Lotis episode is intrinsically less serious and absurd because the offending character is a

⁵⁵ Frazel 2003, 75.

⁵⁶ Increased desire as a result of unattainability was discussed on pages 52 and following in reference to Lucretia’s unattainability.

donkey. One of the most emphasized qualities of donkeys was their lustfulness and often they were used as a metaphor for human sexuality.⁵⁷ With this in mind, it is interesting that the donkey thwarts sexual advances in this narrative. In Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* there is also an example of a donkey halting sexual activity, when Lucius in the form of a donkey thwarts an adulterous love affair (9.27). Green argues that both Apuleius and Ovid could be drawing on a common comic tradition for their use of the donkey.⁵⁸ Clearly, Ovid's inclusion of the donkey as the source of interruption in this narrative is comedic. Aside from the source of interruption, even the sound of the interruption in the Lotis narrative is absurd. The donkey makes an incomprehensible sound, which alerts Lotis to the danger, in contrast Lara verbally relates Jupiter's plan to Juturna, as well as Juno. Therefore both the speaking out and subsequent silencing in this narrative is ludicrous in comparison to the Lara narrative. The comedic aspects of this narrative are particularly evident in comparison to other Ovidian rape narratives.

IV.iii. Comedic and Serious Narratives

Aside from its similarity to other Ovidian rape narratives, Ovid's placement of this narrative shortly after his Aristaeus story also highlights the relationship between these two narratives. The juxtaposition of serious and comedic material could be seen as simply a light-hearted attempt to reuse central themes in a different manner. In this way, the Lotis narrative could be read as simply a cheeky redeployment of Vergilian material. Yet, the seriousness and political relevance of Ovid's Aristaeus narrative and his discussion about the injustice of animal sacrifice suggests that there is political relevance to the Lotis narrative as well. Sexual ambition, which is a serious, destructive force in the Aristaeus narrative, is redeployed as comedic humiliation in the Lotis narrative. As such political ambition, which is metaphorically described

⁵⁷ Mills 1978, 304.

⁵⁸ Green 2004, 200.

as a destructive force in the Aristaeus narrative is re-used as comedic material in the Lotis narrative. This is not to say that Ovid always uses sexual aggression as a source of comedy, clearly the stories of Philomela, Lucretia and Lara demonstrate the devastating effects of sexual aggression. Furthermore, this is not to say that all Ovidian comedic rape narratives are controversial and have political relevance. I argue, however, that Ovid's juxtaposition of the serious Aristaeus narrative and comedic Lotis narrative allows him to mock Augustus as a political aggressor.

It is not unusual for Ovid to position serious and comedic narratives shortly after one another. In book three of the *Metamorphoses* Ovid juxtaposes the serious story of Cadmus (1.1-137) with the ludicrous narrative about Tiresias (1.316-338). In both narratives snakes play a decisive role in the outcome of events. Regardless of their common theme, one narrative is a serious, politically charged story, while the other is comedic. In the Cadmus story, Thebes is founded from the death of Mars' serpent and populated by Cadmus sowing the serpent's teeth. Furthermore, Cadmus and his wife are later transformed into snakes themselves (4.576-603). This foundation narrative is undoubtedly tied to contemporary political events, specifically Rome's civil war and Augustus' re-foundation of Rome. Hardie argues that Ovid's story about the foundation of Thebes is an 'anti-*Aeneid*' and precursor of Lucan's *Bellum Civile* and Statius' *Thebaid*.⁵⁹ The relationship between this foundation narrative and Vergil's *Aeneid* emphasizes the gravity of this narrative. In contrast to this politically charged narrative, the Tiresias narrative also concerns snakes, but with comedic consequences. In an attempt to discover which of the sexes enjoys more pleasure in sex, Jupiter and Juno ask Tiresias, who has been both a man and woman. Tiresias was transformed into a woman when he hit two mating serpents and changed

⁵⁹ Hardie (1990, 226). An 'anti-*Aeneid*' is a foundation narrative that goes wrong. In the Cadmus narrative after founding Thebes, Cadmus is forced to go into a second exile. See Hardie for a detailed examination of the relationship between Ovid's Theban foundation narrative and Vergil's *Aeneid*.

back to man by the same means. Similar to the *Aeneid* and Ovid's Cadmus narrative, Juno and Jupiter are also at odds with one another in this narrative, however their disagreement is laughable in the Tiresias narrative. The ludicrous nature of this narrative is further emphasized through the involvement of snakes, which were also present in the Cadmus narrative. The role of snakes in this narrative does not have the same gravity and political nature as the Cadmus story. Ovid's ability to redeploy themes from a serious and overtly political narrative to a ludicrous narrative allows him to mock those themes. Ovid's juxtaposition of serious and comedic narratives in the *Fasti* also indicates mockery. Ovid uses the connection between Aristaeus and Augustus, as well as sexual aggression and imperial ambition to mock Augustus as a political aggressor in the Lotis narrative.

In another juxtaposition of serious and comedic material, Ovid pushes the boundaries of comedic material in his narrative about Priapus' second attempted rape. In book six of the *Fasti* Ovid tells Priapus' attempted rape of Vesta (6.319-48), the guardian of Rome's hearth, which follows the same storyline as his attempted rape of Lotis.⁶⁰ These narratives do not only have the same theme of sexual aggression, but also the same basic plot. In both stories there is a feast attended by Silenus, Priapus and various nymphs and satyrs. The victim of the attempted rape leaves the party to sleep, during which Priapus attempts to rape her. Finally, in both narratives the braying of a donkey foils Priapus' attempt. Some scholars have argued that the similarities between these narratives indicate that Ovid would have omitted one of these narratives in the completed version of the *Fasti*.⁶¹ Fantham argues that the tale is ultimately "a failure, defeated by Vesta's aura of respectability".⁶² On the other hand, Newlands argues that the repetition of

⁶⁰ See Fantham (1983) for an examination of the repetition of words and phrases in the two attempted rapes of Priapus.

⁶¹ Wilkinson 1955, 253; Fantham 1983, 203.

⁶² Fantham 1983, 210.

material and characters from book one in book six functions as a form of poetic unity, as well as closure. She argues that this repetition creates a negative mirroring of themes and situations.⁶³ I agree that these narratives form a ring composition and therefore it is not necessary to view one as inferior or misplaced.

Despite the similarities between these narratives, there is uneasiness in the Vesta narrative, which is not present in the Lotis narrative. Undoubtedly, much of this uneasiness arises from the substitution of a revered Roman goddess, Vesta, for a sexualized Greek nymph as the victim. This uneasiness is particularly marked by the discrepancy in the conclusions of these two stories. Whereas the Lotis narrative ends with the grove laughing at Priapus, the Vesta narrative concludes with Priapus escaping from hostile hands (6.344). It is this uneasiness, which has caused scholars such as Fantham to label the Vesta and Priapus narrative a comedic failure. It seems unlikely, however, that this narrative is simply a failed attempt at a joke. Littlewood argues that the inclusion of both Priapus and Vesta in this narrative reflects the literary challenge of combining two antithetical deities, Vesta and Priapus, respectively the personifications of Chastity and Lust in the same story.⁶⁴ Newlands argues that Ovid has attempted to mediate between elegy and Augustan Rome. She concludes that this narrative is not an aesthetic failure, but rather an integral part of the poem's movement towards disenchantment.⁶⁵ Although I agree that the poem is not an aesthetic failure and it does represent a literary challenge, I argue that Ovid's inclusion of this narrative continues to mock Augustus and his reforms by destabilizing the respectability and chastity of Vesta.

⁶³ Newlands 1995, 129. Both Littlewood and Frazel also support the opinion that these two rapes of Priapus should be read together, but for different reasons. Littlewood (2006, 105) argues that the narratives frame Ovid's two peripheral books. Frazel (2003, 64) argues that Priapus' role as the embodiment of constant and unfulfilled male sexual desire is emphasized through Ovid's inclusion of both narratives.

⁶⁴ Littlewood 2006, 105.

⁶⁵ Newlands 1995, 145.

I argue that Ovid's inclusion of Vesta in the attempted rape narrative indicates that Ovid is specifically reacting against the Augustan image of Vesta. In 12 BCE when Augustus was made *pontifex maximus*, he took charge of the cult of Vesta. Furthermore, he transformed a section of his house into public property and built a shrine to Vesta there.⁶⁶ His creation of this shrine served to associate Vesta and her guardianship of the Roman hearth with Augustus and his family. Newlands argues, "connected with the worship of his own Lares and Penates, the new temple of Vesta expressed the identification of the emperor's hearth with that of the state".⁶⁷ Considering Augustus' interest in encouraging sexual modesty, it is not surprising that Vesta, a revered goddess often associated with chastity, should rise to new prominence. The figure of Vesta, however, is not as solely associated with chastity as the Augustan version might seem. Beard argues that sexual ambiguity is a key factor in Vesta's position.⁶⁸ Although Vesta was associated with inviolable chastity, she is called *mater* (mother) and also connected to the donkey, which is generally considered to be a sexually driven animal.⁶⁹ Pliny states that the Vestal Virgins were also in charge of the cult of Fascinus, the god of the penis (*H.N.* 28.39). This is not to say that virginity was not an integral aspect of the Vestal Virgins, simply that there are other aspects to Vesta than only inviolable chastity. This sexual ambiguity is obviously masked in the Augustan portrayal of Vesta, since her association with chastity coincides more with Augustan moral reforms.

Ovid presents an alternate version of Vesta, since he does not overtly emphasize her chastity and connection to the imperial family. Instead he likens Vesta to the Greek nymph Lotis through the similarities in their rape narratives. The figure of Vesta, however, is not completely

⁶⁶ Newlands 1995, 130. It should be noted that Ovid celebrates this action in book four of the *Fasti* (949-54).

⁶⁷ Newlands 1995, 130-1.

⁶⁸ Beard 1980, 12-27. For further information about the sexual status of Vestal Virgins see Parker (2004) and Beard (1995).

⁶⁹ Newlands 1995, 136.

compatible with a bawdy rape narrative, which is noticeable through Ovid's treatment of her. Ovid does not describe Vesta in a sexualized manner, nor does he devote attention to sexualizing the nymphs attending the party. Unlike Lotis, Priapus does not attempt to woo Vesta, in fact Ovid suggests that Priapus might not have even realized that the sleeping figure was Vesta (6.335-6). The marked absence of overt sexualization could be seen as support for the Augustan image of a chaste and revered Vesta. Yet, Vesta's association with such sexualized company tarnishes this accommodation.⁷⁰ Why is a goddess associated with chastity consorting with hyper-sexualized Priapus and his company of equally sexualized nymphs and satyrs in the first place? Even though Ovid's version of Vesta is not entirely socially comparable to Lotis, this narrative is clearly at odds with the Augustan redefinition of this goddess. By connecting this narrative to the previous story about Lotis, Ovid is able to contrast serious and comedic material again. Whereas the Lotis narrative mocks sexual aggression and imperial ambition, the Vesta narrative is more overtly political and a more serious examination of Augustan reforms. Ovid presents a version of Vesta, which is not completely compatible with the Augustan version of this goddess. Furthermore, he returns to the conflation of sexual aggression and political aggression, but presents the humiliated sexual aggressor in a more precarious situation. Instead of laughing at the exploits of Priapus, the grove becomes hostile and resents the display of the sexual aggression, as well as the sexual aggressor overstepping his boundaries. There is the implication that the ambition of the aggressor has exceeded the accepted boundaries for lighthearted humiliation. This narrative suggests, therefore, that it is possible for a political aggressor to also exceed the boundaries of acceptable ambition and perhaps Ovid is suggesting that Augustus has reached this limit.

⁷⁰ Newlands 1995, 136.

V. Conclusion

Ovid's re-telling of the Vergilian Aristaetus narrative asserts the freedom of the poet to re-imagine narratives and question political ideology. He exploits two unresolved issues from the Vergilian version: the necessity of death for renewal and the dangers of sexual aggression. By retelling the Aristaetus narrative within a discussion about the injustice of animal sacrifice, Ovid questions the necessity of death for religious renewal. Aside from the literal interpretation of Ovid's sympathy for the victims of animal sacrifice, there are also metaphorical connections to the civil war. In Vergil's Aristaetus narrative the bee community is representative of Romans, the cattle are representative of Italy and Aristaetus is representative of Augustus. As such, when Ovid questions the injustice of innocent deaths, he is also questioning the necessity of suffering for political ambition. Furthermore, by highlighting the death and destruction of the civil war, he questions the political rhetoric of a new Golden Age of Rome under Augustus.

The second issue that Ovid addresses from the Vergilian Aristaetus narrative is the dangers of sexual aggression and its metaphorical relationship with Augustan ambition. Ovid places his Lotis narrative directly after his Aristaetus narrative. This narrative mocks sexual aggression and the sexual aggressor by presenting a failed sexual attempt as comedic. By mocking this sexual exploit, Ovid also mocks imperial ambition and more specifically Augustus as a political aggressor. The juxtaposition of the serious and comedic narratives, which is evident in Ovid's placement of the Aristaetus and Lotis narratives, is also seen in the Lotis and Vesta narratives. The substitution of Vesta for Lotis creates another narrative mocking sexual and political ambitions, but in a more serious manner than the Lotis narrative. Ovid juxtaposes the serious and overtly political Vesta narrative with the comedic and trivial Lotis narrative. In his Vesta narrative Ovid destabilizes the respectability and chastity associated with the Augustan

version of Vesta by likening her to the Greek nymph, Lotis. He asserts the freedom of the poet to re-imagine characters, such as Vesta, in an alternate manner, even if this manner is at odds with political ideology and reforms. By encircling his Aristaeus narrative with a discussion about animal sacrifice and the comedic Lotis narrative, Ovid undermines several aspects of Augustan ideology. He questions the necessity of death during the civil war and the political rhetoric of renewal under Augustus' leadership. In addition, he destabilizes Vesta's image as a chaste goddess and mocks Augustus' political ambition in both his Lotis and Vesta narratives. By straying from the politically acceptable views of Augustan ideology, he demonstrates a desire for poetic autonomy.

CONCLUSION

History Re-Imagined

Ovid expands the boundaries of elegy in his poem about the Roman calendar by choosing a subject matter that is inherently imbued with political relevance and transforming it into elegy. All of the narratives that I have examined from Ovid's *Fasti* have been eroticized and contain various motifs from elegiac poetry. Ovid's eroticization of these narratives is more significant than simply a way to make historical and political narratives suitable to an elegiac meter and a primarily elegiac poet. I argue that his eroticization of these narratives demonstrates a desire for poetic autonomy in response to the political pressure to write in support of Augustan ideology. Elegy responds to this political pressure by creating a clear separation between public and private lives. Although elegists traditionally refuse to discuss public themes, they incorporate and redeploy aspects of public genres into their elegiac poetry. It is this relationship between elegy and public genres, such as epic and history, which is significant for my discussion of the *Fasti*. I argue that Ovid's incorporation of historical and political narratives into his elegiac poem is a continuation of this elegiac practice.

At a time when the political world is intruding on the private and amatory lives of individuals, Ovid incorporates public and political themes into his elegiac poetry. He takes history and transports it in a genre that has been defined as private and distinct from the imperial reach. By transporting historical narratives into this genre, Ovid asserts poetic autonomy. He demonstrates the freedom of the poet to choose his own subject matter and the manner of presenting it. Furthermore, he presents a version of history that is, at times, critical of Augustan ideology. In Ovid's historical narratives, sexual dominance is celebrated, figures of chastity are destabilized and the political rhetoric of a new Golden Age is questioned.

In my introduction I outlined the main issues and concerns in developing an argument about the *Fasti*. The *Fasti* is a complex poem for several reasons, not the least of which is its concern with the Roman calendar. It incorporates a wide variety of subject matter, which makes any development of a unifying theme difficult. In addition to the diverse subject matter, a single unifying argument about Ovid's stance on Augustan politics in the *Fasti* is highly debated. There are numerous arguments, both supportive and critical, about Ovid, the *Fasti* and Augustus. I argued, nevertheless, that my analysis of the *Fasti* does not find overwhelming support of Augustan ideology. My argument concerned Ovid's eroticization of historical and politically significant narratives in the *Fasti*. I focused on three main narratives: the capture of Gabii (2.687-710), the rape of Lucretia (2.721-852) and the Aristaetus narrative (1.363-390). I argued that Ovid's eroticization of these narratives demonstrates a desire for poetic autonomy by transporting public and political subjects into a private genre. For each chapter I began by outlining the ways in which Ovid eroticizes the narrative and concluded with the significance of this eroticization.

My first chapter established a relationship between private and public poetry. I focused on Ovid's version of the Gabii narrative in this chapter. Ovid transports this narrative about a military conquest into his elegiac poem and transforms it into a story about an erotic domination. I argued that eroticization is particularly emphasized in Ovid's inclusion of a *locus amoenus*, his substitution of lilies for poppies and his description of the defeated citizens as victims of sexual aggression. After demonstrating Ovid's eroticization of this narrative, I questioned the significance of this eroticization. I argued Ovid's eroticization of this narrative correlates to the elegiac response to the political pressure to write poetry in support of Augustan ideology. Ovid reacts to the political pressure to write about martial themes by writing about these themes in an

elegiac manner. He demonstrates the freedom of the poet to choose his own themes and the manner of writing them.

In my second chapter I examined Ovid's version of the Lucretia narrative. The story of Lucretia's death is inescapably political in nature since her suicide results in the foundation of the Republic. Despite its political importance, Ovid focuses on his depiction of Lucretia as an elegiac woman and the sexual violence of the story rather than the ensuing political change. I argued that there are three reoccurring themes in Ovid's version of this narrative that suggest eroticization. The first theme is Ovid's emphasis on household boundaries as symbolic of female chastity, which I related to the elegiac motif of the *paraclausithyron*. Secondly, I discussed Ovid's manner of describing Lucretia as a sexualized object of desire. I likened this method of describing a viewed woman to descriptions of elegiac mistresses from Ovid's other works and Propertius. Finally, I examined Ovid's focus on the correlation between speech and power in this narrative, which emphasizes the passivity of a viewed character. Ovid's focus on the vulnerability of silenced Lucretia correlates to several other narratives in book two, which also include silenced characters. I argued that this focus on the vulnerability of silence indicates an anxiety about poetic autonomy and not having the freedom to speak. I also connected this concern for poetic autonomy to Ovid's destabilization of Lucretia as a figure of respectability and chastity. Ovid asserts control over his presentation of history and politics by not only presenting this narrative in a genre known for its private nature, but also by presenting a version of this narrative that is at odds with Augustan ideology.

My third chapter examines the Aristaeus narrative in the *Fasti*, which is based on Vergil's version of this mythological narrative in the *Georgics*. After an examination of Vergil's narrative, I concluded that there are two unresolved issues: the necessity of death for rebirth and

the dangers of sexual aggression. I argued that Ovid exploits these two issues in his version of the narrative. He encircles his Aristaeus narrative with a discussion about the injustice of animal sacrifice and the comedic Lotis story. In the Vergilian version sacrifice metaphorically represents the death of Romans during the civil war, Ovid engages with this metaphorical understanding of sacrifice in his discussion about the injustice of animal sacrifice. He questions the necessity of death and destruction during the civil war for the political ambitions of a leader, Augustus. His inclusion of the comedic attempted rape of Lotis also engages with Vergilian concerns. Whereas sexual aggression is a dangerous desire for mastery in Vergil's *Georgics*, the sexual aggressor is mocked in Ovid's Lotis narrative. I argued that the ludicrous Lotis narrative should be read with the serious and overtly political Vesta narrative. Ovid destabilizes the Augustan version of a chaste and respectable Vesta by likening her to the Greek nymph, Lotis. In both the Lotis and Vesta narratives I argued that Ovid mocks the political ambition of Augustus. Thus, Ovid's version of the Aristaeus narrative asserts his poetic freedom to question political ideology and re-imagine characters, such as Vesta, in an alternate manner.

Ovid's eroticization of these historical and politically significant narratives reveals a desire for poetic autonomy. These narratives are traditionally outside of the self-imposed marginalized scope of elegy. Ovid, however, transports these narratives into the private genre of elegy. Through this action, Ovid asserts control over these public subjects and challenges the accepted political ideology. Ovid's eroticized versions of historical narratives demonstrate the power of the poet to question political ideology and mock political leaders.

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