

APOSTROPHE TO THE GODS IN OVID'S *METAMORPHOSES*, LUCAN'S
PHARSALIA, AND STATIUS' *THEBAID*

By

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To my students, for believing in me

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This dissertation examines the significance of apostrophes to gods in three post-Vergilian epics: Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Lucan's *Pharsalia*, and Statius' *Thebaid*.

This work devotes one chapter each to the *Metamorphoses*, *Pharsalia*, and the *Thebaid*, with an introduction and a conclusion. The introduction establishes a working definition of apostrophe and postulates that apostrophe in post-Vergilian epic is a space in which the poet can add meaning. Apostrophes to gods during the early principate are places in which poets do not merely heighten the emotional tone of an episode, but comment on the role of political or religious power.

In the chapters on Ovid, Lucan, and Statius, apostrophes to gods are treated by the episodes in which they occur, in the order in which they come in the epic, allowing the reader to follow trends and changes as they occur. Each apostrophe to a god is discussed, even those that exist for no greater purpose than variety. By comparison, then, one can better appreciate the function of those apostrophes that clearly do contribute to the meaning of particular passages or reveal sentiments that the poet did not express directly.

The conclusion discusses trends found in the use of apostrophe to the gods within each of the epics, then across the three works. Ovid uses apostrophes to gods to guide readers to the conclusion that mortals owe reverence to their rulers out of fear, no matter how cruel or unjust they might be. Apostrophes to many gods accompany the panegyric to Augustus that ends the work; by placing Caesar and Augustus in Book 15 alongside a pantheon Ovid has taken such pains to disgrace throughout the *Metamorphoses*, he colors the reader's impression of the new regime. Lucan uses apostrophes to gods mainly to establish his assertion that *Fortuna* is the real force behind the advancement of history, a capricious deity that is indifferent to the fate of Rome at best and actively hostile to its interests at worst. Apostrophes to gods in Statius help reestablish the unquestionable power of the Olympians. Statius exhibits a tension between tradition and novelty in his apostrophes to gods and is careful to use only minor characters to criticize the actions of gods or rulers through them. The examination of apostrophes to gods across the three epics reveals an evolution of permissible speech, from Ovid's cavalier brazenness to Lucan's confrontational assertiveness to Statius' baroque deference. Read against this evolution, apostrophes to the gods help the reader interpret the panegyrics to the sitting emperors in each epic.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

From the mid-19th century through the 1950s, the prevailing view on apostrophe was that it is chiefly a rhetorical device of convenience: epic poets used apostrophe as one tool among many by which to satisfy the demands of dactylic hexameter, to introduce variety in their methods of narration, or to elicit some (sym)pathetic reaction in the listener.¹ Common assumptions behind these conclusions are that apostrophe does not have a purpose pointing to larger issues in the epic, and that epic poets have used apostrophe almost instinctively, according to conventions long established in Homer, Attic drama, and rhetoric. If apostrophe is merely a convention, a poet's reflex, then there would be nothing for the poet to gain in his use of apostrophe that he could not have gained in some other way with concentrated thought.

The past forty years, however, have seen a reevaluation of the use of apostrophe in epic, not coincidentally with the renaissance in Lucan and Silver Age studies. Hellenistic and post-Republican Latin epic poets, after all, did not approach the construction of epic in the same way that Homer did, nor were the reasons for writing epic the same. In the case of Vergil and the epic writers who followed him, the political environment often weighed on them and so ought to be considered by scholars who study those epics. Because Vergil and his epic successors were heirs, at least in part,

¹ After Nitzsch's short 1860 article on apostrophe in Homer, the subject of apostrophe proper was not taken up again until Henry and Bonner's competing 1905 articles. Henry explained away apostrophe by asserting its origin in *ἄϊνος ἐπιτύμβιος*, speech used in rituals for the dead. Bonner, on the other hand, at least admitted that apostrophe is a device that heightens interest, appearing for a combination of rhetorical and metrical reasons. Their arguments, however, took the form of a list of examples of direct address and/or apostrophe, without any serious treatment from a literary standpoint. Endt 1905, though bound by traditional assumptions that apostrophe is merely a rhetorical flourish incapable of provoking larger questions, began to appreciate how Roman epicists, influenced by lyric, used apostrophe to increase pathos. Wagener 1931, however, regresses in his dismissal of apostrophe as used in lists to promote variety, and in imitation Greek predecessors.

to the Hellenistic and Neoteric movements, the issue of the author's self-conscious intention should be considered in every detail of those works.²

I argue that apostrophe in Latin epic is meant to create space for the author to do something meaningful, whether in the scene in which he inserts an apostrophe, in the whole epic, or both simultaneously. My focus on apostrophes to divinities will contribute to understanding the significance of that space. The characterization of the gods during the establishment of the principate can shed light on the author's political thinking, since the emperors came to identify themselves with the gods and the epic poets were conscious of the new political reality and critical of it to varying degrees. If an author alludes directly or indirectly to the *princeps*, as Ovid, Lucan, and Statius all do, then the depiction of the gods also contributes to the image of the *princeps* in the poem. Apostrophes to the gods can help guide the reader toward an image of the *princeps*, reflecting or contradicting the one explicitly given; either way, these apostrophes comment on the role of power, both within the text and, by analogy, outside the text. Within the text, are the authority figures tyrannical or just? What degree of deference do mortals and subjects show to their gods and kings? By analogy, are the power relationships in each epic consistent with the characterization of the *princeps* and poet's relationship with him? Ultimately, literary, religious, and political themes within the text converge on the use of apostrophe.

² Zyroff's 1971 dissertation on apostrophe in epic is seminal because she assumes that the apostrophe is a deliberate act on the author's part, not necessarily an instinctive rhetorical flourish. Perraud's 1983 article on Ovid's use of apostrophe in the Pyramus and Thisbe episode investigates what Ovid actively intended with the device. Behr's 2005 article on apostrophe in Vergil builds on Mieke Bal's concept of focalization (i.e., the perspective within which events are presented in a text) to investigate apostrophe as a way for the poet to communicate different points of view. Behr's 2007 book on Lucan concludes that his apostrophes are didactic. Georgacopoulou's work on apostrophe in Statius' *Thebaid* is the most detailed study on apostrophe to date, asking what the function of the narrator's voice is and how that voice interacts with other voices in the story.

Investigating apostrophes to the gods in Ovid, Lucan, and Statius reveals an evolution of the relationship of poets with their emperors. The *Metamorphoses*, *Pharsalia*, and *Thebaid* were written in the three generations after the principate was fully established. The emperors Augustus, Nero, and Domitian are present to varying degrees in the same epic canvas in which such themes as power, conflict, and the position of ordinary mortals dominate; the proximity of sitting rulers with these themes invites interpretation. In the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid tests how much freedom a poet actually has in the new political reality of the principate by openly ridiculing both the gods and the new *princeps*. Lucan is defiant, barely concealing his resentment over what he sees as the loss of freedom under the new political order. Statius' use of apostrophe to the gods, perhaps learning from Ovid and Lucan, reveals a more tempered acceptance of the new boundaries.

In order to investigate apostrophes to the gods in these three epics, some ground rules need to be established. First, what is apostrophe? The earliest use of the word is probably in a fragment of Philodemus' treatise Περὶ Παρρησίας, *On Frank Criticism*, though there it has not yet acquired a precise rhetorical meaning.³ The pseudo-Ciceronian *Ad Herennium* defines apostrophe, called there *exclamatio*, as a figure expressing *doloris aut indignationis*, "grief or indignation," by addressing someone or something. The writer of *Ad Herennium* advises that this device should be used sparingly and at important moments in order to bring out the intended *indignatio*.⁴

Quintilian formally defines the Greek term ἀποστροφή as simply a turning away from

³ *On Frank Criticism*, fr. 21: καὶ πάσης ἀποστρ(ο)φῆς περιγεγραμμένης καὶ κατάρα(ς καὶ) λοιδορίας ἀπάσ(ης) καὶ δι' ἀπο(ν)οίας: "And when every recourse has been determined and every malediction (and) insult, both through madness..." (Text and translation by Konstan 1998.)

⁴ *For Herennius* 4.15.

the listener, *sermonem a persona iudicis aversum*.⁵ Elsewhere, he seems to consider as apostrophe any instance in which the speaker turns away from what he specifically calls the judge (*iudex*), invokes someone or something, exclaims in disgust, or deliberately serves to distract the listener.⁶ He suggests that the device should be used sparingly but admits that it can be effective in certain circumstances. To be effective, it must be useful; by inference, it must be intentional. With this opinion, he departs from what he perceives as the prevailing view among writers on rhetoric that apostrophe is not useful.⁷ Longinus, supporting his assertion that the effect of elevated language is not persuasion but transport,⁸ quotes Demosthenes' use of the device in *De Corona* 208, admiring how he lifted up his listeners with a sense of conviction and pride.⁹ These ancient rhetoricians agree that apostrophe is useful; they disagree, however, on its exact function, with possible effects ranging from anger and indignation to elevation and honor. It is noteworthy that they discuss apostrophe in the context of in-person speech, never in a literary context such as epic; scholars over the last century, on the other hand, have written about apostrophe almost exclusively in a literary context, particularly epic.¹⁰

⁵ Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory* 4.1.63.

⁶ Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory* 9.2.38-39.

⁷ Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory* 4.1.65.

⁸ Longinus, *On the Sublime* 1.4.1-2: οὐ γὰρ εἰς πειθῶ τοὺς ἀκρωμένους ἀλλ' εἰς ἔκστασιν ἄγει τὰ ὑπερφυᾶ.

⁹ Longinus, *On the Sublime* 16.2.

¹⁰ Scholars since 1900 who have written about apostrophe in Greco-Roman epic include Scott 1903, Basore 1904, Endt 1905, Henry 1905, Bonner 1905, Zyroff 1971, Perry 1972, Perraud 1983, McRoberts 2005, Georgacopoulou 2005, and Behr 2005 and 2007. Wagener 1931 wrote on apostrophe in Greek drama, and Culler 1977 and Kneale 1991 treat apostrophe in their roles as critics of English lyric. Hutchinson 2010 discusses the use of apostrophe among many genres, both in prose and poetry.

Recent scholarship assumes an analogy between the ancient and modern philological treatment of apostrophe. The ancient rhetoricians discussed the speaker's use of apostrophe; modern scholars have been investigating the narrator's use of apostrophe in drama or epic, likening the narrator of epic, for instance, to a speaker trying to move his audience in some direction. Revealing her acceptance of this analogy, to take an example from the longest scholarly work on apostrophe to date, Zyroff writes that apostrophes in poetry are spoken by characters and, revealingly, by the author (not merely by the narrator).¹¹ It is important to step away from the notion that the narrator's voice is always and automatically that of the author; it is also important to see that the narrator is but one perspective in epic and may not necessarily encompass the whole of what the author intends to convey. The author is responsible for the entire text and so constructs more than one perspective in that text, using his arsenal of literary devices from many points of view. It is important that analysis of any of these literary devices, like apostrophe, be considered wherever found, not just in the narrator's sections of epic, lest we unnecessarily confine ourselves. So for the purposes of this study, apostrophe will be considered in both the general narration and the speeches of characters.

In accordance, therefore, with the ancient understanding of the device, apostrophe is a sudden shift from narration or the direct address of one entity to an address of some person, god, or thing that is not present, without a change in the narrator/speaker. By this definition, a direct prayer from a character to a god is not an apostrophe in itself; some shift has to take place from the character narrating something or addressing

¹¹ Zyroff 1971, 1.

someone.¹² To find apostrophes, I read through each of the epics in Latin, looking for vocatives and second person verbs to see whether those elements represented a sudden shift from narration or in address from one entity to another.

The second ground rule to establish is the identification of a god. In their own ways and to varying degrees, Ovid, Lucan, and Statius examine the nature and effect of power between rulers and their subjects (both within and outside of the epic) and between gods and men. The gods in these poems, then, are not just the Olympians, but other supernatural powers who wield power over mortals, and occasionally other gods. By the time of Ovid, Lucan, and Statius, that pantheon includes not only the Romanized Olympians, but also native Italian gods, foreign imports, and some personifications.

Any discussion of gods in epic must include some grounding in Denis Feeney's 1991 book on the subject. He observes that Ovid used mythological episodes involving sex to investigate the boundaries between human and divine. One way in which the gods appear separate from mortals is their *licentia*, their power for self-indulgence.¹³ Ovid's Ariadne episode, to take but one example, blurs the line between human and divine by presenting gods as acting human with divine *licentia*. The *Metamorphoses* asks both how divine humanity is and how human divinity is. Ovid wades into the political implications of such questions as soon as he compares the home of the gods with Augustus' palace, *hic locus est, quem... / haud timeam magni dixisse Palatia caeli*

¹² Lausberg 1998, 338, summarizes the ancient opinions on the nature and effect of apostrophe in his definition: "*Apostrophe*...is "turning away" from the normal audience...and the addressing of another, second audience, surprisingly chosen by the speaker. This practice has an emotive...effect on the normal audience, since it is an expression, on the part of the speaker... Apostrophe is, so to speak, an emotional move of despair on the part of the speaker."

¹³ Feeney 1991, 198.

(1.175-76), "This is the sort of place which I would not fear to call the Palatine of great heaven." To investigate the nature of and limitations of the gods is also to probe the character and foibles of a *princeps* who historically obfuscated the distinction between mortal and divine.¹⁴ Ovid's exploration of divine anger and its consequences leads to the conclusion that morality is a concept that only has meaning for humans.¹⁵

Feeney's chapter on the role of the gods in Lucan begins by establishing just how bizarre the lack or withdrawal of the traditional divine apparatus was for the ancients. To the hypothesis that the gods are absent from Lucan's *Pharsalia*, Feeney concedes that many modern scholars object that "this supposed godless poem is actually obsessed with gods."¹⁶ He assumes that Lucan's epic takes belief in the gods for granted because he addresses them so much, attributing motives and will.¹⁷ After the epic finally dispenses with the possibility that the Muses, Apollo, and Bacchus take part in the development of history, for good or ill, Lucan forces the reader to confront the disturbing reality that something worse than divine malevolence is behind the civil war, randomness. It is at this point that the language of destiny and randomness (e.g., *fortuna*) takes over.¹⁸

Feeney exclaims that Statius' use of the gods is "an astonishing exercise of resilient originality in the face of a tradition which must have threatened any sense of

¹⁴ Feeney 1991, 220.

¹⁵ Feeney 1991, 203.

¹⁶ Feeney 1991, 270.

¹⁷ Feeney 1991, 274.

¹⁸ Feeney 1991, 278-80.

adequacy he possessed."¹⁹ The gods at times show a self-conscious deviation from their previous characterizations. The cosmology of the *Thebaid* is clearly and vertically ordered, with the Olympians above, the Underworld below, and humanity in between. Jupiter is clearly in charge among the Olympians, displaying an Ovidian anger and the long, grudge-keeping memory of Vergil's Juno. While Ovid blurs the line between human and divine even when he compares Augustus with Jupiter, Statius takes pains to maintain the distinction, as when he presents Domitian and Jupiter as competing for what Feeney calls "divine prerogatives." Domitian is mortal and must be content with the human portion of the cosmos; Jupiter is a god and cannot yield any part of his dominion to any mortal ruler, no matter how powerful.²⁰ Statius, though, does complicate the supposedly clear delineation between mortal and divine by experimenting with divine allegory and by ultimately ceding morality from the divine to the human sphere.

I proceed by discussing apostrophes in the order in which they appear in the poems. This linear approach helps preserve the continuity of the text and invites the reader to consider how the use of apostrophe evolves as the story develops; a god or gods at the beginning of a text may not have the same power or significance by the end. I interrogate the apostrophes in isolation and in context, identifying and discussing the significance of the speaker and addressee. Scenes in which apostrophes occur are often consequential, so I also discuss the scene in which we find apostrophe, leading to

¹⁹ Feeney 1991, 338.

²⁰ Feeney 1991, 358.

larger themes and perhaps even insight into messages the author did not feel free to express directly.

There are times, though, when an apostrophe adds little or nothing to the scene in which we find it. Scholars of the modern era have often overemphasized the uselessness of apostrophe by explaining it away as metrically convenient. There are instances in which those earlier scholars were correct; we must be wary of overreaching toward the other extreme, of assuming that apostrophe is always meaningful. By not ignoring inconsequential apostrophes, then, we can discern a range that allows us to understand the aesthetic and narrative value of all apostrophes.

In the end, we shall see trends in the use of apostrophe that occur within each poem and across all three poems. Within each poem, the use of apostrophes to the gods point to conclusions about the author's view of religion, the literary/rhetorical function of apostrophe, and the politics of his own time. Once individual authors have been analyzed, we will consider trends in the use of apostrophe to the gods from Ovid to Lucan to Statius, in the spheres of religion, rhetoric, and politics, and finally at their intersection.

CHAPTER 2 OVID, *METAMORPHOSES*

In the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid uses apostrophes to gods twenty-four times in twenty-one episodes. The diversity of gods apostrophized is striking, as is the fact that the same god is rarely so addressed more than once. Only five apostrophes to gods are to gods generally, three to *di*, two to *superi*. Of the narrator's fifteen apostrophes to gods, Apollo, Vesta, and Jupiter are apostrophized twice, and Bacchus three times. Other characters apostrophize gods nine times, with no god apostrophized more than once. In the first six books, apostrophized gods are, with only a few exceptions, always Olympians. Books 8-15 see not only different or even foreign gods (Ammon) apostrophized, but more characters doing the addressing.

Book 1

In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas
corpora: di, coeptis (nam vos mutastis et illa)
adspirate meis primaque ab origine mundi
ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen. (*Metamorphoses* 1.1-4)

My mind brings me to assert that shapes have been changed into new bodies: gods, breathe inspiration upon what I have begun (for you have changed even that) and bring along my continuous poem from the very beginning of the universe to my own time.¹

The reader of epic expects an invocation to a god at the beginning of the work. Homer addressed a Muse in the first lines of both the *Iliad* (θεά) and the *Odyssey* (μοῦσα); Apollonius addressed Apollo (Φοῖβε) in the *Argonautica*; Lucretius invoked Venus (*Aeneadum genetrix*). Vergil departed from the established tradition somewhat when he postponed his required invocation until line 8 of his *Aeneid* (*Musa*). There is also epic precedent for establishing the poet as narrator with a first person verb or

¹ All translations are my own. The text is Anderson 1988.

pronoun within the first two lines. The first line of the *Odyssey* has such a pronoun (ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε), but it is the Muse who does the storytelling through the medium of the narrator. Apollonius begins the first two lines of his *Argonautica* with either a first person verb (μνήσομαι) or a participle that modifies a first person subject (ἀρχόμενος). While he “begins from you, Phoebus,” it is Apollonius who does the telling, who has wrested control of his story from the god.² Vergil established himself as the storyteller in the first line of his epic by inserting himself in the first person (*cano*). He does fulfill the epic requirement of invoking the Muse in line 8, but not until he has done the equivalent of walking onto the stage before the curtain has been raised, with only a spotlight and his single voice.

Ovid distinguishes himself from all of these. In his first line, there is neither a first person word nor an invocation to a god, but rather vocabulary that lends itself more to history than to epic. Bömer pointed out that the phrase “*fert animus*” was originally a prose phrase used by Sallust and Livy, and only recently adopted into poetry by Horace and Ovid.³ While Vergil puts himself directly on the stage with the first person *cano*, Ovid ‘out-Lucretiuses’ Lucretius by asserting that it is “active rational intelligence”⁴ which brings him to speak. By not inserting a *meus* to modify *animus*, it is the *animus* alone

² Quinn 1982, 83, reminds us that early poets improvised from a repertoire, and therefore the Muse signifies a combination of memory and inspiration. Apollonius’ control of his Muse helps mark his shift away from an epic that stems from oral tradition to one that is more self-conscious and academic.

³ Bömer 1969, 12. Buchheit 1966, 83, adds that *fert animus* “breaks from the conventional scheme” of the poem, marking “a self-conscious departure far beyond the usual way.”

⁴ Anderson 1997, 150.

that occupies the spotlight first, that reinforces the unique programmatic epic introduction *in nova*.⁵

Ovid's address of the generic *di* (1.2) is apostrophic because it interrupts the established third person introduction. Ovid's epic predecessors all address a single god (Homer's and Vergil's Muse, Apollonius' Apollo, or Lucretius' Venus), so for Ovid to address gods, plural, inclusive in gender, and unnamed, is unusual and unique.⁶ It fulfills the epic expectation of an introductory invocation but also startles the reader by juxtaposing the rational and the religious. The two could oppose one another, but it is possible that the unnamed nature of these *di* could be another manifestation of the *animus*. After all, no sooner has Ovid invoked the gods than he credits them with changing what he has begun (*nam vos mutastis et illa*, 1.2). It is difficult to pin down the natures of the *animus* and the *di*, just as it is difficult to discern what the *illa* are.⁷ Does *illa* point to the whole work (*coeptis* meaning "undertakings"), or to the beginning of this work (*coeptis* meaning "beginning"). Who are these *di* who are juxtaposed with the rational *animus*? There is no reason to assume automatically that they are the Muses, who are not only feminine, but also customarily addressed in the singular. Furthermore, the *di* he has just invoked are not necessarily to be identified with the gods he will name in his poem. After all, the gods themselves will be presented in various manifestations: Greek, native Italian, Egyptian, and even in mortal disguise. Ovid's apostrophe to the *di*

⁵ Buchheit 1966, 83, says that these elements of Ovid's invocation reveal "die Eigenständigkeit und das Selbstbewußtsein," independence and self-consciousness.

⁶ Bömer 1969, 12. Barchiesi 2005, 137, asserts that this is the most concise and comprehensive invocation to the gods in all of epic.

⁷ Zyffoff 1971, 89, read *illas* instead of *illa*, so she interpreted this apostrophe as conventional. If the "gods are responsible for each transformation narrated," they are the "most logical group to ask for symbolic support."

serves notice to the reader that neither he nor his subject matter can be confidently defined. It also serves to draw the reader into the text for the first time in a way that the mere objective *animus* cannot, the first manifestation of Feldherr's observation that Ovid keeps his reader aware of the external reality of the text and simultaneously keeps him absorbed by the reality it describes.⁸

Book 2

Callisto

After the (un)expected invocation, there is no apostrophe to a god until the middle of book 2. While wandering in Arcadia after the conflagration caused by Phaethon's crashed chariot, Jupiter falls into lust at first sight with Callisto, one of Diana's companions, turns himself into the likeness of Diana in order to approach her, then rapes her. In the midst of the act, the narrator emphasizes how Callisto resisted Jupiter:

Illa quidem contra, quantum modo femina posset,
(adspiceres utinam, Saturnia, mitior esses!)
illa quidem pugnat; sed quem superare puella,
quisve lovem poterat?⁹ (2.434-37)

She certainly fights against him, as much as a mere mortal woman could, (if only you were there to see it, Daughter of Saturn, you might be more forgiving!) she really does fight; but what man could the girl overcome, or Jove at that?

Ovid emphasizes how Callisto struggled against the lecherous Jupiter by making the indicative, factual part of the sentence (Callisto fought against him) struggle with the

⁸ Feldherr 2010, 15.

⁹ I am following what Anderson 1997, 283, considers the standard textual reading, which considers *poterat* as marking the end of the sentence instead of making the next word, *superum* the end of the sentence. Galinsky 1975, 196, includes *superum* in his interpretation of the sentence, making the rhetorical question into a double entendre, "What girl could overcome Jupiter the divine (or: Jupiter when he is on top)?" Anderson reinforces the traditional punctuation by observing that Ovid regularly uses *superum* to describe breezes and homes (here it modifies *aethera*), and that "there is no literary evidence that Jupiter ever had the epithet *superus*."

apostrophe to Juno and his own rhetorical question cast in synchysis. In fact, though the indicative main portion of the sentence is underscored by the emphatic anaphora of *illa quidem* at the beginning of their respective lines (*Illam quidem contra...illa quidem pugnat*), the struggling Callisto is also overwhelmed by (pinned to the ground by?) the subjunctive portions and the rhetorical questions. Ovid absorbs the reader into this portion of the story by interweaving the apostrophe to Juno (*Saturnia*, the daughter of Saturn) and the rhetorical question into the struggle, and once he has the reader's rapt attention, makes him struggle with the questions and assumptions that Ovid raised in the apostrophe and rhetorical questions.

The lone fact that Ovid chose to present a version of the Callisto story in which she is merely banished rather than killed¹⁰ shows his sympathy toward mortal victims of divine misbehavior. His insertion of the apostrophe to Juno betrays his desire that his reader share this sympathy.¹¹ The subjunctive *adspiceres* is contrafactual, emphasizing that Juno was in fact not there to see Jupiter's foul act, just as he had intended.¹² This also implies that the gods are neither all-seeing nor all-knowing, at least with respect to love and perceived injury to themselves, and therefore they are subject to the pitfalls that occur with imperfect information.¹³ While one could explain away the *utinam* as

¹⁰ Anderson 1997, 283.

¹¹ Fränkel 1945, 214 n. 35, cites this apostrophe as one example when Ovid "breaks the illusion of his own narrative in order to argue in person with his characters about the moral issue involved."

¹² *Metamorphoses* 2.423-24: "*Hoc certe furtum coniunx mea nesciet*" inquit, / "*aut si rescierit, sunt, o sunt iurgia tanti!*" Moore-Blunt 1977, 96, dismisses the imperfect as placed here for metrical reasons, which may be true in part, but it also provides a sense of immanence that reinforces the injustice done to Callisto.

¹³ For Zyffoff 1971, 104, Juno has no more omniscience in this passage than any other scorned wife.

simply a synonym for *si* in this contrafactual construction,¹⁴ the conjunction could also help reveal the narrator's desire for a vindictive goddess to see such a situation more clearly.¹⁵ The lofty-sounding epic patronymic *Saturnia* becomes a vehicle for Ovid's cynicism: though he would rather the gods have a moral sense, he has either chosen not to make them so or at least make the reader sense that something is amiss.

It is tempting to adopt Curran's interpretation of Juno in this passage and in the whole episode as personifying social attitudes toward marriage and extramarital sexuality through a role-reversing parody of her role in the *Aeneid*.¹⁶ Though he is not given credit for his modern feminist interpretation,¹⁷ Curran concludes that Juno's actions show that "although Ovid can hardly have conceived of it in such explicit terms, the treatment of Juno as such a prominent victimizer of women shows a patriarchal society that conditions women to punish their own sisters."¹⁸ While it may even seem that Ovid's version of the story is favorable (after all, Callisto is "merely" banished and turned into a bear, rather than killed), O'Bryhim (1990) illuminated how Juno's additional punishment of Callisto after Jupiter turned her into a constellation transformed Jupiter's

¹⁴ Bömer 1969, 349: "Verwandschaft von *utinam* und *si*." Anderson 1997, 282, on the other hand, sees *utinam* as somewhat stronger than *si*, but does not give a reason.

¹⁵ The implication on the narrator's part is that Juno did not see the situation clearly in the Io episode, 1.568-746, and will not in this one.

¹⁶ Curran 1978, 225-26.

¹⁷ Rejecting Curran's argument that the narrator's consciousness of the victim's fear shows his empathy for them, Richlin 1992, 162, notes that the narrator stresses how fear, for instance, makes the victim visually attractive. Furthermore, for Richlin, "a text about rape may also be about something else, but it is still a text of rape" (159). In other words, the moral/political condemnation of the content must always supersede any other considerations. But the presence of Juno and Jupiter in this episode, though it is certainly about rape, necessitates that religion, the meaning of the gods in the context, must be considered.

¹⁸ Curran 1978, 226. See also Wall 1988, 12, who asserts that Ovid's version of the story "gives the best idea of the patriarchal signature of the Augustan Age."

honor into an eternal humiliation.¹⁹ Ursa Major is never allowed to set, *ne puro tingatur in aequore paelex* (*Metamorphoses* 2.530), with the result that Callisto may never purify herself after giving birth to Arcas and therefore must wander forever among the stars as an unclean outcast. Because this portion of the Callisto story is Ovid's invention, he has consciously maintained Juno's persona as unforgiving, no matter the circumstances.²⁰

The narrator's apostrophe reveals Ovid's preference that circumstances should matter, even if it is unclear exactly why. If Juno, even as a parody of herself in the *Aeneid*, cannot look upon Jupiter's vile action and become more forgiving, the reader can because Ovid has used his apostrophe to Juno to put the scene before his eyes and challenge him to look differently upon Callisto and, by implication, the social mores that made it impossible for Juno to be *mitior*. In other words, the apostrophe transforms the reader into a better sort of god than Juno and Diana, one who does see more and has a better sense of justice toward struggling mortals, one who can employ his *animus*.

Coronis

The transition from the Callisto story announces that the next vignette explains why the raven is black.²¹ After the transition, the narrator introduces Coronis whose story seems a variant on that of Callisto:

Pulchrior in tota quam Larissaea Coronis
non fuit Haemonia: placuit tibi, Delphice, certe,
dum vel casta vel inobservata, sed ales
sensit adulterium Phoebus, utque latentem

¹⁹ Otis 1970, 386, agrees that Ovid makes "Callisto's metamorphosis...an act of Junonian vengeance that comes as an additional and final touch to a previous tragedy."

²⁰ See Johnson 1996 for a discussion of how Ovid's version of the story in his *Fasti* victimizes Callisto still further and casts the gods in an even worse light.

²¹ *Metamorphoses* 2.531-41.

detegeret culpam, non exorabilis index,
ad dominum tendebat iter. (2.542-47)

No one was more beautiful in all Haemonia than Coronis of Larissa: she was certainly pleasing to you, God of Delphi, so long as she was otherwise celibate or discreet, but Phoebus' bird, an informer unswayable by reason, sensed an unfaithfulness, and headed straight for his master in order to reveal her secret dalliance.

The address of the god here is striking, as sarcastic as the address was to Juno was in the Callisto story, but in a comic way. The introduction of Coronis sounds to us like the opening line of a fairy tale ("Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess..."), and the construction of the Latin makes it sound appropriately epic to Ovid's reader. Lines 542-43 have emphatic and careful word placement (*pulchrior* first in the line, Coronis last, and, as Bömer pointed out, the central caesurae of each line marked by *tota...Haemonia*), and a loftiness that comes from the epic versions of place names (*Haemonia* for Thessaly, and the adjectival use of an important city in Thessaly to describe Coronis). Ovid immediately undercuts his soaring description of Coronis with his euphemistically crude apostrophe to Apollo. The vocative epithet *Delphice*, referring to Apollo's solemn association with prophecy, seems at first to continue the epic tone that the rare poetic epithets *Larissaea*²² and *Haemonia* started. Further, the association of Apollo with prophecy also aligns him with rationality.²³ It crosses over into comedy, however, because it is preceded by the sexually suggestive *placuit tibi*²⁴ and followed by the ribald quality of *certe*.²⁵ Ovid continues in a comic fashion with his

²² Bömer 1969, 373. Cf. *Aeneid* 2.197, *Larissaeus Achilles*.

²³ Armstrong 2004, 546, n. 87.

²⁴ Anderson 1997, 298-99, reminds us not only of the suggestive connotation behind *placuit*, but also that Juno used the same term at 2.475, taunting Callisto just before she turned her into a bear: *adimam tibi namque figuram / qua tibi quaque places nostro, inportuna, marito*.

²⁵ Zyffoff 1971, 84-85, notes the teasing quality of the passage.

sly and inventive use of *inobservata* in line 544, appearing to equate morally the appearance of faithful celibacy with discretion in one's sexual freedom.²⁶

Ovid's version of the story of Coronis makes Apollo the more important character. Ovid went out of his way to express his sympathy for Callisto and, by implication, his condemnation of the actions of the gods. He chose to embellish the version of the Callisto tale in which she is "merely" banished, perhaps so that she could undergo metamorphosis. In this story, Ovid has largely followed Hesiod's account, and he did not deviate from the elements of the story that all the versions have, such as the fact that Coronis takes a mortal lover²⁷ and that she always dies at the hands of a god or goddess.²⁸ Indeed, Ovid seized upon that difference among the stories and chose to focus on Apollo. His Apollo is a combination of Jupiter and Juno from the Callisto story: he is as randy as Jupiter, but as quick to anger and blindly cruel as Juno.²⁹

The tone and content of the apostrophe *Delphice* stands in contrast to the tone and content of its surroundings. *Delphice*, by itself, should be a respectful epithet with a

²⁶ Anderson 1997, 299.

²⁷ It is tempting to argue that Ovid injected some doubt about this part of the story. The raven, like a tabloid publisher or a town gossip eager to uncover a juicy scoop (*utque latentem / detegeret culpam*, 2.545-46), *sensit adulterium*. The nebulous *sensit* in the raven's mind becomes a more definite *vidisse* (2.599) when he tells Apollo that Coronis has been unfaithful to him. Furthermore, the raven does not name Coronis' lover as the previous versions of the story do, but describes him anonymously as merely *iuvene Haemonio*. The doubt comes from the sense that the raven has concocted the story for the joy of telling some piece of juicy gossip. This would be consistent with the comic element that accompanies the apostrophe to Apollo.

²⁸ Bömer 1969, 373, noted that in Hesiod's version, it was news of Coronis' marriage to Ischys that the raven brought to Apollo. Also, Coronis is killed either by Artemis (because she got pregnant), by Zeus, or by Apollo. While Ovid could choose to embellish a version of the Callisto story in which she is "merely" banished, he had no such freedom here. Coronis always dies at the hands of some god.

²⁹ Zyroff 1971, 85, goes so far as to read the passage as sympathetic to Apollo because he kills Coronis and then regrets his rash act.

solemn religious tone since it refers to the god of prophecy.³⁰ But it is set in a story about a god whose actions are more fit for bawdy barroom banter than for devout reverence at an oracle. Ovid has used apostrophe as part of his plan to bring down Apollo at least as far as he has brought down Jupiter,³¹ even below mortals such as the reverent Callisto³² and Coronis.

Chiron and Ocyrhoe

The narrator again apostrophizes Apollo at 2.677, this time after Ocyrhoe has been transformed into a mare, having given her prophecies about the fate of young Aesculapius and the coming suffering of her own father:

Flebat opemque tuam frustra Philyreius heros,
Delphice, poscebat. Nam nec rescindere magni
iussa Iovis poterat, nec, si rescindere posses,
tunc aderas: Elim Messeniaeque arva colebas.
Illud erat tempus, quo te pastoria pellis
textit onusque fuit baculum silvestre sinistrae,
alterius dispar septenis fistula cannis;
dumque amor est curae, dum te fistula mulcet,
incustoditae Pylios memorantur in agros
processisse boves. (2.676-85)

³⁰ Armstrong 2004, 530, declares that, in Augustan literature, the appearance of Apollo “brings with him not only his literary baggage as the long-standing divine patron of poetry, but also his more recent political baggage. In Augustan Rome, the poetical has become the political,” since the identification between Augustus and Apollo had been established for over thirty years. If Armstrong is right that depiction of Apollo is politically charged, then Ovid deftly deemphasizes, or at least attempts to side-step the political by apostrophizing Apollo not by his early (and by then obsolete) association with healing or his recent warlike association, but in his prophetic manifestation. But since Augustus tried to weave together religion and morality, as Bailey 1932, 173-73, reminds us, even the attempt to deemphasize Apollo’s connection with Augustus may not be enough to overcome the clear contradiction between the religious figure and moral conduct. Miller 2009 reminds us that there are many perspectives on Apollo in the *Metamorphoses*, so a reader should be careful not to dwell too much on any particular one.

³¹ Altieri 1973, 37, theorizes that because Ovid displays a worldview in which humankind is subject to outside forces beyond his control, Ovid diminishes Apollo and Jupiter as representatives of an ordered worldview in which humankind orders, defines, and therefore controls reality. Along a similar line, Fredericks 1977, 248, suggests that Apollo fails where Mercury succeeds in love because the latter exhibits wit and creativity, tools appropriate to react to change, while the former’s unthinking recklessness is wholly unsuited to it. Zyffoff 1971, 84, notes that Ovid used “traditional invocation to mock the gods and human pretenses about superior divine knowledge.”

³² *Metamorphoses* 2.477: *tendebat brachia supplex*.

The Philyreian hero began to weep and asked in vain for your aid, god of Delphi. For you were neither able to annul the orders of great Jove, nor, if you were able to annul them, were you present at that time: You were dwelling in Elis and the fields of Messenia. That was the time when a shepherd's pelt covered you and a stick from the woods weighed your left hand, and a pipe uneven with seven reeds your right; and while love was a care to you, while the pipe comforted you, the oxen, left unattended, are remembered to have gone ahead into the fields of Pylos.

Though this is a transitional passage from the brief story of Chiron and his daughter Ocyrhoe to that of Mercury and Battus, the address of Apollo is interesting because it again points to his ineptitude and powerlessness. The narrator addresses Apollo again in his association with prophecy as *Delphice*,³³ though appropriately here because Ocyrhoe had the gift of prophecy and was in the act of using it when she was suddenly turned into a mare. Ovid invented an epic epithet for Chiron, *Philyreius heros*,³⁴ giving him noble standing from which to make his prayer,³⁵ and praying to the appropriate god. What Chiron does not know is that the god must be there to listen for his prayer to have even a chance at success. Again, the gods are not omnipresent, and they are distractible. What is more, mortals are either cursed or helpless. Simply by giving voice to her prophetic gift, Ocyrhoe is made to lose that voice by being turned into a mare. The voice that Chiron offered in prayer was never heard. Twice already Apollo has been apostrophized in accordance with his association with prophecy, and twice Apollo has been portrayed as wholly distracted by love. In this case, he is so

³³ Bömer 1969, 399, points out that this adjective is only used by Ennius (*Scaenica* 361) before Ovid. Moore-Blunt 1977, 117, quotes the Ennian passage: *et me Apollo ipse delectate ductat Delphicus*. Ovid has taken the Ennian precedent a step further by apostrophizing Apollo in this way. Practically a neologism, like *incustoditae* in line 684 (see Anderson 1997, 315), it carries added significance.

³⁴ For Ovid's invention of *Philyreius*, see Linse 1891, 24.

³⁵ Anderson 1997, 314, downplays the epic formula because Chiron is not just a centaur, a fact which for him is strange in itself, but also weeping. Barchiesi 2005, 293, also points out that it is notable for the first use of "hero" in the poem to refer to someone who is weeping. Chiron is noble for his action; Apollo, though also addressed with an epic neologism, is ignoble for his inaction.

distracted that he cannot come to the aid of an innocent to whom he should be sympathetic. The apostrophe here signals another disconnect between the traditional association of a god and the god's abdication of his responsibility.³⁶ In fact, Apollo is so distracted by love that he even fails as a simple herdsman,³⁷ letting his cattle wander away. In the Coronis passage, Apollo was transformed into a lover, and more completely in this one into a pastoral lover.³⁸ The use of *Delphice* is ironic because the use of prophecy by a mortal is punished and is ignored altogether by Apollo.³⁹

Book 4

Hymn to Bacchus

Book 3 ends with the gruesome dismemberment of Pentheus at the hands of his mother, aunts, and other frenzied Bacchic revelers because he had denied the power of the new god and dared to gaze upon the Bacchic rites, reserved for the initiated. At the beginning of Book 4, most of the Theban women joined in belief in this new deity and were summoned to celebrate a festival in Bacchus' honor. The narrator describes how the women put aside their normal tasks and begin their worship. The Theban women offer a hymn to Bacchus, during which they give the usual catalog of names by which

³⁶ In her article on the Callimachean use of Apollo in Augustan poetry, Gosling 1992, 504, begins to link Ovid's "frivolous and disrespectful" use of Apollo, the adopted patron god of Augustus, with "a deliberate challenge to Augustan ideals." Fränkel 1945, 214 n. 35, cites this passage in the same way that he did the apostrophe to Juno at 2.435, illustrating how Ovid sometimes breaks into his narrative to address a "moral issue."

³⁷ Anderson 1997, 315, recalls Hesiod's version of this story, in which Apollo worked for a year as a herdsman for King Adrastus of Thessaly. There, Apollo attends to his cattle, even making them "unusually productive." It is the version of Antoninus Liberalis (23) that gave Ovid the idea of Apollo falling in love with Adrastus' grandson and, thus distracted, letting his cattle wander away. See also Castellani 1980 for information about the sources of the Mercury and Battis story.

³⁸ Bömer 1969, 401, reminds that the *incustoditae boves* marks a traditional scene in pastoral poetry, in which the cattle wander off as the lover thinks and sings about his love.

³⁹ For Zyroff 1971, 86, the use of *Delphice* is ironic.

Bacchus is known. As though he has transformed himself into one of the worshippers,⁴⁰ the narrator himself takes up the hymn, apostrophizing Bacchus at length:

et quae praeterea per Graias plurima gentes
nomina, Liber, habes; tibi enim inconsumpta iuventa est,
tu puer aeternus, tu formosissimus alto
conspiceris caelo; tibi, cum sine cornibus adstas,
virgineum caput est; Oriens tibi victus adusque
decolor extremo qua cingitur India Gange.
Pentheia tu, venerande, bipenniferumque Lycurgum
sacrilegos mactas Tyrrhenaque mittis in aequor
corpora; tu biiugum pictis insignia frenis
colla premis lyncum; Bacchae Satyrique sequuntur,
quique senex ferula titubantes ebrius artus
sustinet et pando non fortiter haeret asello.
Quacumque ingrederis, clamor iuvenalis et una
femineae voces impulsaque tympana palmis
concavaque aera sonant longoque foramine buxus. (4.16-30)

...and the great many names besides, Liber, that you have among the Greek peoples; for you have everlasting youth, you are forever a child, you are seen as the most beautiful in high heaven; when you stand near without horns, you have the head like a young woman; the East has been conquered by you, all the way up to where discolored India is encircled by the furthest Ganges. You who are to be worshipped slaughtered Pentheus and Lycurgus though armed with his two-headed axe, those impious men, and you sent their bodies into the Tyrrhenian sea; you burden the necks of the two-yoked lynxes, laden with the embroidered harnesses; the Bacchant revelers and the Satyrs follow, and well as the drunken old man who supports his tottering limbs on a cane and does not strongly cling to his bent-backed donkey. Wherever you go, youthful shouting and women's voices together, the drums struck with palms, the hollowed bronze, and the boxwood flute resound.

This constitutes an extended apostrophe because the narrator has broken into the narrative with a second person address and then remained there for fifteen lines with second person pronouns and verbs. Although Vergil advanced the use of this figure of

⁴⁰ Barchiesi 2007, 248, likens Ovid to becoming a priest joining himself to the mass of the faithful.

speech by using an extended apostrophe on occasion, the length of 4.16-30 is unprecedented,⁴¹ and the result is emphasis on the god.

The story of Thebes and the arrival of Dionysius/Bacchus was a popular theme in Greek and Roman literature.⁴² The reader should expect Ovid, with his fondness for *variatio*, to compose his own unique rendering of the story. Ovid opens the extended apostrophe by addressing the god as *Liber*, which could have been considered a “conventional” apostrophe had he then resumed with third person narration.⁴³ The switch from Greek to Latin marks a transition from the distant to the familiar, and from the conventional (Athenian tragedy) to the novel (Ovid’s own branding of the story for his own purposes).⁴⁴ Continuing this new familiarity, he continues the apostrophe with several uses of the second person pronoun to describe the god as forever young and beautiful. To emphasize even more his admiration for this quality of Bacchus, and to inject added solemnity, Ovid invented the adjective *inconsumpta*.⁴⁵ Line 20 presents the reader with an interesting juxtaposition, starting with Bacchus’ *virgineum caput*, the feminine aspect of his appearance associated with youth and beauty, and ending with

⁴¹ Moore-Blunt 1977, 139. Moore-Blunt is also notable for even using the phrase “extended apostrophe,” including as I do all the second person references that accompany the apostrophe proper.

⁴² Keith 2010, 189, gives a comprehensive list of Greek and Roman tragedies associated with Thebes and Dionysius/Bacchus.

⁴³ Anderson 1997, 413. Barchiesi 2007, 248, citing Cicero (*De Natura Deorum* 2.62), reminds us Ovid has concluded the litany of Greek names with the Latin *Liber*, the name of the ancient Italian god of vegetation, which also conveniently has the connotation of freedom attractive to Ovid.

⁴⁴ Barchiesi 2007, 248. Danielewicz 1990, 76, working under the assumption that Ovid’s penchant for apostrophizing the participants in his stories means that “the narrator does not belong to the presented world,” interprets the transition as the narrator presenting the Roman viewpoint in contrast to the Greek one given by the Theban women.

⁴⁵ Anderson 1997, 413. Lewis and Short cite only three uses of *inconsumptus*, all in Ovid (here, *Metamorphoses* 7.592, and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.2.41). Of Ovid’s three uses, this is the only one that does not refer to the physical deterioration of an object. For the solemnity added by compounds with “*in*”, see Gärtner 2005, 148.

his conquering the East, *Oriens tibi victus*, using both the association with the East attributed to Dionysius since Euripides, as well as that of India since the time of Alexander.⁴⁶ The mixing of *cornibus* and *virgineum caput* introduces the image of violence inherent in the god, and *victus* in the next sentence continues it. Of the apostrophes to gods used so far, this is the first that betrays fear and respect for the god it addresses by portraying the god using the imagery generally associated with him and adhering to the typical hymnic form, including a fulsome list of the names associated with the god.⁴⁷ The emphatic placement of *Pentheia* freshens in the reader's mind the grisly end he just met at the end of Book 3. Pentheus' stubborn unbelief, and particularly his sacrilegious gazing upon the Bacchic rites, earned him a horrific punishment, which in turn convinced the Theban women to join in the worship of Bacchus. The name Pentheus becomes a byword for the consequences of not giving the god proper respect, of which Ovid reminds the reader with *venerande*, used only here to refer to Bacchus.⁴⁸ This message is reinforced by the other examples of sacrilege and the awful punishments that followed them. Ovid even ascribes the slaughter of the impious to Bacchus himself with the second person *mactas*, even though it was Pentheus' kinswomen who tore him apart at the end of Book 3.⁴⁹ In only three lines, Ovid has transformed Bacchus from a beautiful, youthful, and fun-loving (*Liber*) god into a wrathful, rough god who demands worship upon pain of horrible

⁴⁶ Barchiesi 2007, 249.

⁴⁷ In her article on the Roman Hymn, Martin 1938, 94, calls this "an exaggerated sample of the polyonymy which was thought to delight the hearts of the gods." Keith 2010, 196-97 glosses over the passage as assimilating the Theban worshippers to the "tragic choruses of Bacchantes hymning the god of drama."

⁴⁸ Bömer 1976a, 22.

⁴⁹ Anderson 1997, 414.

death. The narrator comes full circle when he describes Bacchus' attendants following his lynx-driven chariot as consisting of the young and particularly female (*clamor iuvenalis et femineae voces*).

This apostrophe reveals an authenticity to the god and to his worship that was absent with Juno and Apollo. Previously, Ovid created rhetorical space with apostrophe to comment on injustice or to highlight that a god is styled as something that he is no longer; here, he has drawn both himself and the reader into the Bacchic ritual, making Bacchus more real than any god apostrophized so far.⁵⁰ Emphasizing Bacchus helps Ovid distinguish his Theban narrative by highlighting its tragic elements instead of the martial ones he deliberately avoids.⁵¹ Here tragedy comes through in the tension between admiration and dread, between the god's eternal youthful beauty and his terrifying avenging alter ego. Tragedy, like love, is more real to Ovid than the supposed supreme power of Jupiter or the prophetic power of Apollo.

Leucothoe

Leuconoe, one of the three Theban sisters who refused to put aside their weaving and partake of the Bacchic rites, was telling the story of Vulcan's discovery of Venus' adultery with Mars. The Sun, who sees everything, had spotted the pair and told Vulcan, who then devised his plan to catch them in the act with a bed booby-trapped with chains. All the gods laughed at Mars and Venus, caught *in flagrante delicto*, with Venus being so embarrassed that she vowed to take her revenge on the Sun who had informed on her.

⁵⁰ Danielewicz 1990, 77, comes close to this interpretation, emphasizing how Ovid both stands apart as a traditional epic narrator, but also identifies with one of the Theban worshippers. In this way, Ovid approximated the style of Apollonius and Callimachus (83).

⁵¹ Keith 2010, 192-94.

At this point in the story, the narrator Leuconoe apostrophizes the Sun at length:

Quid nunc, Hyperione nate,
forma colorque tibi radiataque lumina prosunt?
Nempe, tuis omnes qui terras ignibus uris,
ureris igne novo, quique omnia cernere debes,
Leucothoen spectas et virgine figis in una,
quos mundo debes, oculos. Modo surgis Eoo
temperius caelo, modo serius incidis undis
spectandique mora brumales porrigis horas;
deficis interdum, vitiumque in lumina mentis
transit, et obscurus mortalia pectora terres.
Nec, tibi quod lunae terris propioris imago
obstiterit, palles; facit hunc amor iste colorem.
Diligis hanc unam, nec te Clymeneque Rhodosque
nec tenet Aeaetae genetrix pulcherrima Circes,
quaeque tuos Clytie quamvis despecta petebat
concubitus ipsoque illo grave vulnus habebat
tempore. (4.192-208)

What use now, son of Hyperion, are your beauty and brightness and radiant light? Truly you, who burn all the lands with your fires, are burned with a new fire, and you who ought to behold all things, stare at Leucothoe and fix the eyes that ought to be fixed on the earth on one young woman. Now you rise too early from the Eastern sky, now you set later than usual and stretch the winter hours with your delay of staring; you fail sometimes, and the fault of your mind crosses into your light, and, dark, you frighten mortal hearts. Nor do you fade because the image of the moon, closer to the earth, blocks you; that love of yours makes this dullness. You cherish her alone, and neither Clymene nor Rhodos hold you, nor that most beautiful mother of Aeaean Clytie, although scorned, who sought union with you and who at that very time bore her heavy wound.

The apostrophe emphasizes the Sun in Leuconoe's story and how love made even him fail in his duty. As in his earlier apostrophes to gods, Ovid has used an epic patronymic instead of a direct name. The loftiness implied by the patronymic makes the god fall that much farther toward human failing. Around the patronymic is a rhetorical question emphasizing the uselessness of the god's power and attributes in the face of love. The son of the Titan Hyperion is accompanied by his physical attributes *forma*,

color, and *radiata lumina*.⁵² Leuconoe answers the question with the nagging *nempe*, setting up the rest of her disapproving apostrophe.⁵³

Many of the second person verbs that follow describe how utterly changed and upside-down the Sun's world becomes, adding up to a sort of scolding tone.⁵⁴ The juxtaposition of the active *uris* and the passive *ureris* begins the upheaval. Ovid has Leuconoe practically nag the sun. She uses the verb *debes*, "ought," twice in three lines, making what he ought to be doing surround what he is in fact doing, staring at Leucothoe, fixing his eyes on that one young woman.⁵⁵ Borrowing from Callimachus' *Hymn to Artemis*, in which the Sun stops to admire the dance of Artemis' nymphs,⁵⁶ Ovid's use of comparative adverbs helps him connect the Sun's obsession with faltering in his day job, *surgis temperius* and *serius incidis*. Eventually, the Sun fails in his duty altogether, *deficis, palles*. The latter verb recalls the opposite of one of the Sun's original physical attributes, *color*. He has now become something other than what he was. Love, described clinically as a *vitium mentis*,⁵⁷ creates wider collateral damage, in

⁵² According to Barchiesi 2005, 274-75, Ovid has anthropomorphized the Sun by giving him these canonical attributes of classical (feminine) beauty. *Radiata lumina*, then, refers to an intensity of the eyes.

⁵³ Anderson 1997, 433. Barchiesi 2005, 274, does not go as far, describing the tone of *quid nunc...possunt* as mocking, then the rest of the passage as merely ironic. Mere irony, however, would be inconsistent with earlier apostrophes to gods, while a sense of outright disapproval is consistent with several previous apostrophes.

⁵⁴ Anderson 1997, 433, remarked that the apostrophe "often characterizes the manner of the elegiac poet," though it is unclear whether he meant apostrophe generally or the length of this particular one. He then makes the helpful point that elegists generally use apostrophes out of sympathy for their subject. This apostrophe, therefore, raises an expectation in the reader before veering in an unexpected direction. Fränkel 1945, 214 n. 35, writes that this apostrophe is "unusually elaborate...where Ovid, the poet of love, gloats over the fitting revenge (190-92) which Venus took on Sol."

⁵⁵ Barchiesi 2005, 275, points out that the intensive *spectas* contrasts with the generic *cernere*.

⁵⁶ Barchiesi 2005, 275.

⁵⁷ Bömer 1976a, 80, quoting the same phrase in Quintilian (*Institutes of Oratory* 12.1.32), inserted his own translation, "Charakterfehler," "character defect."

this case people frightened by the now irregular cycles of light and dark, and therefore wondering what ills and evils the eclipse forebodes,⁵⁸ but Leuconoe quickly focuses such consequences on several women the Sun has passed over, finally settling on one particular woman, Clytie, who was just as obsessed with the Sun as he was with Leucothoe.

The extended apostrophe is a way for Ovid to emphasize how love weakens even the most focused of gods. In Book 2, the Sun, acutely aware of both the difficulty of his daily job and the consequences of failure, was very reluctant to lend his chariot to Phaethon. Here, the apostrophe portrays a gradual weakening of the Sun until his rays dim completely. It is another example of *forma*, beauty, changing a god, rendering him helpless until its effect passes, and revealing his inherent irrationality.⁵⁹ Another god, even one as normally dutiful as the Sun, bites the dust.

Hermaphroditus

The last story of the Minyades is about Hermaphroditus. Ovid's version is markedly different from previous versions, starting with the details that he is not only male to begin with, but also fifteen years old.⁶⁰ Ovid has his narrator linger over certain physical details of both Hermaphroditus and his Naiad admirer Salmacis, such as their beauty and their nudity or near-nudity, with the voyeuristic effect of enflaming the reader in the same way as Salmacis, or even Jupiter or Apollo before. When Hermaphroditus struggles to reject Salmacis' advances in the pond, Salmacis, using the militaristic

⁵⁸ Barchiesi 2005, 275.

⁵⁹ Anderson 1963, 23-24.

⁶⁰ For the differences and complexities, see Robinson 1999 and Romano 2009.

vocabulary of rape,⁶¹ tells him that he will not escape her clutches. She then turns from branding him as *improbe*, as though he is wicked for struggling against her,⁶² and prays to all the gods: “Ita di iubeatis, et istum / nulla dies a me nec me deducat ab isto,”⁶³ “May you gods order thus, that no day takes him from me, nor takes me from him.” Her prayer combines a resemblance of the bland formula *di faciant* with the frustration implied by her use of *istum* and *isto*.⁶⁴

This is an apostrophe because Salmacis began by addressing Hermaphroditus in lines 370-71 before suddenly switching to her prayer. This marks the first apostrophe to all the gods (*di*) since the introduction to the whole work. The previous apostrophes to the gods meant to highlight some injustice done to a mortal, to denigrate a god smitten by love, or to praise one that the narrator fears. There is no god present, only an instinct toward love, an instinct that the narrator has idealized through his prurient description of the pair.⁶⁵ That the apostrophe is addressed simply to the generic *di* instead of a particular god or gods who would weigh down the scene with their own problems or agendas actually has the effect of removing the gods from the picture, allowing love itself to remain the focus of the story.⁶⁶ What is more, the content and chiasmic structure of the prayer itself suggest an echo of Propertius 2.6.41-42, illustrating

⁶¹ *pugnes* (4.370), *effugies* (4.371)

⁶² Bömer 1976a, 128, quoting the use of the vocative *improbe* in both Vergil (*Aeneid* 4.386) and Propertius (1.3.39, 2.8.14), suggests both heroic and elegiac elements in this role reversal. For an excellent discussion on just how complex the gender roles are in this section, see Robinson 1999.

⁶³ *Metamorphoses* 4.371-72.

⁶⁴ Anderson 1997, 452.

⁶⁵ See Singer 1965 for a discussion of the idealization of the instinct of love in Ovid, amoral yet pleasant.

⁶⁶ Robinson 1999 poses and attempts to answer the question of who these gods are. He ventures that there is an allusion to Plato's *Symposium* here (189c-193e), and that therefore a possible answer to the question is Vulcan.

the elegiac poet's desire to possess his beloved: *nos uxor numquam, numquam deducet amica, semper amica mihi, semper et uxor eris.*⁶⁷ The apostrophe marks a climactic moment in the whole episode and helps inject a tension between the idealized instinct toward love that the narrator's pleasing descriptions of the pair betray and the fact that this is still a rape scene, albeit one in which the normal roles are reversed. To address all the gods is to keep the emphasis on the action; for all the gods at once to answer the prayer is to deemphasize them further and keep our attention on the struggle and the metamorphosis. A love that seemed natural is now turned monstrous.

Perseus

Instead of using apostrophe to highlight the heroic deeds of Perseus, Ovid uses it in the denouement to the episode of the freeing of Andromeda, in which Perseus builds altars of thanksgiving to Jupiter, Mercury, and Minerva:

Dis tribus ille focos totidem de caespite ponit,
laevum Mercurio, dextrum tibi, bellica virgo,
ara Iovis media est: mactatur vacca Minervae,
alipedi vitulus, taurus tibi, summe deorum. (4.753-56)

To three gods he sets up as many hearths of turf, the one on the left to Mercury, the one of the right to you, warring maiden, and an altar to Jove is the middle one: a cow is slaughtered for Minerva, a calf to the swift-footed god, and a bull to you, greatest of the gods.

All three gods have helped him in some significant way, so Perseus is simply fulfilling not even a heroic role in building altars to his patron gods (since heroes are often portrayed as building such structures), but the task normally expected of anyone. Roman religion, after all, is a give-and-take affair: when one prays to a god, one offers

⁶⁷ Referring to this passage, Barchiesi 2007, 292, describes this longing to possess one's beloved as "the dream of elegy." Bömer 1976a, 129, expands a bit, pointing out that Salmacis' prayer here and the passage from Propertius correlate both in construction and the use of *deducere*, which can also have the implication of "seduce."

something to him/her in return. If a god/dess helps you, you give him/her something in return. Perseus is holding up his end of the bargain. After the gods each get mentioned by name once and by some attribute once, the narrator quickly moves on to the marriage of Perseus and Andromeda, which is much more interesting both to him and, presumably, to the reader. The apostrophes to Minerva and Jupiter are at the end of their respective lines, using an ordinary attribute instead of a name. The apostrophes, then, have the same metrical rhythm and probably mimic a general prayer. It is as though Ovid had to fulfill an expectation in epic that the hero has to be seen sacrificing after a heroic deed. To overcome his own boredom with this expectation, Ovid plays with the names, attributes, and sacrificial victims, making sure to give each god one each. The victims given are standard-issue: something female for Minerva, something male for Mercury, and another male one for Jupiter, but bigger than Mercury's.⁶⁸ If one did not already know the relationship that each of these gods had to Perseus, one would not recognize from this context that, for instance, Jupiter is Perseus' father and Minerva his sister. One would imagine that Perseus should more properly address his father and sister with more emotion, and at least to recognize their relationship, as he did often earlier in book 4.⁶⁹ Here, however, Ovid has Perseus recognize them by their most superficial attributes. This scene of sacrifice, deemphasizing the relationship between these gods and Perseus, serves as a transition between the freeing of Andromeda and the wedding banquet scene.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Anderson 1997, 492. Bömer 1976a, 218, remarks that it is Roman to pay attention to the gender of the sacrificial animal, though there are numerous exceptions. He previously addresses as a non-issue the inconsistency in the altar terminology.

⁶⁹ *Metamorphoses* 4.640, 645, 697.

⁷⁰ Barchiesi 2007, 344.

Book 6

Arachne

The next apostrophe to a god comes during the weaving contest between Minerva and Arachne. Minerva has woven the gods in their traditional manifestations and added scenes depicting the consequences of challenging the gods. Immediately after finishing his description of Minerva's tapestry at 6.102, Ovid draws the reader into Arachne's with his insertion of the second person subjunctive *putares* (6.104), such that Minerva's threats have no effect because Ariadne insists on weaving a realistic portrait of the gods' offenses. Inside the ekphrasis that is Arachne's tapestry, Ovid inserts an apostrophe to Neptune:

Te quoque mutatum torvo, Neptune, iuvenco
virgine in Aeolia posuit, tu visus Enipeus
gignis Aloidas, aries Bisaltida fallis;
et te flava comas frugum mitissima mater
sensit equum, sensit volucrem crinita colubris
mater equi volucris, sensit delphina Melantho. (6.115-20)

She put you there, too, Neptune, changed to a pitiless bull on⁷¹ the Aeolian maiden, you, seeming to be Enipeus, sired the Aloidae, and as a ram you deceived the daughter of Bisaltes; and it was you too that the kindest golden-haired mother of grain felt you, a horse, it was while you were winged that the mother of the winged horse, long-haired with snakes, felt you, and as a dolphin that Melantho felt you.

The contest itself, of course, invites comparison, and the narrator's apostrophe augments the accusatory tone of Arachne's tapestry.⁷² The first twelve lines of the

⁷¹ Johnson 2008, 86, claims that the preposition *in* is "difficult to interpret," citing that most translators render this as accompaniment. But the rape scenes on the tapestry are shocking, and meant to be so. The preposition indicates a direction, the forcible imposition of Neptune on his victim. He is not lying next to her as though they are on the beach getting a suntan; he is in the act of raping her. The preposition is not difficult to interpret if one is prepared to confront the violence depicted on the tapestry. Johnson (87-88) admits this when she says that "Arachne's tapestry unveils the great hypocrisy of Minerva's existence: she is a champion of virgins and virginity in an Olympian hierarchy headed up by rapists... The explicitness of Arachne's representations strikes a nerve, and Minerva will not forget it."

⁷² Anderson 1972, 166, describes the apostrophes as undermining the divinity of the god.

description of Arachne's tapestry (6.103-14) cover Jupiter's dalliances. Ovid has already dealt with several of Jupiter's improprieties earlier in the *Metamorphoses*, including the Europa story, but none yet of Neptune's.⁷³ It is fitting, then, for Ovid to apostrophize Neptune here with *te quoque*, "you, too," like a parent scolding a child who hoped he could lay low while his brother takes the rap. The repetition of the second person pronoun is typical in hymns,⁷⁴ and this is used ironically here, combining the lofty, laudatory character of the form with the implied turpitude of Neptune's lechery.⁷⁵ The second person verbs and participles used to describe Neptune have to do with changing, seeming, siring, and deceiving. Ovid's address of the god is both simple and forceful.

There is no epithet, patronymic, or other circumlocutory association, only the god's name. The name begins during the fourth foot caesura and caps a series of three heavy spondees to maximize the accusatory effect of the line. If there is an epithet, it is a transferred one since Ovid placed *Neptune* after the grim *torvo*, heightening the fear that the *virgine* must have felt. It is also important to note that the first victims mentioned are ennobled with patronymics, while the stark address of Neptune freights the perpetrator with contempt.

It is particularly gutsy for Arachne to weave a portrait of Medusa that implicates her weaving opponent Minerva herself. According to Ovid's own account (4.793ff.),

⁷³ From this fact, Zyroff 1971, 111-12, reaches the completely different conclusion that Ovid must have found it "tedious" to describe Neptune's dalliances, and so composed these lines as though to congratulate the god on his accomplishments, and "purely for variety of style."

⁷⁴ Barchiesi 2009, 266.

⁷⁵ Some of this is achieved through dark comedy, as Curran 1978, 217, suggests when he says that "Ariadne's catalog of divine lechery...depicts a universe infested by rapists dressed like Disney characters."

Neptune raped Medusa in Minerva's temple, and the goddess, offended by this sacrilege, took out her anger on the victim Medusa, turning her into the famous snake-haired monster. Arachne is characterized as pitying Medusa by using the same verb *sensit*, "felt," as with Ceres and Melanthe, a verb which implies passivity:⁷⁶ they could do no more against Neptune than feel what was being done to them. Medusa's description as *mater equi volucris* places her on the same plane as Ceres, who is also described as a *mater*. To try and conceal her implied criticism of Minerva, Arachne places Medusa in the middle of her triad,⁷⁷ but it is the most cleverly composed of the three. For Ceres, the focus is on her attribute and beauty. Melanthe afterward is given only a half line, identifiable only by the shape in which Neptune raped her. Medusa's part focuses on what happened to her. She was raped by Neptune, who was in winged form, *sensit volucrum*. Then she was turned into a horrible snake-haired monster (by Minerva, who is unnamed here), *crinite colubris*. Finally, she gave birth to Pegasus, *mater equi volucris*. Medusa has been violated not just by Neptune, but also by Minerva.

The apostrophe creates space for Arachne (and Ovid) to criticize Neptune overtly, and Minerva covertly.⁷⁸ It is supposedly safer to accuse openly a powerful person who

⁷⁶ Barchiesi 2009, 267, points out that the repetition of *sensit* and *mater* contributes to an acceleration of the rhythm, which in turn suggests the erotic frenzy from which the gods are being dragged.

⁷⁷ If Vincent 1994, 371, is correct that Ariadne "convinces by weight of example rather than by the relation of the parts to the whole," then this middle position is an additional effective way to hide the direct assault on Minerva. The omission of the Medusa reference would not have been missed—Ariadne would have paid the same penalty.

⁷⁸ Vincent 1994, 373, citing Anderson 1972, dismisses Ovid's use of apostrophe as a "metrical convenience," though he at least concedes that it must "be construed as the mark of orality and the mark of a narrator." Johnson 2008, 85, in agreement with Ahl's 1984 article on the necessity of "figured speech required of the weak both in Roman society and ancient mythology", generalizes that Ariadne constructs "a deliberate dissimulation of her own" as she confronts the gods' disguises.

is absent, and to accuse cleverly a powerful person who is present; it is safer still to use an ekphrasis, in which the unspeakable can be spoken plainly.⁷⁹ The lesson here, then, is that it is not safe to accuse the powerful at any time anywhere, since Minerva turns Arachne into a spider for her brazenness against the gods generally. Just because it is not safe, however, does not mean it is not done.⁸⁰

Procne and Philomela

Avenging actions that elicit a disbelieving shrug from readers when done by gods generate terror and revulsion when done by mortals. One such story is Procne's revenge against her husband Tereus for kidnapping, raping, and mutilating her sister Philomela. When Procne received, unraveled, and understood the images on the tapestry that Philomela made and smuggled to her, again an example of speaking the unspeakable in an ekphrasis, she makes her way to the hideaway where Philomela has been imprisoned. Procne is able to leave the palace and conceal her rage by the coincidence of the celebration of the Bacchic rites. Then the narrator apostrophizes Bacchus: *Terribilis Procne furiisque agitate doloris, / Bacche, tuas similat* (6.595-96), "Procne, disturbed by the madness of an awful grief, feigns your madness, Bacchus."

Throughout the whole appalling episode, it is important to note that no god was ever present or ever appeared. Philomela prayed "above all to the gods" while she was

⁷⁹ Curran 1972, 84, discerns an anti-Augustanism in the lack "of discernable visual order" in Ariadne's tapestry vis-à-vis the Augustan order and symmetry of Minerva's. But while Ariadne's tapestry may seem only a mish-mash of stories, I contend that the structure of their presentation in the poem does have a discernable, relevant structure.

⁸⁰ Leach 1974, 106-07, while approaching this episode as a commentary on opposing artistic systems (and therefore keeping at arm's length its actual content), remarks that the tapestries are "mirrors of the poem itself." Observing that artists such as the Minyades and Ariadne who oppose the artistry of the gods are destroyed, she considers them helpless against the gods and wonders why Ovid treated them so harshly. I agree with Lateiner's 1984, 16, blunt assessment: "Those who doggedly expose divine and human despotic powers will suffer for it. Arachne represents Ovid's accurate foreboding about speaking truth to unlimited power."

being raped by Tereus,⁸¹ but Ovid has already conditioned the reader to understand that the gods only take notice of wrongdoing if, in some way, they themselves think they have been wronged. The gods of the *Metamorphoses* are not omnipresent, they are not omniscient, and they certainly do not have a moral sense in the same way that Philomela does. Mortals must exact avenging punishment.

In this context, the apostrophe to Bacchus illuminates the ultimate absence of the gods in the face of crime.⁸² The story of the Theban women has already established that the Bacchic rites must be observed, lest the impious face the wrath of the god. The juxtaposition of the Bacchic *furiis* with Procne's in this apostrophe not only makes the former seem very unimportant in comparison, but reveals a monstrous contradiction about the Bacchic revels: women are driven to madness for not participating in them, but participate in madness when they do. The narrator joined in the hymn to Bacchus in an earlier apostrophe in which the main element was fear. The tone here is one of wrathful urgency. The narrator renders unto Bacchus that which is Bacchus' ("See, Procne is celebrating your rites just as she is supposed to!"), but with the clear implication that Procne's *furiis* is justifiably real, while those for Bacchus are make-believe.⁸³

⁸¹ *clamato...magnis super omnia divis*, 6.525-6.

⁸² Anderson 1972, 229, dismisses the apostrophe as used for metrical convenience, although he does agree that Philomela's prayer helps emphasize the gods' indifference to this crime (220). Barchiesi 2009, 342, does not address the apostrophe at all, choosing instead to emphasize the metamorphosis of Procne from a kind, civilized woman to a wild, savage one. He explained away the gods to whom Philomela prays by lumping them together with her invocation of her father and sister, and making the three a symbol of a "moral universe (333)."

⁸³ Fontenrose 1948, 158, in his excellent article summarizing the comparing all the different versions of the Procne story, traces Procne's participation in the Bacchic rites here to an earlier story of Athamas and Ino. In that story, Ino had gone off to participate in the Dionysian rites, but was long to return, setting off a series of tragic events including Athamas' remarriage and the slaying of his sons by his new wife. No

There is an active intention on Procne's part to use the Bacchic rites as a ruse that contrasts with how Juno and her minion Allecto used the Bacchic rites to drive Amata mad in Book 7 of the *Aeneid*.⁸⁴ In that context, Juno was enraged at the marriage contract agreed upon by Latinus and Aeneas, and she enlisted Allecto to spoil the plan. The mortal was a pawn there; here, the mortal is the intentional agent. The phrase used here, *Bacche, tuas simulat* is in the active voice and is emphasized by the apostrophe. The phrase used in *Aeneid* 7.385, *simulato numine Bacchi*, is in the passive voice and easily overlooked. It is as though the god should be offended by a mortal actively pretending observance of the god, but all that really matters for Bacchus is that his rites be observed at all. Morality and religion, again, are completely separate.

Book 8

During the transition from the Baucis and Philemon parable into the Erysichthon story, Achelous, the narrator of both stories, apostrophizes Proteus as an example of a god who could change himself multiple times, not just once as Baucis and Philemon had been changed once and forever into trees:

Sunt, quibus in plures ius est transire figuras,
ut tibi, complexi terram maris incola, Proteu,
nam modo te iuvenem, modo te videre leonem;
nunc violentus aper, nunc, quem tetigisse timerent,
anguis eras; modo te faciebant cornua taurum;
saepe lapis poteras, arbor quoque saepe videri;
interdum faciem liquidarum imitatus aquarum
flumen eras, interdum undis contrarius ignis. (8.730-37)

There are those for whom there is the power to transform into many shapes, as it is for you, Proteus, who inhabits the sea which embraces the

other version of the Procne story used this aspect, so Ovid must have deliberately chosen to insert Bacchus into this story and to address him.

⁸⁴ Bömer 1976b, 162, cited *Aeneid* 7.385, *simulato numine Bacchi*, without further explanation. Zyroff 1971, 107, claims that Ovid misinterpreted Vergil's use.

earth, for at times men have seen you as a young man, at times as a lion; now you were a fierce boar, and now a snake of the sort that men fear to have touched; now horns made you a bull; often you could appear as a stone, often too a tree; sometimes you were a river, imitating the appearance of clear waters, sometimes you were fire that is hostile to the waves.

This passage recalls descriptions of Proteus in Homer's *Odyssey* and Vergil's *Georgics*, both of which Ovid clearly knew. All three list several objects into which Proteus could change himself. A comparison of these passages provides an excellent example of Ovid's interest in *variatio*:

πάντα δὲ γιγνόμενος πειρήσεται, ὅσσ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν
ἔρπετὰ γίνονται, καὶ ὕδωρ καὶ θεσπιδαῆς πῦρ...
ἀλλ' ἢ τοι πρῶτιστα λέων γένετ' ἠυγένειος,
αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα δράκων καὶ πάρδαλις ἠδὲ μέγας σῦς:
γίγνετο δ' ὕγρον ὕδωρ καὶ δένδρεον ὑψιπέτηλον... (*Odyssey* 4.417-18, 456-58)⁸⁵

And he will try (to escape), becoming all things, as great as the creatures that move along the ground, as well as water and blazing fire... but in truth he first became a strong-bearded lion, and then a snake and leopard and then a large boar: next he became liquid water and a tree with high foliage.

Fiet enim subito sus horridus atraque tigris
squamosusque draco et fulva cervice leaena,
aut acrem flammae sonitum dabit atque ita vinculis
excidet, aut in aquas tenues dilapsus abibit.
Sed quanto ille magis formas se vertet in omnes... (*Georgics* 4.407-11)

For he will become a bristly boar and a dark tigress and a scaly snake and a tawny-necked lioness, or he will give the piercing sound of a flame and in such a way fall from his chains, or he will depart having slipped into thin water. But how much more will he turn himself into every shape...

Vergil recalled the *Odyssey* passage by using all of Homer's objects except for "tree," and even transliterated Homer's words for "snake" and "boar". Ovid included all of Homer's items, apparently making a point not to use the same terms as Vergil

⁸⁵ Anderson 1972, 402, refers to these Homeric passages, Fantham 1993, 22-23, to Vergil's. Fantham also directly refers to Ovid's apostrophe, but makes no effort to explain its significance.

(*flumen* instead of *aquas*, *ignis* instead of *flammae*, *leonem* instead of *leaena*, *anguis* instead of the transliterated *draco*, *aper* instead of the transliterated *sus*), reintroduced the *arbor* which Vergil had left out, and even expanded on Homer's list by including *iuvenem*, *taurum*, and *lapis*.

Neither of Ovid's sources, however, used an apostrophe. The anaphora of the second person pronoun and the heightened tone of the apostrophe suggest prayer or hymn form. This is appropriate because Achelous has the power of self-transformation, but on a more limited scale than Proteus. The passages from Homer and Vergil that Ovid manipulates respectively exalt Proteus as pious and omniscient. In *Odyssey* 4, Menelaus was instructed to find Proteus to ask him how to get back home. Proteus tells him that he must first go to the river of Egypt and ῥέξης θ' ἱερὰς ἑκατόμβας / ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι, "sacrifice sacred hecatombs to the immortal gods" (*Odyssey* 4.478-79). Vergil emphasized Proteus' omniscience at *Georgics* 4.392-93, *novit namque omnia vates / quae sint, quae fuerint, quae mox ventura trahuntur*, "for in fact the seer knew all things which are, which have been, which soon will come to pass." One could argue that Ovid implied that attribute in *Metamorphoses* 11 when Proteus instructs Peleus how to "catch" Thetis, who also had the power of self-transformation. The Homeric piety particularly fits the context here, placed between that shown by Baucis and Philemon just before, and by the votive offerings on Ceres' tree shortly after. Together, these examples will make Erysichthon's impiety seem all the worse by comparison.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Fantham 1993, 23, views the insertion of Proteus as raising an expectation of a retelling of that story, an expectation dashed when Achelous shifts to the story of Erysichthon and his daughter.

Book 9

Byblis

Byblis left Miletus to follow her brother Caunus, who left the city to escape her incestuous advances. Vocabulary of madness and despair describe her: *maestam* (9.635), *furibunda* (9.637), *demens* (6.638). The narrator uses an apostrophe to Bacchus to help describe Byblis' madness: *Utque tuo motae, proles Semeleia, thyrsos / Ismariae celebrant repetita triennia bacchae*, "And just as Ismarian bacchantes, spurred on by your thyrsus, son of Semele, celebrate the repeated triennial rites" (9.641-42). Ovid already clearly established the connection between Bacchus and madness, and his insertion of the *Ismariae bacchae* intensifies that connection here, since Ismarus is in eastern Thrace, a region stereotypically associated with wildness and the home of Dionysius.⁸⁷ Zyroff observes that Ovid addressed Bacchus as "son of Semele" partly as an allusion to Jupiter's affair with Semele in Book 2. This allusion "enhances the orgiastic associations with his name to include the association with illicit love, so appropriate to Byblis' plight."⁸⁸

The insertion of an apostrophe to Bacchus not only serves to illustrate Byblis' frenzy, but in the other direction, denigrates the god by associating the frenzy in his worship with so abominable a lust. The gods have already been condemned for their immorality during Byblis' monologue, during which she exclaimed, *Di melius* (9.497),

⁸⁷ Bömer 1977, 463. Curiously, Anderson 1972, 461, speculates that if this apostrophe is not here for metrical reasons (itself a curious statement, though of the sort that he has made before to explain away the presence of an apostrophe), it "may be to suggest a lightening of the tragic note by Ovid." He does not explain what elements of the apostrophe could suggest comedy. By contrast, Nagle 1983, 307, connects the narrator's two apostrophes to Byblis with sympathy for her. If Ovid employs apostrophe to a *character* with a discernable purpose, it does not seem to follow that an apostrophe to a *god*, particularly one in such close proximity to the purposeful one (*proles Semeleia*, 9.641; *Bybli*, 9.651) could be "merely due to metrical exigencies" (Anderson 1972, 461).

⁸⁸ Zyroff 1971, 108.

when she realized that the gods have among them many examples of incest and therefore *sunt superis sua iura* (9.500).⁸⁹ Raval and Anderson both make the erroneous assumption that an invocation to the gods marks, as Raval says, “moral check on her illicit thoughts,”⁹⁰ and therefore find it ironic that Byblis uses the gods as an example for her “immoral argument”.⁹¹ Anderson correctly points out that when Byblis examines the gods, she “implicitly accuses the gods of being less moral than humans.”⁹² He seems troubled by this because it flies in the face of his initial assumption of the moral nature of the divine. But all along, Ovid has repeatedly been making the point that the equation of gods with morality is a false assumption. The implication behind Byblis’ apostrophe to the gods in her soliloquy is consistent with that of previous apostrophes to gods.

Iphis

The story of Iphis provides one of the rare happy endings in the *Metamorphoses*, but it is a foreign god, not one of the repeatedly discredited Olympians, who makes it possible. Iphis, born a girl but raised as a boy to avoid her father’s deadly edict, is betrothed to lanthe, and falls in love with her. The wedding day approaches, and Iphis delivers a soliloquy in which she despairs of her “unnatural” and unattainable love, and finally apostrophizes the wedding deities Juno and Hymenaeus in frustration: *Pronuba quid Juno, quid ad haec, Hymenaeae, venitis / sacra, quibus qui ducat abest, ubi*

⁸⁹ Otis 1970, 225, considers the Byblis episode as a transition between the Scylla and the Myrrha, episodes that feature actions of incest, not just thoughts as in the Byblis. In that context, Byblis retains a semblance of moral authority that gives some weight to the potentially explosive insight that “the gods have their own laws.” This thought, then, traitorous if applied to emperor-gods and blasphemous to actual gods, is well hidden underneath the moral turpitude of mortal incest.

⁹⁰ Raval 2001, 289. Anderson 1972, 453, comments on *di melius*: “For a moment Byblis seems to be moved by a moral sense.”

⁹¹ Anderson 1972, 453.

⁹² Anderson 1972, 454.

nubimus ambae?, “Why do you, Juno, and you, Hymenaeus, come to these sacred rites, for which the man who should take her away is absent, where we two girls are marrying?” (9.762-63) At this point, the narrator takes over and also apostrophizes Hymenaeus on behalf of Iphigeneia’s hope: *nec lenius altera virgo / aestuat, utque celer venias, Hymenaeae, precatur*, “and no less does the other young woman burn and pray that you, Hymenaeus, come quickly” (9.764-65). Hymenaeus does come at the end of Book 9, along with Venus and Juno, *Venus et Iuno sociosque Hymenaeus ad ignes / conveniunt* (9.796-97). They merely gather, *conveniunt*, as though they were simply invited wedding guests.⁹³ None of these gods seem to know or recognize Iphigeneia’s plight, much less do anything about it. It is a foreign goddess, Isis, to whom Iphigeneia’s mother Telethusa prays, and it is she who hears the prayer and immediately changes Iphigeneia to a man who can now live happily ever after. Even before Iphigeneia was born, Isis appeared to Telethusa and promised to her that she would come to her aid if asked. It is the Egyptian goddess, then, not a Greco-Roman one like Leto,⁹⁴ who is portrayed as caring about a human in a way that matters, who hears a prayer, and answers it. Iphigeneia’s implied prayer to Juno and Hymenaeus is never heard, and so those Roman gods are made to look impotent in comparison with the Egyptian one.⁹⁵

⁹³ Even if Anderson 1972, 472, is correct to assume that these gods preside over the marriage, it is certainly not because of them that the story ends happily. The gods appear like a justice of the peace at a Las Vegas wedding, oblivious to whatever story brings the couple to the altar. There is nothing in the text to support Anderson’s assumption that the Roman deities “now attend the rites with full benevolence” (473).

⁹⁴ Graf 2002, 118. Anderson 1972, 465, also believes that Ovid deliberately chose to use the Egyptian Isis instead, a deity “outside the Greco-Roman pantheon who was not tarnished by the usual subhuman associations he gives gods.” See Wheeler 1997, 190-91, for a summary of Ovid’s sources for the Iphigeneia story and the changes he made to it.

⁹⁵ Again, this charge is well disguised by the theme of love and the happy ending of this story. Galinsky 1975, 86, for instance, following from his explicit assumption that the *Metamorphoses* is chiefly about *variatio* (218) connects the Iphigeneia story to the Byblis by their common love theme: “Byblis’ is a nefarious

Book 10

Venus apostrophizes Persephone as she gazes upon the lifeless Adonis, who had just been mauled by a boar, and declares that he will be turned into a flower:

an tibi quondam
femineos artus in olentes vertere mentas,
Persephone, licuit, nobis Cinyreius heros
invidiae mutatus erit? (10.728-31)

Were you once allowed, Persephone, to turn a woman's limbs into fragrant mint, or will it be a source of spite for the Cinyreian hero to be changed by me?

This apostrophe to Persephone is curious on several levels. Ovid has changed the traditional story surrounding Adonis' birth by eliminating any mention of Persephone, yet it is she whom he apostrophizes. According to Pseudo-Apollodorus, after Adonis' birth, Aphrodite hid Adonis in a chest and gave him to Persephone to keep. When Persephone looked at Adonis, she refused to give him back. The arbiter of the dispute was Zeus, who decreed that Adonis be alone for a third of the year, be with Aphrodite for another third, and Persephone the last. Adonis decided to add his third to Aphrodite's.⁹⁶ In Ovid's version, the nymphs lay the newborn Adonis on the ground, no further mention is made of his upbringing, and the next time he appears, Venus is infatuated with him.

The Alexandrian poet Bion of Smyrna has Aphrodite apostrophize Persephone in his *Epitaph on Adonis*:

love that merits punishment, whereas Iphis' is an impossible love which is finally made possible by a god." But not all gods are created equal, as it were, especially not in a time in which religion is so politically charged. Zyroff 1971, 121, sees sympathy for Hymenaeus here, though she does not explain why.

⁹⁶ Pseudo-Apollodorus, *Bibliothèque*, 3.14.3-4.

Λάμβανε, Περσεφόνα, τὸν ἔμὸν πόσιν: ἔσσι γὰρ αὐτά
πολλὸν ἔμευ κρέσσων, τὸ δὲ πᾶν καλὸν ἐς σὲ καταρρεῖ.
ἐμμὶ δ' ἐγὼ πανάποτμος, ἔχω δ' ἀκόρεστον ἀνίαν,
καὶ κλαίω τὸν Ἄδωνιν, ὃ μοι θάνε, καὶ σε φοβεῦμαι.

Persephone, take my husband: for you yourself are far stronger than I am,
and every beautiful thing flows down to you. I am completely ill-fated, I
have an unceasing grief, and I weep for Adonis, who has died, and I yield to
you.⁹⁷

In Bion's apostrophe, Aphrodite, overwhelmed by grief, acknowledges Persephone as ultimately more powerful. Also, where Bion has Adonis' blood turn to a rose and Aphrodite's tears turn to the anemone all on their own accord,⁹⁸ Ovid not only has Venus turn Adonis into the anemone by her will and power, but makes that power a source of *invidia* between Venus and Persephone.⁹⁹ Venus gets a power in Ovid that she does not have in Bion and uses that power not just to turn a beloved into a flower, but to assert an equal power in the implied rivalry with Persephone.

Book 11

In only eight lines, Ovid moves from the prophecy that the deeds of Thetis' son would outshine those of his father to Jupiter's order to Peleus to "go into the embrace of the sea-maiden." (11.227) Ovid then takes care to set the scene of a bay in Thessaly where Peleus will find Thetis.¹⁰⁰ The reader will experience here a role-reversal in comparison with the many previous scenes in which a randy god creeps up on an

⁹⁷ For the translation of φοβεῦμαι, see Reed 1997, 229.

⁹⁸ Bion, Ἀδώνιδος Ἐπιτάφιος 64-6.

⁹⁹ Bömer 1980, 231, says that the reference to Persephone turning a favorite nymph into a flower would not have escaped Ovid's listener/reader, and goes on to declare that there is a standard formula for rivalry here. Anderson 1972, 534, simply refers to the apostrophe as "invidious," without further explanation.

¹⁰⁰ Pauly-Wissowa 1894, VI.A.1.209, *Thetis*: "Das nicht menschliche, übernatürliche Wesen der Achillesmutter ist nie verleugnet worden."

unsuspecting nymph and rapes her. In the earlier episodes, Ovid highlights in some way the beauty or innocence of the woman. Here, Ovid follows the same formula. He uses a lengthy apostrophe to place Thetis in that picturesque setting, to stir the reader to imagine a naked goddess, and then to have Peleus try to take her by force. The difference is that Peleus, a mortal, fails:

quo saepe venire
frenato delphine sedens, Theti, nuda solebas.
illic te Peleus, ut somno victa iacebas,
occupat et, quoniam precibus temptata repugnas,
vim parat innectens ambobus colla lacertis;
quod nisi venisses variatis saepe figuris
ad solitas artes, auso foret ille potitus;
sed modo tu volucris (volucrum tamen ille tenebat),
nunc gravis arbor eras. (11.236-44)

There, Thetis, you used to come often, sitting naked on a bridled dolphin. There, when you were laying, overcome by sleep, Peleus seizes upon you and, because you fought off what he attempted by seduction, prepares to use force by wrapping your neck with both his arms; but if you had not come to your usual skill by often changing your shape, he would have gotten what he had dared; but now you were a bird (but he got hold of that bird), now you were a heavy tree.

In what becomes an attempted rape scene, in the midst of Thetis' self-transformations, Ovid cuts off his apostrophe. Once Thetis is fully awake, aware of what is happening, and begins to use her power to resist, the danger to her is over and the heightened drama of the apostrophe is unnecessary. Peleus holds on to Thetis-as-tree, but Thetis turns into a tiger and escapes. Ovid used apostrophe to highlight rape scenes before and here seems to use it to fool the reader into thinking he is reading the actual deed, or at least to dramatize Peleus' first attempt from the point of view of a startled Thetis, who is, for the time being at any rate, still more powerful than Peleus.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ For an excellent analysis of whole episode, see Fantham 1993, 23-27. For Murphy 1972, 57, there is not even an acknowledgement of the apostrophe, but rather a brief comparison of Thetis' self-

After so long and dramatic an apostrophe, Thetis' quick self-transformations, which take only half a line each, serve as a denouement to the scene, which ends with Peleus finally letting go, *solvit* (11.246).

After the apostrophe and Peleus' failed attempt, the focus shifts to Proteus and to Peleus, who is then used as a transition to the Ceyx story. Thetis is ultimately taken, though she accompanies her capitulation with a groan, *ingemuit* (11.263) and her lament that Peleus has not played fair but enlisted divine help, *neque...sine numine vincis* (11.263). In effect, Jupiter has indirectly raped the goddess by ordering Peleus to do what he had meant to do and allowing the mortal to enlist Proteus' help. The apostrophe is the dramatic moment of the whole episode, highlighting the tragedy of Thetis, who takes her place in the long line of wronged women in the *Metamorphoses*.

Book 13

Polyxena

After Polyxena had been sacrificed to appease Achilles' soul, Ovid gave Hecuba the space to deliver an impassioned lament. In the midst of several rhetorical questions in which Hecuba bewails that she is still alive and that Priam is actually fortunate to have already died so as not to witness even his daughter slaughtered, Hecuba apostrophizes the gods: *quo, di crudeles, nisi uti nova funera cernam, / vivacem differtis anum?*, "Why, cruel gods, do you delay (the death of) a woman long since old, except to see still more deaths?" (13.518-19) Together with the previous rhetorical question and apostrophe to *annosa senectus* (13.517), itself a synonym for *vivacem anum*, Hecuba

transformation with that of Proteus (8.730-37) and a conclusion that the ability of sea-gods to transform themselves reflects the "changeability and unpredictability of the sea itself." That may be so, but that does nothing to help the reader understand why Ovid chose an apostrophe to emphasize the struggle.

expresses both her desire to die and the unspeakable tragedy she continues to witness. Adjacent to the apostrophized gods is a clause that Hecuba thinks is sarcastic, but that she does not know is prescient, since she is about to find out that her son Polydorus was murdered.¹⁰² Again, the gods are associated with death and tragedy by apostrophe.¹⁰³

The construction and content of 13.516-20 are a combination of two passages from Euripides' *Hecuba*, in the beginning of which Hecuba witnesses the sacrifice of Polyxena.¹⁰⁴ The rhetorical questions that make up 13.516-20 are similar in tone to those in Euripides' *Hecuba* 154-64. The content of 13.518-19 recalls Euripides:

κάγωγ' ἄρ' οὐκ ἔθνησκον οὐ μ' ἐχρῆν θανεῖν,
οὐδ' ὤλεσέν με Ζεὺς, τρέφει δ', ὅπως ὀρῶ
κακῶν κάκ' ἄλλα μείζον' ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγώ. (*Hecuba* 231-33)

But I did not die when it was necessary for me to die, nor did Zeus destroy me, but he keeps me, so that I, a wretch, may see other evils greater than the evils (I have already seen).

Ovid uses the idea of τρέφει directly in line 517, *quo me servas* and continues it in 519, *quo...differtis anum*. He practically translates the clause ὅπως ὀρῶ / κακῶν κάκ' ἄλλα μείζον' with *uti nova funera cernam* (518), preserving the construction (purpose clause) and the action of seeing. While the Greek uses paregmenon (κακῶν κάκ') here to express pathos, Ovid has to change the content slightly to accommodate Latin

¹⁰² Hopkinson 2000, 518.

¹⁰³ Neither Hopkinson 2000 nor Bömer 1982 refer to the apostrophe.

¹⁰⁴ A section of Cross 2000 discusses the parallels between the sacrifice of Polyxena in the *Hecuba* and the *Metamorphoses*. Cross does not discuss Hecuba's speeches in either, but the idea for me to do so derives from that article.

usage.¹⁰⁵ He therefore condenses and perhaps clarifies the notion of evils to *nova funera*.

In Euripides, Hecuba is made to ascribe her fate to Zeus, while Ovid makes all the gods culpable. There is more emphasis on the blameworthiness of the gods in Ovid's line because in the same place, the gods are apostrophized, they earn the epithet *crudeles*, and the phrase is comprised of three long vowels, continuing the nearly unbroken line of teeth-clenching spondees that began in the previous line, *quo me servas, annosa senectus*.

Galatea

The Trojan passage through Scylla and Charybdis allows Ovid to segue into two tales of spurned love, Galatea's rejection of Polyphemus and Scylla's rejection of Glaucus. Scylla visited the sea nymph Galatea, who tells her how she loved the young man Acis but utterly despised the Cyclops Polyphemus, who had fallen deeply in love with her. At that point in her narrative, Galatea apostrophizes Venus: *Pro quanta potentia regni / est, Venus alma, tui!* "How great is the power of your realm, gentle Venus!" (13.758-59) Galatea's use of the interjection *pro* expresses an untranslatable sense of awe.¹⁰⁶ Though *alma* is a common epithet for Venus,¹⁰⁷ its proximity to

¹⁰⁵ See Collard 1991, 135, for the effect of paregmenon, the juxtaposition of words with the same root. Commenting on this particular line in Euripides, Collard 1991, 144, notes that paregmenon of κακός is common, citing two other instances of it in the *Hecuba* (588, 690).

¹⁰⁶ Hopkinson 2000, 81, remarks that the interjection *pro* is usually attached to *Iuppiter* or *di immortales*, and cites 13.758 as an exception. It is worth noting that near the beginning of Theocritus' *Idyll* 11 about Polyphemus, there is a dichotomy between love and the medicine for love. The latter is described as κοῦφον...καὶ ἄδύ (11.3), "light and sweet", yet Polyphemus loved with ὀρθαῖς μανίαις (11.1), "real madness." Farrell 1992, 246, warns, however, against seeing this episode as merely a reworking of Theocritus, though "it is in a sense hardly possible to study this passage without using Theocritus' eleventh *Idyll* as the main point of reference." Galinsky 1975, 192-93, in a section on literary allusiveness and parody, considers Ovid's scene "more farcical, exaggerated, and graphically overdone than Theocritus' *Idyll* 11," then goes on to note the influence of Vergil's *Eclogues* 1 and 2, which contrast the power and futility of music.

potentia regni provides a striking oxymoron. The short apostrophe, in fact, provides the “moral” for both Galatea’s and Scylla’s stories, and the juxtaposition of *potentia* with *alma* is reflected in the structure of the Polyphemus tale.¹⁰⁸ Galatea goes on from the apostrophe to describe to what lengths Polyphemus had gone to become gentler, both physically and in his expression of love through his love song. But Venus’ power has an overwhelmingly violent side, shown to the reader when Polyphemus kills Acis in a fit of jealous passion. In the end, there is little *alma* about Venus and truly a great deal of *potentia*.

Book 14

Vertumnus, disguised as an old woman, tries to woo Pomona by telling her the tale of Iphis and Anaxarete. When Iphis tries and repeatedly fails to win Anaxarete’s affection, he prepares to commit suicide outside her door. In the midst of his soliloquy, he apostrophizes all the gods:

Si tamen, o superi, mortalia facta videtis,
este mei memores (nihil ultra lingua precari
sustinet) et longo facite ut narremur in aevo
et, quae dempsistis vitae, date tempora famae. (14.729-32)

But if, O gods above, you see mortal deeds, remember me (my tongue can pray no longer) and bring it about that we are told of over a long age, and give a time to my fame that you took from my life.

¹⁰⁷ Hopkinson 2000, 213. Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 1.1-2, provides a notable example.

¹⁰⁸ In a way, the coexistence of violence and gentleness is also reflective of Ovid’s combination of the horrific Homeric Polyphemus and the pathetic Theocritean one that Griffin 1983 discusses. Farrell 1992 investigates in more detail the intersection of pastoral, elegy, and epic in the Galatea and Polyphemus episode.

In the immediate context of the Iphis/Anaxarete story, it is important to point out that Iphis' prayer is neither answered nor even heard.¹⁰⁹ Ovid inverts the traditional trope of many tongues in order to emphasize Iphis' desperation.¹¹⁰ It is also important to remember a wider context, that it is Vertumnus who is telling the story, who has an interest in how the story does or does not sway Pomona.¹¹¹ By the end of Book 14, the reader has read quite a few stories in which the gods either do not look upon the deeds of mortals or only care about them insofar as they advance a god's interests. On one level, it is rather cynical of the god to advance the farcical notion that the gods have such a beneficent disposition toward mortals and their problems. After all, Vertumnus, disguised as the old woman, openly tells Pomona that she should be frightened by his story.¹¹² On another level, though, such an over-the-top prayer is in line with the hyperbolic nature of Iphis' determination to commit suicide rather than leave Anaxarete alone, as though the moral of Vertumnus' story requires that the female ought to receive the advances of any male who comes knocking on her door. Apparently it was a good thing that Pomona got that message, since Vertumnus was prepared to rape her (*vim parat*, 14.770) if she did not finally give way. Scholars have generally swooned over the

¹⁰⁹ Lateiner 1996, 231, points out that prayer, whether verbal or non-verbal, comes to no avail throughout Book 14, citing the failed supplications of Glaucus, Picus, Canens, Circe, Cyclops, as well as Vertumnus and Iphis.

¹¹⁰ See Hinds 1998, 34-47, for a discussion on the "many mouths" or "hundred tongues" trope from Homer through Persius.

¹¹¹ Myers 2009, 187, focuses her interpretation of this apostrophe (though she did not recognize it as such) on the commemorative function of poetry. Both she and Bömer 1986, 222, refer to Horace, *Ars Poetica* 68 (*mortalia facta peribunt*). To stop one's reading of this passage with such an interpretation is not to consider that the passage has either an immediate or an overarching context.

¹¹² 14.693-7, particularly *ultores deos...memoremque time Rhamnusidis iram...quoque magis timeas*. Myers 2009, 179, reminds us that *Rhamnusidis* is a reference to Nemesis, who had a temple as Rhamnus near Marathon.

Vertumnus and Pomona story,¹¹³ but the incongruity of the assumption behind the apostrophe with Vertumnus' own intended action is but one indication that the story's ending may be happy, but the story itself merits examination. Propertius, an important source to Ovid for the story of Vertumnus, represented the god as not having a propensity for misrepresentation, seduction, or violence.¹¹⁴ Ovid, then, had to have introduced those elements into the story. This is not without wider significance, because if Myers is correct that the Pomona and Vertumnus story introduces programmatic Roman religious themes,¹¹⁵ character flaws in the Italian god may reflect similar flaws in what the god is meant to represent. It is true that Pomona voluntarily falls in love with Vertumnus after he reveals himself as a god, but that fact does not negate the fact that Vertumnus has already demonstrated a willingness to use fear and violence to get what he wants. The apostrophe that Vertumnus-in-disguise has Iphis use contains an assumption of benevolent gods that Vertumnus contradicts by his own actions in the episode.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Fränkel 1945, 106, describes the story as "a very simple tale, steeped in the homely spirit of Italian countryfolk." Littlefield 1965, 472, says that "artifice, assault, and deceit, are alien" to Vertumnus. This is a stunning statement in light of Vertumnus' self-metamorphosis and his willingness to use violence to gain possession of Pomona. Fantham 1993 recognizes, but ultimately has no issue either with Vertumnus' attempts at rhetorical persuasion or his willingness to resort to violence, and is content with the "chaste union appropriate to a national deity" (36). Johnson 1997, 368, declares that the episode is about Vertumnus' "clumsy style of wooing...not the rape he would have committed," so Vertumnus is in love, not lust since Pomona made Vertumnus' intended rape unnecessary.

¹¹⁴ Propertius 4.2.55-6 does contain Vertumnus' wish to be worshipped for all time, a desire reminiscent of Iphis' apostrophe in content, structure, and use of apostrophe to a god: *sed facias, divum Sator, ut Romana per aevum / transeat ante meos turba togata pedes.*

¹¹⁵ Myers 1994, 225.

¹¹⁶ For further discussion on Vertumnus' deceptions in this episode, see Gentilcore 1995.

Book 15

Pythagoras

In the midst of his discourse on the ultimate mutability of all things, Pythagoras digresses into a discussion of how water changes things and how bodies of water themselves change. During a list of rivers and waters with special properties, Pythagoras apostrophizes an Egyptian god, in whose land a certain fountain changes temperature at different times of the day: *medio tua, corniger Ammon, / unda die gelida est, ortuque obituque calescit* (15.309-10), “Horn-bearing Ammon, in the middle of the day your wave is cool, but it grows warmer at sunrise and sunset.” Bömer mentions that an apostrophe to Jupiter Ammon is unusual.¹¹⁷ The commentator assumes that this is the Romanized version of the Egyptian deity, but not only is the god addressed by his Egyptian name and with an epithet which emphasizes how he would have been depicted by Egyptians (with a pair of rams’ horns springing from his head), the god is surrounded by references to foreign places without connection to Rome. Ammon is addressed here in his own right and in his own land. The foreign nature of the god helps the apostrophe emphasize the strange property of the fountain. A reference to a Romanized or Hellenized Ammon, or to the oracle there, would not fit the surrounding context.

Aesculapius

Pandite nunc, Musae, praesentia numina vatum,
(scitis enim, nec vos fallit spatiosa vetustas)
unde Coroniden circumflua Thybridis alti
insula Romuleae sacris adiecerit urbis. (15.622-25)

Now reveal, Muses, divine powers at hand for bards, (for you know, and far-

¹¹⁷ Bömer 1986, 336.

reaching old age does not deceive you) from where the island around which the deep Tiber flows added the son of Coronis to the gods of Romulus' city.

This narrator's apostrophe to the Muses introduces the story of Aesculapius, which in turn functions as a transition to the announcement of the divinity of Caesar. This is therefore a delicate moment in the work.¹¹⁸ Ovid has to be on his best behavior, as it were, and so gives this the feel of a traditional, "proper" epic. The language in these lines is elevated in several respects, much more so than Ovid's introduction to the whole work.¹¹⁹

The first line establishes a reverent tone. The imperative *pandite*, "reveal," recalls Vergil and Lucretius,¹²⁰ and implies established knowledge from a hallowed past. This is quite different from the revolutionary *adspirate* from 1.3, which suggests something new and points to the future. The addressee, *Musae*, recalls Homer and Vergil,¹²¹ and therefore contributes to the respectful tone of traditional epic. This, along with the fact

¹¹⁸ Knox 1986, 75, sensed this as well: "The entrance of Aesculapius serves as foil to the apotheosis of Julius Caesar." Bömer 1986, 417, summarizes the problem that Ovid faced here. This is the junction of myth and historical reality, and Ovid is confronted with the difficulty of making myth seem real and reality into a believable myth, without giving offense to the emperor. Zyff 1971, 72, recognizes that this is a transition to the Caesar and Augustus finale but only sees the invocation of the Muses as "a last minute concession to tradition" since Ovid has not felt the need to invoke them before. Barchiesi 1997b, 187, rejects the notion that the invocation to the Muses has a direct relation to the section on Augustus. Feeney 1991, 209, simply describes the invocation to the Muses as "inevitable," emphasizing the value of the importation of Aesculapius' cult in Roman history.

¹¹⁹ Bömer 1986, 420, noted several scholars with a wide range of opinions on why Ovid used such a traditional invocation to the Muses: Heinze thought Ovid wanted to instill a sense of *horror sacer*, Holleman that this does not belong to the *carmen perpetuum*, Wilkinson that Ovid was getting a bit lazy, and Segal that it was meant to be somewhat funny. Bömer himself is fond of the view of Gassner, whom he quotes as saying that it serves the "higher dignity of the final section," though Bömer admits this does not address the question of why the final section starts here. Bömer finally admits that there is no wholly satisfactory answer.

¹²⁰ *Aeneid* 7.461, *De Rerum Natura* 1.55.

¹²¹ *Iliad* 1.1, *Odyssey* 1.1, *Aeneid* 1.8. Hardie 2002b, 4, notes the distinction that the Muses are singled out as being *praesentia numina*, "making of the Muses a special case of *praesentes divi*, gods who vouchsafe their presence to help mankind." He also notes that Vergil used the same phrase, *praesentia numina* in the opening prayer of *Georgics* 1.10 when Vergil invoked rustic divinities (*Fauni, Dryades*) as being present.

that it is the only story in the whole epic introduced by invoking the Muses,¹²² marks a contrast with the unique address that Ovid used in the second line of the work, *di*. While Ovid's introduction contains an address to *di*, it lacks a religious nature. His insertion of *vatum* is supposed to help set a religious tone here, though Ovid must have hoped that his readers failed to realize, or at least overlook, how irreverently he had treated the word not only in the *Metamorphoses*, but also in his earlier elegiac poetry.¹²³

Both the second line of the whole work and the second line of this apostrophe contain a parenthetical aside that provides a particular attribute to the *di/Musae*. Here, the aside ascribes infallible knowledge to the Muses.¹²⁴ Ovid has been careful to set a religious tone, but it seems he cannot resist injecting a hint of irreverence.¹²⁵ Some, perhaps many, ascribe infallibility to the stories of old simply because they are old, but for Ovid, *vetustas* is *spatiosa*, vast, and therefore prone to deceive, *fallit*.¹²⁶ If he has to say that the distant past does not deceive the Muses, it means that it does deceive mortals. In his introduction, the *di* (who/whatever they are) are given a positive attribute, the ability to transform something; here, the Muses receive an attribute expressed in negative terms, namely the ability not to be deceived by the distant past.

¹²² Galinsky 1975, 253.

¹²³ See Newman 1967, 100-14, for a detailed discussion of Ovid's use of the term *vates*.

¹²⁴ Zyroff 1971, 70, reminds us to compare lines 623 with its models, *Iliad* 2.485-6 (ὕμεις γὰρ θεαί ἐστε πάρεστε τε ἴστε τε πάντα, / ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν) and *Aeneid* 7.645-6 (*et meministis enim, divae, et memorare potestis; / ad nos vix tenuis famae perlabitur aura*).

¹²⁵ Segal 1969, 278, agreeing that this apostrophic passage has Homeric echoes and arguing that the lofty flourishes are "undercut by the subsequent grotesquerie," questions whether Ovid was reaching for epic dignity or epic parody.

¹²⁶ Bömer 1986, 420, comments that *spatiosa vetustas* marks a criterion of credibility and age, but also as a criterion of uncertain tradition.

This has implications for how we should read Ovid's Trojan/Roman "history," none that would have pleased the emperor.

The names in lines 624-25 are also used in an epic way. Otis describes the god's translation to Rome as "a geographic crescendo, a climactic series of revered names and connotations."¹²⁷ *Coroniden* is a unique matronymic, referring to Aesculapius as the son of Coronis. The spelling of *Thybridis* is archaic, according to Pliny the Elder,¹²⁸ and therefore lends the weight of age (which Ovid has implicitly criticized in his parenthetical aside). While it is not uncommon for rivers to be described as *altus*, only here in classical poetry was it used to describe the Tiber.¹²⁹ Finally, the circumlocution for Rome, *Romuleae urbis*, contains the unusual adjective, perhaps coined by Vergil, which lends a solemn tone.¹³⁰ In only four lines, Ovid has taken pains to make this introduction to the Aesculapius story appear weighty and appropriate to introduce the deification of Caesar, while at the same time cleverly sabotaging the message with his subtle implication that the stories of old ought not be believed simply because they are old.

When Aesculapius-as-snake arrives in Rome, the narrator apostrophizes Vesta:

Huc omnes populi passim matrumque patrumque
obvia turba fuit, quaeque ignes, Troica, servat,
Vesta, tuos, laetoque deum clamore salutant. (15.729-31)

To this place all the people everywhere, a crowd of mothers and fathers,
came to meet him, and those who tend your fires, Trojan Vesta, greet the
god with joyous shouting.

¹²⁷ Otis 1970, 296.

¹²⁸ *Natural History* 3.53.1: *Tiberis, ante Thyberis appellatus et prius Albula...*

¹²⁹ Bömer 1986, 421.

¹³⁰ Bömer 1986, 421.

Aesculapius is a foreign god who “willingly” comes to Rome to take up residence there. Vesta is a native deity who is addressed in a similar fashion, as though she were also foreign before residing in Rome. This is probably a nod to Vergil and his rendering of the hearth fire and Penates being brought from the besieged Troy ultimately to Rome.¹³¹ Not long after this apostrophe, the transition to Caesar, *in urbe sua deus* (15.746), takes place. Both Aesculapius and Vesta are great local gods, but apparently inferior to Caesar because they were originally foreign.

Apotheosis

Between the declaration of the apotheosis of Caesar at 15.746 (*Caesar in urbe sua deus est*), and the end of the work 133 lines later, the narrator apostrophizes the gods in two places. In the first instance, Ovid apostrophizes all the gods in ostensible approval that they have shown their favor to the human race because Augustus reigns over them: *quo praeside rerum / humano generi, superi, favistis abunde* (15.758-59). How sincere is this pronouncement? If all we had of Ovid was the final hundred or so lines of the *Metamorphoses*, remote posterity could either assume Ovid’s sincerity or dismiss him as a sycophant. But we have almost fifteen books of the *Metamorphoses* that lead up to the panegyric to Augustus. Ovid’s depiction of the gods in those fifteen books colors the interpretation of the final passages, and Ovid’s apostrophes to the gods tint that color. In the apostrophes to the gods analyzed in this chapter, the gods have been unsympathetic to helpless humans, unable to control themselves when in love, and often linked with death and tragedy. The Olympians are neither omniscient nor omnipresent. What is more, Ovid has composed them as beyond morality, which,

¹³¹ Bömer 1986, 449, quoting Bailey 1935: “Vesta is the hearth containing the fire.”

as Feeney noted, “is a term that only has meaning in relation to human beings.”¹³² The only apostrophized gods who cared enough about a mortal to answer a prayer were Egyptian gods, not Greco-Roman ones. Ovid has shown fear of a god only under threat of violence at the hand of the god or his followers. Because of the threat of violence and because the gods are not omnipresent, the narrator has openly criticized an absent god, but covertly criticized one that is present. As the work approaches its conclusion, it also approaches the recently apotheosized Caesar and the living god Augustus. Thus toward the end of the work reverence seems manufactured in the form of an invocation to the Muses. Manipulation is at work, and Ovid has trained his reader to take the closing flattery with a proverbial grain of salt.

Ovid has cleverly made both this apostrophe and its immediate surroundings open to either a positive or a negative interpretation. This apostrophe comes at the end of a passage heightened in tone by a long rhetorical question in which the narrator lists several of Caesar’s accomplishments and ultimately declares that Caesar’s greatest accomplishment was to have been the father of Augustus, *tantum genuisse virum* (15.758). The list of accomplishments is impressive and alone can appear to lend Augustus glory by association. On the other hand, it can also make Augustus seem to have no accomplishments of his own. Caesar, after all, subjugated the Britanni, Juba, and Mithridates, all foreign enemies of Rome—whom has Augustus defeated, except other Romans? Introducing the sentence that lists Caesar’s victories is the adverb *scilicet*, a pivotal word in the passage because it either implies, according to Lewis and Short, that the statement is obviously true, or ironic and obviously false. The reader’s

¹³² Feeney 1991, 203.

interpretation of this word influences the rest of the passage, including the apostrophe that concludes that sentence. In a favorable light, the reader would see *genuisse* and overlook as poetic license that Caesar was not the biological father of Augustus. If not, the phrase *tantum genuisse virum* would condemn the unnamed Augustus as borrowing both lineage and accomplishments from the man who was truly *tantum* in comparison. In the apostrophe, the adverb *abunde* is unusual, emphasized by the line-ending spondee, and used very rarely in poetry with a verb.¹³³ Viewed sympathetically, Ovid has used a strong word in a strong position in approval of Augustus. Unsympathetically, Ovid has used a hyperbolic word in a way more suited for history. The very next sentence supports the latter view, read as a straightforward historical judgment: *ne foret hic igitur mortali semine cretus, / ille deus faciendus est* (15.760-61), “Caesar had to be made a god so that Augustus, then, would not be born of mortal stock.” The following scene in which Venus complains about the death of Caesar is unbelievable, if for no other reason than that gods have previously not taken much notice of the deeds of mortals, much less to intercede in or because of historical events. While arguments can be made in support of either a favorable or unfavorable interpretation of the apostrophe, a reader has to make too many allowances to make a sympathetic or even neutral reading work.¹³⁴

In the second place, the narrator apostrophizes all the gods, including many by name, that they may ensure the long life of Augustus:

¹³³ Lewis and Short cites Horace as the only other poet to use *abunde* with a non-linking verb. Many of the other citations are historians, especially Sallust; Vergil and Horace are cited once each using *abunde* predicatively with *est*.

¹³⁴ Bömer 1986, 458, for instance, advocates a neutral reading, citing a similar relationship between Caesar and Augustus as divine father and son in Propertius 4.6.59.

Di, precor, Aeneae comites, quibus ensis et ignis
 cesserunt, dique Indigetes genitorque Quirine
 urbis et invicti genitor Gradive Quirini
 Vestaque Caesareos inter sacrata Penates
 et cum Caesarea tu, Phoebae domestice, Vesta,
 quique tenes altus Tarpeias Iuppiter arces,
 quosque alios vati fas appellare piusque est:
 tarda sit illa dies et nostro serior aevo,
 qua caput Augustum, quem temperat, orbe relicto
 accedat caelo faveatque precantibus absens! (15.861-70)

O gods, I pray, companions of Aeneas, to whom sword and fire gave way,
 Native gods, Quirinus the father of our city, and Gradivus the father of
 unconquered Quirinus, and Vesta who was consecrated among Caesar's
 Penates, and together with Caesar's Vesta you, our own Phoebus, and
 exalted Jupiter who holds the Tarpeian citadel, and you other gods whom it
 is right and dutiful for a bard to address: may that day be slow and later
 than my lifetime in which the Augustan godhead, once it has left the world
 which he calms, goes to heaven and, though gone, favors those who pray
 to him!

This apostrophe explodes into the narrative like the finale of a fireworks display. The narrator has just deified Augustus by analogy to Jupiter (Jupiter is to the ethereal realm as Augustus is to the earth, *Iuppiter arces / temperat aetherias... / terra sub Augusto est*, 15.858-60), so the prayer is to postpone his ascension into heaven. The reader has not seen an apostrophe like this before, either in content or fervor. Most of the gods that the narrator addresses here have not been addressed before in the work, and even those that he has addressed before, Apollo and Jupiter, are invoked in ways wholly inconsistent with their previous depictions.¹³⁵ Feeney is particularly instructive when he describes the chronological movement of the prayer, how it shifts from the communal to the individual, and the significance of the link among Augustus, Apollo,

¹³⁵ Zyroff 1971, 91, did not address why Ovid listed these particular gods. Her only remark about this passage was that *di* refers to Trojan gods and that line 867 was inserted to avoid committing the *nefas* of failing to address the correct divinity in his prayer.

and Vesta in lines 864-65.¹³⁶ All the gods to whom the narrator prays are linked to Rome, and the last two particularly are linked with Caesar/Augustus. The narrator himself is a *vates*, careful to be *fas* and *pious*, all of which are terms that have been absent for almost the entire work. The apostrophe seems so intensely patriotic and dutifully pious that it can either make the reader swell with pride or furl his brow in confusion because it is so inconsistent with the depiction of the gods throughout the work.¹³⁷

The first apostrophe to gods in the opening lines of the poem asks the *di* to help the poet bring his poem from the beginning of time to his own day; set in Ovid's own time, the last apostrophe to gods, hyper-specific in its address to so many peculiarly Roman gods, may be seen as defining who the initial *di* are. Feeney sees in the last apostrophe a culminating association of Jupiter and Augustus. Such an association is by no means original to Ovid but would have resonated in the memories of his

¹³⁶ Feeney 1991, 215-16.

¹³⁷ Otis 1970, 305, tends to this direction when he wrote of the end of the *Metamorphoses*: "Ovid doubtless intended the Emperor to be pleased or at least mollified. But he did not expect all his readers to take him so literally." Galinsky 1975, 257-61, however, warns the reader not to read anti-Augustanism into this ending, but instead see it as a comparably conventional tribute, in line with long-established norms of imperial panegyric. Furthermore, the panegyric cannot be a culmination of the poem or even one of its themes due to the scattered nature of Roman and Augustan motifs throughout the work (3). I argue that such scattered nature reinforces an anti-Augustan reading: obscuring the message makes it safer to say. Fränkel's reading, that Ovid was "trying to conform to the ideas of the Emperor when it was too late" (1945, 55), may have some merit if the poet felt he was in some danger. Ahl 1984b, 64, hints that Ovid ultimately failed to speak his criticism safely: "But in toying with myth he toyed with official realities of Ages of Gold, of Caesar deified, of Octavian become Augustus. And for this he paid a price." In his article on the end of Book 15, Holleman 1969 is outspoken in his assertion that Ovid was "a master of ambiguous language (42)", and that he used that talent in the end of book 15 to denounce the idea that Augustus was the savior of Rome predicted in Vergil's *Eclogue* 4. It is important to point out that more recent scholarship does not try to pin down Augustan authors as strictly for or against the regime. Nappa 2005, 15-18, for instance, sees deliberate ambiguities and tensions between incompatible perspectives in Vergil's *Georgics*. Miller 2009, 333, admits that it is "difficult to extract a coherent political position from the *Metamorphoses*."

contemporary readers.¹³⁸ Augustus among the Roman gods at the end of the epic are analogous to Jupiter and the Olympians from the beginning. The characteristics of the Olympians that Ovid has investigated throughout the epic, especially arbitrariness, anger and *licentia*, cast a shadow over the presentation of Augustus and the Roman deities.

¹³⁸ For the historical links between Jupiter and Octavian, see Feeney 1991, 220.

CHAPTER 3
LUCAN, *PHARSALIA*

Lucan is the most apostrophic of all epic poets.¹ In the *Pharsalia*, there are forty-three apostrophes to gods, in which there are sixteen addresses to *Fortuna*, fifteen to *superi*, six to Apollo, five to Jupiter, and one each to Gradivus, Pallas, Neptune, Vulcan, and *di*.² Almost half of the apostrophes to the gods in Lucan's epic occur in Books 1 and 2, where all but six of the apostrophes to individual gods are found. For as much as the narrator apostrophizes in the *Pharsalia*, he does so to gods only nineteen times, with eight from Caesar, Pompey, or Cato, and sixteen by various other mortal characters. Thirteen of the sixteen apostrophes to gods from characters other than the narrator, Caesar, Pompey, or Cato occur in Books 1 and 2. There is certainly a shift in the use of apostrophes to gods starting in Book 3; they are employed less often, they are usually from the narrator, and they nearly always address the *superi* or *Fortuna*.

Feeney sums up scholarly opinion on the role of the gods in Lucan with his simple statement that Lucan "abandoned the divine machinery."³ But even he cautions that such an assertion cannot allow readers to cease engaging with the gods as they find them in the epic. What he meant by abandonment of the divine machinery is that the traditional gods of epic, the *superi*, do not themselves advance the story. Feeney is right that "statements on the absence of the gods from the poem need...to be cautious

¹ McRoberts 2005, 219-34, counted 155 apostrophes in Lucan, followed by ninety-nine in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and ninety-one in Statius' *Thebaid*.

² The number of addresses to gods do not add up exactly to forty-four since some apostrophes are addressed to more than one god.

³ Feeney 1991, 270.

and exact."⁴ There are two major questions, then, that a critic of Lucan must address concerning the gods, their existence and their function in the epic.

The absence of the "divine machinery" in Lucan does not preclude the existence or involvement of gods in his epic. The reader learns in the opening books that the *superi* exist in both the writer's mind and in those of his characters, that they have emotions and attitudes toward Rome and her (lack of) progress. But Lucan challenges his readers to reach beyond the traditional divine apparatus and admit that the real force behind the advancement of history is *Fortuna*, not a council of *superi* chaired by Jupiter.⁵ *Fortuna* is a divinity in Lucan, and it is toward the recognition of this force that Lucan directs the reader through his rhetoric. Far from losing his narratorial omniscience, to which consequence Tipping suggests Lucan's use of apostrophe leads,⁶ Lucan's apostrophes to the gods reveal his assertion that he knows how history actually proceeds. An examination of the apostrophes to gods in the *Pharsalia* reveals this trend from prayer to the traditional gods to an almost solitary focus on *Fortuna*, the embodiment of the simultaneous meaning and chaos that Bartsch rightly describes as part of Lucan's talent.⁷

Book 1

Panegyric to Nero

Lucan predicts that Nero will one day become a god. At the beginning of his panegyric to Nero, Lucan apostrophizes the gods for the first time:

⁴ Feeney 1991, 273.

⁵ Feeney 1991, 301, notes that the ancient commentators could not do this but instead categorized Lucan's work as history.

⁶ Tipping 2011, 226.

⁷ Bartsch 1997, 134.

Quod si non aliam venturo fata Neroni
invenere viam magnoque aeterna parantur
regna deis caelumque suo servire Tonanti
non nisi saevorum potuit post bella gigantum,
iam nihil, o superi, querimur.⁸ (1.33-37)

But if fate found no other path to the advent of Nero, if it costs much for an everlasting kingdom to be prepared for gods, and if heaven could not serve its Thunderer except after wars among the awful giants, then, O gods above, I no longer complain of anything.

Lucan frustrates the expectation of an apostrophic invocation to a god that the reader has been conditioned throughout literary history to anticipate. Instead, he inserts himself directly into the epic from the first sentence, *canimus* (1.2), and then indirectly as the speaker of apostrophes.⁹

In fact, Lucan has no use for the gods at all in the first thirty-two lines beyond rhetorical flourish. The very first reference to a god is *Titan* (1.15), used as metonymy for the sun. Lucan just asked how much of the known world Rome could have conquered had it not been mired in civil war; lines 15-18 answer the question with the rhetorical flair that epitomizes him. To say that Rome could have conquered the whole world, Lucan refers to east (*Titan* is metonymy for the sun, which rises in the east), west (*nox ubi sidera condit*), south (*quaque dies medius flagrantibus aestuat oris*), and north (*qua bruma rigens ac nescia vere remitti / astringit Scythio glaciale frigore pontum*).

That Lucan has chosen to address the gods collectively as *superi* sets him apart from his recent epic predecessors. His use of metonymy (*Titan*), epithet (*Tonanti*) and myth (*Gigantum*) are conventional, but this particular address to all the gods departs from convention and therefore marks conscious choice. It may not be completely clear

⁸ The text is Housman 1926; all translations are my own.

⁹ For a fascinating analysis of the proem, including a comparison with the beginning of the *Iliad* (Lucan's *canimus* against Homer's ἄειδε), see Conte 1966.

to the reader at this very early point in the epic just what that choice means, but there are already hints, both in the construction of the Latin and in allusions to the end of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Lucan juxtaposes *superi* with *querimur*, associating the gods with complaining. Two of the previous three apostrophes are similarly juxtaposed with negative ideas: *cives* with *furor* (1.8), *Roma* with *nefandi* (1.21).¹⁰ Taken together, these three apostrophes are anticipatory: the citizens will be possessed by madness, Rome will become profane, and the gods will be complained to about it all. The gods are powerless, or at least unwilling to do anything about the civil war or its outcome.¹¹

Wheeler argues persuasively that the panegyric to Nero is part of Lucan's continuation of the *Metamorphoses* because it has the same elements as the panegyric to Augustus at the end of the *Metamorphoses*: a list of civil wars fought to bring the emperor to power, the establishment of world peace, the coming apotheosis of the emperor, and a prayer that the death of the sitting emperor be delayed.¹² It is also the case that both passages apostrophize gods in unique ways. Throughout the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid focuses on the Olympian gods, apostrophizing them only one or two at a time. At the end of Book 15, however, he lists many at once, and specifically Roman ones at that: *di Indigetes, Quirine, Gradive, Vesta, penates, Iuppiter* (*Metamorphoses* 15.862-86). Lucan, for his part, apostrophizes the *superi*, something

¹⁰ See Keith 2011, 133, for a comparison of Lucan's *Quis furor* (1.8) and Ovid's (*Met.* 3.351-52), as well as for a comparison of the structure of Lucan's proem with that of Vergil's *Aeneid*.

¹¹ The other apostrophe in the first thirty-seven lines is *Pyrrhe ferox* (1.30). I have not included this here because *ferox* is a direct epithet of *Pyrrhe*. But even here, the association is a net negative. Roche 2009, 127, notes that *ferocia* "is a positive Roman military virtue...here its application to a foreigner complicates this positive association."

¹² Wheeler 2002, 371-72.

only done four times before him and never before by the narrator.¹³ If this use of apostrophe to gods during a panegyric to the sitting emperor is another way in which Lucan alludes to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, we therefore know that the gods whom Lucan associates with complaint are the Roman gods who are supposed to be charged with the protection of the city, who lay at the heart of Rome's identity.

Lucan has not made these connections overtly, however, because he must be careful of the presence of Nero, both in this section of the introduction and in his actual life. A superficial reading of this passage suggests that fate used the civil wars as a vehicle for the advent of Nero (Lucan skillfully interposed *fata* between *venturo* and *Neroni* at line 33). If, however, Lucan says that *iam nihil, o superi, querimur*, that means he has been complaining; the rise of Nero has not been worth the horrific bloodshed of civil war.

How seriously should the reader take Lucan here? The conjunction *quod si* provides the beginning of the answer, if Gagliardi is correct that this transitional phrase contains a hint of irony.¹⁴ Having only read thirty-three lines, though, the reader cannot yet know but perhaps can pick up the hint that *fata* will not have the same beneficent meaning that it did in Vergil.¹⁵ The word order in *venturo fata Neroni* confirms the reader's pre-conceived notion of Nero, whether the opinion brought into the reading of the epic is positive or negative. The structure and metrical placement of the phrases *venturo fata Neroni* (1.33) and *suo servire Tonanti* (1.35) intensifies the comparison of

¹³ Roche 2009, 133. Vergil apostrophizes *superi* once, Ovid three times. Roche observes that Lucan uses the formula eleven times, five in the voice of the narrator.

¹⁴ Gagliardi 1989, 54.

¹⁵ Gagliardi 1989, 54.

Nero with Jupiter. The word that separates each noun/adjective phrase elucidates the meaning of the phrase; placement at the end of the lines gives them weight. Fate is associated with Nero, servitude with Jupiter.¹⁶ The comparison of Nero and Jupiter is not positive.

By contrast, Horace's *Epode 7* conveys similar thoughts but condemns Rome more forcefully.¹⁷ Without any need for an introduction or a nod to a sitting emperor and operating in the more violent art form of the epode, Horace openly berates his fellow citizens for their headlong rush into civil war. He calls them wicked, *scelesti*, in the very first line and later piles up in a single line a veritable thesaurus of violent words that summarize his opinion of Rome's descent into madness: *furorne caecos an rapit vis acrior* (7.13). By contrast, Lucan scatters similar terminology throughout the introduction, diluting the immediate impact but still establishing a simmering disgruntled tone. For example, compare the vocabulary used in *Epode 7.13* with *Pharsalia 1.8*, *Quis furor, o cives, quae tanta licentia ferri?* While Lucan does lob the indignant *furor* at the beginning of the line as Horace did, he immediately takes the edge off the effect by addressing his fellow citizens as citizens where Horace angrily addresses them as *scelesti*. Lucan then understates the notion of fighting as *licentia ferri*, while Horace minces no words with his *vis acrior*.

Because Lucan's first apostrophic passage to the gods can be read in both complementary and subversive directions, and because the address of *superi* betrays

¹⁶ Roche 2009, 8. According to Gagliardi 1989, 54, a hint of scorn in the reference to Jupiter the Thunderer contributes to the tone of mockery.

¹⁷ Nock 1926, 17, cites Horace *Epode 7* in support of the point that "the blood spent in civil war might have been more usefully employed in the conquest of Rome's enemies is a thought which Lucan did not originate." For other Horatian echoes in Lucan's poem, specifically from the Roman Odes, see Paschalis 1982.

conscious choice, I contend that Lucan intended both readings.¹⁸ Fantham is right that “the irony must be elusive if it is to escape the tyrant’s notice.”¹⁹ A quick skim might satisfy the emperor’s ego, but any thought given to the apostrophes yields an unmistakably subversive, critical interpretation that the panegyric to Nero is biting sarcasm.²⁰ The apostrophes are aligned with negativity, and the Horatian predecessor to this passage strongly condemns civil war, no matter what comes of it. Far from having nothing more to complain about, Lucan has only gotten started.

Caesar Crosses the Rubicon

As soon as Caesar crosses the Rubicon, he stops to recognize the momentous nature of the act. In the middle of his speech, Caesar apostrophizes *Fortuna*:

“Hic,” ait, “hic pacem temerataque iura relinquo;
te, Fortuna, sequor. Procul hinc iam foedera sunt;
credidimus satis his, utendum est iudice bello (1.225-27).”²¹

¹⁸ This conclusion places me in neither of the camps that Dewar 1994, 199, thought neatly split scholarly opinion about this passage. The passage is subversive and critical, but not obviously so, and in it there are also complementary elements. For Dewar, the question is either-or; I contend the possibility of both-and.

¹⁹ Fantham 1992, 13, however, does not ultimately come to my conclusion that the possibility for a double reading is intentional, as she thinks that, “*iam nihil, o superi, querimus* is irreconcilable with the poet’s own protests in 7.440-59 and many other passages.” As I see it, the poet’s intention to associate gods with complaint makes his later apostrophic protests consistent.

²⁰ See Thompson 1964 for a more positive reading of Lucan’s introduction that establishes a link between Lucan’s depiction of the apotheosis of Nero and Seneca’s *Hercules Oetaeus*. For Thompson, such a connection leads to Lucan’s association of Nero with Hercules and therefore a distinctly positive interpretation of the beginning of the epic. Building in part on Thompson’s conclusions, Jenkinson 1974, 9, denies that our passage is sarcastic because it imitates Vergil’s sincerity to his emperor in the *Georgics*. What he misses, however, is that Lucan’s introduction owes as much to *Epode 7*, which is unmistakably full-throated against the recklessness and futility of civil war, as to Vergil and Seneca. Weaving together these disparate influences, Lucan has created a level of plausible deniability to his latent criticism. Zyff 1971, 92, interpreted the apostrophe as sarcastic, but only in retrospect after cataloguing later apostrophes to *superi* as associated with *nefas*.

²¹ Housman apparently is alone in his conjecture that *his* is a better reading than *fatis*. Getty 1940, 58, disagreeing with this reading, noted that “*Fortuna* and *fatis* seem to be synonymous here.” So also Dick 1967, 236, Feeney 1991, 280, and Long 2007, 185. Friedrich 1938, 408, provides a blanket assumption that it does not matter for Lucan whether one follows *fortuna* or *fata* or *superi*: “Für Lucan ist es also ziemlich einerlei, ob er von jemandem sagt: *fortunam sequitur* oder *fata* oder *superos sequitur*.” Wuilleumier and LeBonniec 1962, 50, think the change was “arbitraire et cacophonique.” But Housman’s conjecture is preferable because it preserves and intensifies Caesar’s rejection of *foedera* by placing it in

“He said, ‘Here, here I leave behind peace and the law that I have now violated.’²² I follow you, Fortuna. Let our agreements be far from here now; we have entrusted enough to them, and war must now be used as an arbiter.”

As Dick reminds us, Lucan is not presenting a historical Caesar who perhaps only uttered “The die is cast” as he crossed the Rubicon stream.²³ Caesar’s speech is fabrication on Lucan’s part, meant to help characterize him within the epic. His apostrophe to *Fortuna* therefore has particular weight. This is the first time that *Fortuna* is addressed, commencing the association of Caesar and *Fortuna* through the rest of the poem.²⁴ Lucan has used some form of the word *fortuna* five times already,²⁵ the first two of which establish *Fortuna* as a powerful reality which possesses all, *quae mare, quae terras, quae totum possidet orbem* (1.110). *Fortuna*, though, is not the same thing as fate, characterless and indiscriminate.²⁶ Lucan has already established

opposition to *bello* as the new arbiter of the dispute, *iudice*. Roche 2009, 221, agrees that some emendation from *fatis* is necessary to keep “the strength of the contrast with *bello*,” but emends with *paci*. Furthermore, the distinct tenses of *sequor* and *credidimus* establish a contrast between what Caesar has already tried and in what he now trusts. *Fatis* muddies the more distinct characterization of *Fortuna* that Lucan has already taken pains to establish.

²² Getty 1940, 58, interprets *temerata* as violated “already by Pompey and the senatorial party.” Because the juxtaposition of *iura relinquo* and *te, Fortuna, sequor* indicate self-conscious intention, I believe that *temerata* refers to Caesar’s own violation of *iura*; he no longer cares about that and consciously dedicates himself wholly to *Fortuna*. Murdock’s 1970 dissertation on *Fatum* and *Fortuna* in Lucan cites and summarizes this passage in a list of references to *Fortuna* in speeches, but does not discuss the passage at all.

²³ Dick 1967, 238.

²⁴ Ahl 1976, 290-91, points out that the connection between Caesar and *Fortuna* leaves out the usual connection between Caesar and Venus. Ahl discusses the close association between Venus and *Fortuna* in the Roman mind, taking the Venus dice throw as one example, so the absence of Venus here is noteworthy.

²⁵ 1.84, 1.111, 1.124, 1.135, 1.160.

²⁶ Gagliardi 1989, 76, tends to this direction when he says that Caesar entrusts himself to *Fortuna* because he has received no favorable signs from either the gods or destiny. Helzle’s short 1991 article on Lucan 1.225-27 cites Cicero’s, Vergil’s, and Seneca’s attempts to distinguish between *fata* and *Fortuna*. Feeney 1991, 280, notes that vocabulary of destiny and randomness, such as *Fortuna* and *fata*, are often used in close proximity with one another.

Fortuna as able to bestow a sense of envy, *commodat...invidiam Fortuna suam* (1.83-84). In that sense, he draws upon the ancient understanding of *Fortuna* as a *numen* that presides over human success.²⁷ *Fortuna* is powerful, it causes envy, and it has influence over all things. It is to this *numen* that Caesar has dedicated himself, not a Rome that actually addressed him just before he crossed the Rubicon. *Roma* warned that Caesar must stop if he came lawfully, *iure* (1.191); the very placement of *iura* and *Fortuna* in Caesar's soliloquy demonstrates *Fortuna's* precedence over Rome and her *iura*. At the end of line 225, Caesar declares that he leaves behind the law. Because *iura relinquo* comes at the end of the line, and it represents the end of a complete sentence, there follows a pause, dramatic due to the significance of the scene and its recall of Rome's self-association with *iure*. Immediately after this pause, Caesar says directly and unambiguously, *te, Fortuna, sequor*. Caesar knows exactly what he is doing; he is turning away from Rome and her association with law, and turning toward *Fortuna* and her association with *invidia* and her rule over all things.²⁸

Caesar Invades Italy

While Caesar's apostrophe to *Fortuna* recalls her ability to bestow success upon fortunate mortals, the next one emphasizes that what *Fortuna* gives to one, she exacts from another. After Caesar and his army cross the Rubicon, they sack the town of Ariminum. Lucan then characterizes the sentiment of the people. Their complaint to *Fortuna* is surrounded by the *silence* of their complaint, (*mutos...questos*, 1.247, before

²⁷ Canter 1922, 65-66. Though old, Canter's article provides an introduction on the development of *Fortuna*, including the fact that the emperors, starting with Augustus, honored *Fortuna* as a divinity.

²⁸ Sklenář 2003, 128, goes one step further. Because *ius* is a principle "that cannot withstand the violation of the boundary, and Caesar is not unmindful of the enormity of such an act," Caesar does not merely turn away from Rome, he willfully desecrates it. *Fortuna*, then, is portrayed as an ally in this desecration.

it and *gemitu...latenti / non ausus timuisse palam*, 1.257-58, after). Such grievances were unsafe to utter openly the moment that the original Caesar crossed the Rubicon, changing civil discourse forever. The plaintive exclamation with which the people's thought begins, *O male...O tristi* (1.248-49), opens rhetorical space that the apostrophe to *Fortuna* widens: *Melius, Fortuna, dedisses / orbe sub Eoo sedem gelidaque sub arcto / errantesque domos, Latii quam claustra tueri* (1.251-53), "Fortuna, it would have been better had you granted us a home under the Eastern sky and the chilly North, and to guard wandering homes instead of the gates of Latium."

The narrator says openly what he characterizes the people of Ariminum as not being able to say, namely that *Fortuna* actively works for Caesar and against everyone else, against justice: *iustos Fortuna laborat / esse ducis motus et causas invenit armis* (1.265-66). The people's apostrophe to *Fortuna*, widening the rhetorical space provided by their pathetic opening exclamation, not only provides Lucan with an opportunity later to act as the people's spokesman, to say openly to the reader what the people could merely think, but also serves as an antithesis to Caesar's *Fortuna*.²⁹ Furthermore, *Fortuna* has now been established as an active force in the epic, deciding winners and losers, and so also who may and may not have a voice.

Omens I

Book 1 ends with three figures who have the ability to see and interpret for the fear-stricken Roman populace the terrifying omens that overwhelm the city (and the reader). All three, two invented characters (Arruns and the *matrona*) and the historical

²⁹ Roche 2009, 229, lone among the commentators to mention the apostrophe to *Fortuna* at line 251, notes that this apostrophe foreshadows "the narrator's impassioned appeal after the battle of Pharsalus at 7.645f...providing a structural connection in *BC* between the taking of Ariminum and the military climax of the war."

Figulus, apostrophize the gods as they recoil in horror at the truth that they hesitate to reveal.³⁰ To bestow the greatest venerable authority and reverence upon the first seer, Lucan introduces the Etruscan *haruspex* Arruns at the end of an exhaustive list of Roman religious figures, from the Vestals to the Salii to the priests of Cybele (1.584-604). When he performs the sacrifice, Arruns is portrayed as faithful in every detail of the ritual (1.605-13), the pious observance of which makes him all the more trustworthy to both the Romans and to the reader. Lucan overwhelms the hallowed observance of ritual and stereotypical respect for ancient religious tradition by spending almost twice as many lines (sixteen, 1.614-29) illustrating in gruesome detail the gross entrails of the sacrificial victim as he did the description of Arruns' careful following of the ritual (nine, 1.605-13). By making the portents in the sacrificial victim so disgusting and by making the reader see them in the same way as his aged priestly character, he transforms the reader, in Ovidian fashion, into a *haruspex* with not only the same interpretive powers as Arruns, but the same horrified reaction. By the time Arruns apostrophizes the *superi* and Jupiter, the reader has come to identify with his conclusions and his reaction:

Exclamat, "Vix fas, superi, quaecumque movetis,
 prodere me populis; nec enim tibi, summe, litavi,
 Iuppiter, hoc sacrum, caesique in pectora tauri
 inferni venere dei. Non fanda timemus;
 sed venient maiora metu. Di visa secudent,
 et fibris sit nulla fides; sed conditor artis
 finxerit ista Tages." (1.631-37)

He exclaims, "It is scarcely right, O gods above, that I reveal to the people whatever you are setting in motion; I have apparently not made this offering acceptable to you, highest Jupiter, and the gods below have come into the

³⁰ Lucan did not, of course, invent the name Arruns. In *Aeneid* 11, Arruns is the name of the young man who slays Camilla, and in Livy 1.56, Arruns is one of the sons of Tarquinius Superbus who goes to visit the oracle at Delphi. Dick 1963, 38 n. 4, speculates that Lucan could have gotten the idea for the Etruscan name from Livy, where the name appears several times in different contexts (e.g., 2.6, son of Tarquinius; 2.14, son of Porsenna; 5.33, a Clusian who guided the Gauls over the Alps).

heart of this stricken bull. We fear unspeakable things; but things greater than what we fear will come. May the gods turn what we have seen favorable, and may these entrails have no certainty; but instead may Tages, the founder of our art, have misrepresented these things."

A venerable old seer has been summoned by every major religious element of Rome from a place associated with the very foundation of the city; every detail of his ritual has been observed to the letter and with the deepest reverence. Adding to the sense of dread reverence, Lucan sprinkles the Vergilian technical phrase *litavi sacrum* and his archaic revival of the particle *enim* into Arruns' speech.³¹ He is so horrified that he shouts out these lines, coloring them with a word, *exclamat*, that Lucan only uses to introduce one other speech in the whole epic, and in a stuttering, halting fashion.³² It is impossible that Arruns could have offended Jupiter if Jupiter were kindly disposed to Rome, so careful and pious was everything leading up to the sacrifice. There can be no doubt whatsoever now that the *superi* and Jupiter have utterly turned against Rome. In the mouth of the impeccably righteous Arruns, the apostrophes to *superi* and Jupiter serve to pit the traditional gods against Rome and, without directly saying so (because it is not safe to?), censure them for their betrayal.

Omens II

Next to observe and interpret omens is the historical figure Publius Nigidius Figulus, a Neo-Pythagorean diviner known also in his day for his writings on the

³¹ Getty 1940, 116, and Wuilleumier/LeBonniec 1962, 107, cite *Aeneid* 4.50, *sacrisque litatis*, in connection with this passage. Roche 2009, 358, helpfully notes how Vergil renewed the "original and archaic" use of *enim* as "an asseverative particle...= ὃν," as well as that *litare* is a "technical religious term."

³² Roche 2009, 357-58, notes that Lucan uses *exclamat* to introduce only this speech and Laelius'. He alone of the major commentators mentions the "disjointed word order" and its effect. More importantly, if Dick 1963, 38, is correct that Arruns was probably an invention of Lucan's, then the near-exclusive use of *exclamat* with Arruns is surely a sign of the importance of the seer's speech, if not the identification of Arruns' hesitation to speak plainly with the narrator's.

interpretation of all manner of omens, from augury and dreams to extispicy and astrology.³³ Lucan produces Figulus as his specialist in astrology (*cui deos secretaque caeli / nosse fuit*, 1.639-40), just as he invents Arruns as his specialist in extispicy. During his speech, already heightened in emotional urgency by many rhetorical questions, Figulus apostrophizes the gods three times; he ends his speech with an apostrophe to Rome.

The apostrophes parallel a progression from general observations of the heavens to the specific conclusion that Rome will only be free while it is mired in civil war. Figulus sees right away that the stars are not at all favorable: *Quod cladis genus, o superi, qua peste paratis / saevitiam* (1.649-50)? "What sort of slaughter are you preparing, O gods above, for what destruction do you prepare your rage?" The sentence is notable for its structural imbalance, which suggests trembling and fear on Figulus' part.³⁴ It is interesting to note that at the outset of his speech, Figulus articulates a revealing assumption about the workings of the universe: either the heavens wander aimlessly without divine intent (which can then be interpreted by mortals), or they move in a way calculated by the gods to reveal their favor or disfavor to the world. The imbalance of Figulus' first apostrophe suggests that the astrologer is a true believer, else he would not reveal such emotion.³⁵ Again, the apostrophe draws in

³³ Getty 1940, 117.

³⁴ Roche 2009, 368 notes that the clauses are imbalanced. Getty 1940, 118, cites Housman's reference to Vergil's similarly uneven *Georgics* 4.505. Wuilleumier and LeBonniec 1962, 110, also cites *Georgics* 4.505. None of the three commentators, however, attempt to analyze the effect of the arrangement.

³⁵ Several scholars have tried to interpret the exact date and events portended by the precise information given by Figulus, with the resulting consensus (according to Lewis 1998, 382) that the horoscope represents an actual one given by Figulus in 50 B.C. The consequence would be that Figulus was deliberately inaccurate in order to give his own negative vision of the future, or that Lucan simply used the figure of Figulus as the means by which to give another series of terrible omens. In a very important article, Lewis proves that the astrological *katarche*, "horoscope of the moment," given by Figulus is

the reader and involves him in that same fear. The reader is made to wonder which is worse, a world without discernable laws or a world governed by malevolent gods who have inexplicably turned their backs on it.³⁶

Continuing in his vein of fearful belief, Figulus next apostrophizes Apollo directly in his manifestation as the sun god and in connection with the constellation Leo, the position of which would have had relevance for astrologers: *Si saevum radiis Nemeaeum, Phoebae, Leonem / nunc premeres, toto fluerent incendia mundo / succensusque tuis flagrasset curribus aether* (1.655-57). "If you were now pressing on the fierce Nemean lion with your rays, Phoebus, fires would be flowing over the whole earth and the upper air would have blazed, scorched by your chariot." Ruling out a direct conflagration of the earth, Figulus settles on the earth's destruction by war and forthwith apostrophizes Mars by his archaic Roman title of Gradivus: *Tu, qui flagrante minacem / Scorpion incendis cauda chelasque peruris, / quid tantum, Gradive, paras* (1.658-60)? "And you, who set on fire the menacing Scorpion with blazing tail and burn up its claws, what such great thing are you preparing, Gradivus?"³⁷ The address of Mars by his distinctively Roman name brings Figulus' interpretation from the general

actually that of the birth of Nero. Figulus' trepidation and fear takes on a second level of meaning in this context.

³⁶ Dick 1963, 39, asserts that "Lucan has put his own feelings about religion and politics into the mouth of Figulus."

³⁷ Getty 1940, 120, compares this with Vergil, *Aen.* 5.14, *Quidve, pater Neptune, paras?* Roche 2009, 370-71, following Getty and Housman, discusses Gradivus only as "the presence of Mars within Scorpio." As such, Roche considers this an address of a planet, not an address of a god: "This direct address of the planets within a *katarche* is apparently unique in the surviving horoscopal literature, both actual and fictional." (On the astrological details behind the Figulus episode, see Getty 1941.) Even so, the "benevolent planets" Jupiter, Venus, and Mercury are given only a couple of lines and certainly not apostrophized. There is much more emotion attached to the apostrophes of Apollo and Gradivus, emotion that matches the crisis and that is meant to draw in the reader.

("What are you gods preparing?") to the specific ("It is war, and specifically Roman war").

Though not to a deity, Figulus' fourth apostrophe in his speech is to Rome itself, bringing the coming destruction out of the heavens, since it is useless to ask the gods to put an end to it (*Et superos quid prodest poscere finem?*, 1.669), down from the gods and onto the city itself. In another sense, Figulus has come full circle in his speech, from the possibility that the universe is governed by no benevolent law, through the gods who prepare harm for humanity, and ultimately to a stark world in which slavery under tyranny (*Cum domino pax ista venit*, 1.670) can only be averted by the continuation of civil war, toward which his apostrophes to gods all point.

Omens III

A third figure, fictional like Arruns, is introduced to offer an interpretation of the awful events to come, an ordinary matron. She is unlike the professionals Arruns and Figulus but is the one who offers, like a Cassandra, the most straightforward and precise account of the immanent war. She apostrophizes Apollo in two of his manifestations, as Paeon, bringer of disease or healing, and as Phoebus, god of prophecy.³⁸ Since Lucan has already likened the matron to a Bacchant (*plena Lyaeo*, 1.675), her apostrophe to Paeon eliminates the possibility of Paeon-as-healer: *Quo feror, o Paeon?*, "To where do I bring myself, Paeon (1.678)?" The content of the question and the address of the opposite-natured Paeon implies uncertainty combined with a futile hope for a better outcome, and the combined apostrophe and rhetorical

³⁸ Getty 1940, 123, Wuilleumier/LeBonniec 1962, 113, and Gagliardi 1989, 125, take the epithet as "the healer," an interpretation that would inject irony into the scene, not least due to the juxtaposition of *furor*, "madness," and an epithet of Apollo having to do with healing. This could also reveal an assumption that the gods will ultimately be beneficent, an assumption that is not only quickly dispelled in this passage as the matron is shown the future, but throughout the epic.

question contributes a note of despairing frenzy. As the matron reveals the actual future, it becomes the case that there is no uncertainty at all, but rather a terrifying and unalterable certainty. In fact, it is not so much that the matron predicts the future, as she is reporting directly what she has been shown, when she is borne aloft and sees the various battlefields from above, *me super aethera raptam...terra*. (1.678-79) In this sense, Lucan has injected himself into the narrative like Cassandra.

The matron asks Apollo, the god of poetry--and by extension, Lucan, his agent--to reveal details of the civil war: *Quis furor hic, o Phoebus, doce, quo tela manusque / Romanae miscent acies, bellumque sine hoste est?* "Tell me what madness this is, Phoebus Apollo, where Roman lines mingle their spears and bands, and where there is war without an enemy (1.681-82)?" Gagliardi points out that the narrator begins line 8 of the proem with *Quis furor* in the same emphatic beginning line position,³⁹ with the effect of framing the book in self-inflicted madness. Extispicy and astrology point to the dreaded truth, but Apollo reveals it directly, just as Lucan attempted to reveal it at the beginning of the book. In this sense the apostrophe to Apollo can be considered programmatic, indicating the role of prophets in the epic. In the lines following this apostrophe to Apollo, the matron reveals details about where important battles will be fought, from Africa to the Alps. She closes with a last apostrophe to Apollo: *Vidi iam, Phoebus, Philippos*. "I have already seen Philippi, Phoebus Apollo," (1.694). The brevity of the apostrophe gives it power, as does the final word *Philippos*, with which utterance the matron passes out, exhausted by Apollo's possession of her; the reader is meant to

³⁹ Gagliardi 1989, 125. Roche 2009, 385, also implies how *Quis furor* frames the book by referring his reader to his original note (113) on *furor* as "a standard trope for civil dissension or war." See Hershkowitz 1998 on how individual epic poets define *furor* differently. To compare only Lucan and Vergil, for instance, Lucan's *furor* is defined from the beginning as human madness; Vergil's as divine anger (199).

do likewise with the knowledge and implication of her terrible, immutable foresight. Dick, adopting the orthodox interpretation that the matron is a symbol for the Republic, suggests that the matron collapses because it is too frightening to continue the prophecy, and so the narrator summons the strength to pick up the story at the start of Book 2.⁴⁰

Book 2

Introduction

By the end of Book 1, there is no doubt that what is to come is terrible (*iamque irae patuere deum*, 2.1). If the inherent wickedness of Caesar's invasion of Italy is not enough, however, Caesar's destructive ambition is made all the worse by the cruel joke that the gods are playing on humankind: foreknowledge of the coming war. Lucan begins Book 2 by appearing to censure Jupiter for toying with humanity in this way; the two apostrophes to Jupiter indicate exasperation and helplessness over the role of the gods in unfolding the bloody demise of the Republic.

At first, Lucan attributes the clear portents of war (*manifesta belli signa*, 2.1-2) to the anger of the gods (*irae deum*, 2.1), but then seems to declare ultimate ignorance about the actual role of the gods by positing opposing philosophies about fate. The narrator's first apostrophe in the opening lines of Book 2 is addressed to the "ruler of Olympus," and so assumes that Jupiter at least controls what humans may know about the future and when they may know it: *Cur hanc tibi, rector Olympi, / sollicitis visum mortalibus addere curam, / noscant venturas ut dira per omina clades* (2.4-5)? "Why

⁴⁰ Dick 1963, 41. Though he cites Bruère's 1950 article which claims that the matron's visions anticipated the ultimate scope of Lucan's unfinished epic, Dick stops just short of endorsing the whole of Bruère's hypothesis, settling on the observation that the matron's revelations anticipate battles and incidents in the actual text that we possess.

did it seem right for you, ruler of Olympus, to add this worry to anxious mortals, that they may know through horrible omens the coming slaughter?" *Rector Olympi* is interposed between *hanc (curam)* and *sollicitis (mortalibus)* in order to associate Jupiter's guidance with worry and anxiety, and so to mock, as Fantham puts it, "the Stoic vision of a world controlled by a benevolent divinity obedient to the fates."⁴¹ As in Ovid, *rector Olympi* is not a Homeric epithet of respect and deference, but an indicator of exasperated contempt.⁴² Instead, it is the *sollicitis mortalibus* whose Homeric echo contributes to a sense of sympathy.⁴³

After the narrator opposes a Stoic and Epicurean teleology,⁴⁴ he inserts an exasperated apostrophe: *sit subitum, quodcumque paras; sit caeca futuri / mens hominum fati; liceat sperare timentis* (2.14-15). "Whatever you are preparing, let it be sudden; let the mind of man be blind to its future fate; let the fearful man be allowed to hope." Though the narrator has just injected some doubt about the existence of a *rector*, the second person address here reveals that Lucan is still clinging to that possibility in a way that Figulus did not at 1.642-45 when he speculated that either there

⁴¹ Fantham 1992, 80.

⁴² Fantham 1992, 80, notes that Ovid used *rector Olympi* in *Metamorphoses* 2.61. There, *rector Olympi* is used ironically in a passage that emphasizes a limitation of Jupiter, that he was unwilling or unable to drive the Sun's chariot. Furthermore, Zyroff 1971, 99, points out that Lucan's tone is "revolutionary for epic tradition...Whereas other poets might invoke a god at the start of a new book, Lucan omits all formulaic praise and instead immediately puts the god on the defensive."

⁴³ Fantham 1992, 80, cites similar echoes of Homer's "miserable mortals" (*Iliad* 24.525) in Lucretius (*miseris mortalibus*, 5.944) and Vergil (*miseris mortalibus*, *Georgics* 3.66; *mortalibus aegris*, *Georgics* 1.237 and *Aeneid* 12.850). In fact, Lucan's use of the phrase has in common with Homer's an implied dichotomy between uncaring gods, ἀκηδέες (24.526) and poor mortals, δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσι (24.525).

⁴⁴ Or as Dick 1967, 236, puts it, Fate or Fortune, *fatorum immoto...limite* or *fors incerta vagatur* (*Pharsalia* 2.11-12). On the same page, however, he confesses that Lucan uses a wide range of meanings for *fatum* and *fortuna*, and that "one cannot expect a poet to conform to a fixed terminology."

is no fixed law governing the universe or destruction has been prepared for it.⁴⁵ On the one hand, the exasperation behind *quodcumque paras* implies that Lucan seems not to care which version of fate is correct; on the other hand, he again adheres to the Stoic version by speaking in terms of hope and fear, emotions the Stoic considered harmful.⁴⁶ What he has let go of in this passage is any notion that the *rector Olympi*, if he exists, is benevolently disposed to humanity.⁴⁷

Mourning in Rome I

Once the omens and prophecies make clear that civil war is coming to Rome, the city gives itself to grief. As the young men set out for their camps, they collectively "pour out justified complaints against the cruel gods, *effundunt iustas in numina saeva querellas* (2.44). Lucan gives approval to what the men are about to say when he describes their *querellas* as *iustas* and censures the gods by calling them *saeva*. It is not fighting *per se* that the men are against, as they would gladly fight the whole world (whose furthest races they list at 2.48-55), but fighting against fellow Romans: *Non pacem petimus, superi: date gentibus iras / nunc urbes excite feras...omnibus hostes / reddite nos populis: civile avertite bellum* (2.47-48, 52-53). "We do not ask for peace, O gods above: give anger to the foreign peoples, now rouse uncivilized cities...give us back as enemies to all peoples: but turn aside civil war." The apostrophe to the gods

⁴⁵ Dick 1963, 39, discusses how it was safer for Lucan to put into Figulus' mouth a more clearly pessimistic prophecy than for him to reveal himself overtly at the beginning of Book 2. But both Figulus and Lucan say essentially the same thing, that "fate is inexorable, fortune uncertain and erratic" (Dick 1967, 236).

⁴⁶ Fantham 1992, 82. Ahl 1976, 232-33, considers the philosophical question unresolved and agrees that, because it would be "too close to the conventional epic mode" to blame Jupiter completely for civil war, the helplessness of Jupiter serves to point the reader toward the philosophical question.

⁴⁷ See Zyroff 1971, 100: "Thus we see the tradition of pious appeal to the god ironically used to assail the god."

here censures them as anti-Vergilian, not giving to Rome what is appropriate to Rome, proper enemies to conquer.

At this point, the men apostrophize the gods and Jupiter in particular out of indignation:

Vel, perdere nomen
si placet Hesperium, superi, conlatus in ignes
plurimus ad terram per fulmina decidat aether.
Saeve parens, utrasque simul partesque ducesque,
dum nondum meruere, feri. (2.56-60)

Or if it pleases you to destroy the name of Hesperia, O gods above, let all the firmament, gathered into flames, crash down to the earth as thunderbolts. Cruel father, strike together each faction and their leaders while they have not yet earned it.

The men use a form of the same adjective to describe Jupiter as the narrator did to describe the gods, *saeve*; the narrator, then, is speaking through the men. The epithet *saeve* operates on two levels: Jupiter is savage because of his ability to destroy using his trademark thunderbolt, but cruel because he is not using that power to destroy the guilty.⁴⁸ And just as the first apostrophe to *superi* pleads to the gods that they would gladly serve for the greater glory of Rome, so also does their second when they express their preference that the whole world burn up than that they have to fight against fellow Romans. The apostrophes to the gods indicate that everything is all wrong, and that the gods are cruel for allowing it.

Mourning in Rome II

Once the men going off to the war have had their say, next come their fathers. The spokesperson for this group, consistent with its greater experience, recounts

⁴⁸ Fantham 1992, 89.

another instigator of civil war upon whom *Fortuna* intermittently smiled, Marius.⁴⁹ The old man apostrophizes *Fortuna* as he recalls how Marius, once victorious over foreign enemies (as the young men going off to war said they wanted to be), escaped death to become victorious again in civil war (and then defeated again): *Stagna avidi texere soli laxaeque paludes / depositum, Fortuna, tuum* (2.71-72). "Pools of greedy earth and loose marshes covered what you had put there, Fortune." In the context of Marius, victorious and defeated, and back and forth again, *Fortuna* is indiscriminate and changing.⁵⁰ Because the reader knows the fate of Caesar, both victorious and defeated by enemies foreign and domestic, the parallel cannot not be lost. Because the original Caesar is ultimately slain, there can lay hidden here a hint of optimism that the current Caesar, Nero, may not always be smiled upon by *Fortuna*, but ultimately come upon the same ending as both Marius and Caesar.

At the end of his speech, after a gruesome description of the mutilation of Marius and the deaths of the proscribed, the speaker compares the current combatants, Pompey and Caesar, with the earlier ones: *Hos alio, Fortuna, vocas, olimque potentes / concurrunt* (2.230-31). "To another place do you summon these, Fortuna, and they clash though being in power for some time." The speaker apostrophizes *Fortuna* at the beginning of the speech when he begins speaking of Marius, and again at the end as he makes the comparison with Pompey and Caesar. By composing the speech with *Fortuna* in such emphatic positions, *Fortuna* is not used arbitrarily, but to show how *Fortuna* embraces and directs everything, and to help answer the question that Lucan

⁴⁹ Fantham 1992, 91, commenting on the length of the old man's speech, the longest in the epic (lines 67-232), writes that "in the sequence of Romans of each age and sex who have voiced their distress at civil war, the experience of the older generation gives this man's reminiscences a prophetic force."

⁵⁰ On the apostrophe, Fantham 1992, 94, writes only that "Marius is a favorite of Fortune."

posed at the beginning of Book 2, whether, as Dick put it, "chance or destiny presides over the government of the universe."⁵¹ Though the speaker believes that *Fortuna* summons Pompey and Caesar to a place different from Marius and Sulla, that place cannot be anything good for Rome if his detailed recall of Marius and Sulla's fight is any indication. *Fortuna* is the driving force behind the unfolding of these current events, and she is, if not overtly malevolent to Rome, then at best indifferent. After all, Pompey and Caesar have had power for some time already, *olim potentes*, so power alone is not the end for *Fortuna*, but, by implication, something either more sinister or indiscriminate.⁵² Furthermore, if Ahl is correct, then "when Fortune becomes the driving force of an epic...the question of the propriety of individual actions can be raised more comfortably."⁵³ The emphatic apostrophes of *Fortuna* at both ends of the longest character speech of the epic cannot be ignored. Pompey and Caesar are not mentioned by name in the latter apostrophe, but only pointed to, *hos*. The old man speaking censures Marius and Sulla at a suitably safe distance, and so Lucan leaves it to the reader to make the connection from Marius and Sulla to Pompey and Caesar to the current regime from an equally safe distance.

⁵¹ Dick 1967, 236. In his article, he tries to delineate a difference between *fatum* and *fortuna*, that "Fate is inexorable, fortune uncertain and erratic." Marius (2.131-3) is used as one instance in which both terms are used to clarify this difference. Dick believes that it is ultimately unclear which one controls the force of history, as "a study of isolated passages would be futile" (237), though the passage considered here points to *Fortuna* having that power. Ahl 1974, 581, on the other hand, does assert *Fortuna* as "the force of historical destiny...a force external to man which confers its blessings upon individual countries and individual men, but which is unpredictable enough to appear whimsical and inscrutable."

⁵² Fantham's 1992, 121, note on this line focuses on *olim* in *olim potentes*, asserting that "the present leaders...have grown worse with long-held power."

⁵³ Ahl 1974, 582.

Cato's House I

After speeches from unnamed representatives of the men who will be doing the fighting and dying, the mothers of these men, and the elders whose memories of the earlier civil wars are still vibrant, the scene shifts abruptly to the specific characters of Brutus and Cato. In his address to Cato, Brutus portrays him as the only Roman remaining who will not go to war because he is guilty of crime or profligacy, but whom the war will make guilty as it comes to him. Brutus' speech begins in a relatively calm fashion as he pledges to follow whatever Cato thinks it is best to do. But then he uses four rhetorical questions in a space of eleven lines (2.247-57) as he contemplates the prospect that Cato's virtue will be compromised by his descent into the maelstrom of civil war on either side. At this heightened rhetorical point he apostrophizes the gods in a brief prayer: *Ne tantum, o superi, liceat feralibus armis, / has etiam movisse manus* (2.260-61). "May it not even be permitted, O gods above, for deadly arms to have moved even these hands."

At the approximate midpoint of his speech, the apostrophe serves as its rhetorical apex. It is not so important, then, what Brutus ends up doing as that Cato is somehow able to preserve his singular *virtus* in the midst of such madness.⁵⁴ But in spite of Brutus' prayer, Cato will enter the war on Pompey's side and will yet be made guilty by his participation in the war; his *virtus* will be compromised with the implication that there will be none left in Rome. Cato is supposed to embody a Stoic ideal, but to live out that ideal would necessitate that Cato withdraw from public life instead of being drawn into the clear evil presented by Caesar and Pompey. This Stoic ideal, then, will be

⁵⁴ Fantham 1992, 129, tends to this conclusion when she writes that "Cato's involvement is seen as an escalation of evil beyond the existing evil bloodshed."

disappointed.⁵⁵ It is entirely appropriate, therefore, for this futile prayer to be shrouded in the emotional intensity provided by the apostrophe, which in turn is amplified by its position in the speech. The apostrophe provides a space to reflect on the philosophical bind entangling Cato and even to question whether an ethical solution exists.

Cato's House II

The composition of the full line of narration that introduces Cato's reply to Brutus, 2.285, cloaks Cato in reverence: *Sic fatur; at illi / arcano sacras reddit Cato pectore voces*. The golden line arrangement allows Lucan to juxtapose the adjectives *arcano* and *sacras*, which respectively modify *pectore* and *voces*. Cato's heart is hallowed and what he says is holy; it is as though a god were speaking.⁵⁶ In fact, Cato seems to transcend even that position as he passes censure against the gods: *crimen erit superis et me fecisse nocentem* (2.288), "it will be a judgment against the gods above that they made even me guilty." Cato will be *nocentem* because he will take part in the war on Pompey's side. His apostrophe to the gods punctuates his assertion that, as a Roman, he cannot avoid becoming involved in the coming conflict: *procul hunc arcete furorem, / o superi, motura Dahas ut clade Getasque / securo me Roma cadat* (2.295-97).⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Lintott 1971, 495, shows how Brutus' expressed judgments about the combatants' motivations for civil war, greed or domination, are also found in Seneca. George 1991 has an excellent discussion on how Stoics varied in their opinion of the degree to which the wise man could or should participate in public life. If Lucan's own opinion was that of Brutus', then not only was he grappling with the question himself, but hoped that the ideal was for the withdrawal of the wise man from public involvement.

⁵⁶ Fantham 1992, 132, helpfully points out that "*voces sacrae* normally came from a god," and that *arcanus* can sometimes describe personal secrets (as in Horace, *Satires* 2.1.30 and Vergil, *Aeneid* 4.422), but also mysteries of religion or magic (as in Horace, *Epodes* 5.52 and *Odes* 3.2.27). On the whole, Fantham reads Cato's reply like that of an oracle.

⁵⁷ Fantham 1992, 133, agrees with Håkanson's 1979 emendation of *furorem* with *pudorem*. I, however, see no issue with the repetition of *furorem* from the same line-ending position three lines previously; in fact, to emend with *pudorem* would be to rob the passage of crucial meaning. Not to care about the destruction of Rome through the evil of civil war is better described as madness, just as the narrator himself has labeled it from the beginning of the epic. Ahl 1976, 242-43, contrasts this passage with *De Rerum Natura* 2.1-6, Lucretius' assertion of the pleasure of disinvolvement. Given George's 1991

"Keep this madness far away, O gods above, that I will not care about the fall of Rome, as it prepares to set in motion the Dahae and the Getae with slaughter." Though Cato uses the same *superi* in both sentences, the apostrophe is used not so much as a prayer, but akin to the modern use of "God forbid." Like the apostrophe that Brutus used, Cato employs three rhetorical questions (2.289-95) as a crescendo that builds to the apostrophic climax, to express as self-evident the proposition that emotion is natural. While on the one hand the apostrophe marks a didactic climax, on the other hand it marks the low point of the devolution of theistic terminology. The narrative introduction of Cato bestows on him a godly mantle. From that height of virtuous authority he reproaches the *superi* for bringing him into the evil of civil war, and therefore eliminates any possibility that the *superi* have any sense of virtue. Without that, all the *superi* have left is to be a source of rhetorical flourish for Cato to use as he makes a didactic point about the nature of man. Human beings can be sanctified by virtue,⁵⁸ virtue has nothing to do with the gods. Cato's apostrophe provides a space to call into question the nature of the gods and their role in human affairs without doing so directly.

Pompey Speaks to His Men

In the space of only sixteen lines (2.462-77), the narrator has recounted how six of Pompey's generals have been defeated or fled, one after another in rapid succession.

exposition of the various degrees of possible Stoic involvements in public life, it is not necessary to box Cato into the rigid doctrine of Stoic *apatheia*, as Fantham does in order to make the proposed emendation work. Most powerfully, Bartsch 1997, 52-53, uses this passage as one example of Lucan's use of repetition to highlight "contradictory notions by using a noun in divergent senses in such proximity that the clash cannot but be noticed." In line 292, *furorem* refers to civil war, but in this apostrophe, it is *furorem* for a Roman worth his salt *not* to participate in one that involves his own country.

⁵⁸ In fact, Cato himself is cloaked in the title *iustitiae cultor* (2.389) not long after this passage.

The ensuing description of the capture of a seventh general, Domitius, culminates in the narrative characterization of his pardon by Caesar as a terrible humiliation, as Roman honor demands a noble death instead of an unconditional release. The combination of swift defeats and humiliation lend an air of pathetic, almost comic futility to Pompey's words as he tries to inspire confidence in his men at 2.531-95. In the very middle of this speech, Pompey apostrophizes *Fortuna* as yet having a sense of shame: *Non tam caeco trahis omnia cursu, / teque nihil, Fortuna, pudet* (2.567-68). "You do not draw everything by so blind a course, nor, Fortuna, does nothing shame you."⁵⁹ Interestingly, the narrator recently exclaimed that *Fortuna* failed to respect *Romano pudori* when Caesar pardoned Domitius instead of killing him: *Heu quanto melius vel caede peracta / parcere Romano potuit Fortuna pudori!* (2.517-18) The narrative descriptions of the quick defeats of several generals and the humiliation of Domitius represent undeniable reality, and so the narrator's characterization of *Fortuna* in his exclamation is true; Pompey's apostrophic characterization of *Fortuna* as yet having the moral sense of shame represents wishful thinking.⁶⁰

Pompey Retreats from Italy

During the description of Pompey's flight from Italy, the narrator reinforces Pompey's recently expressed delusion about *Fortuna* in the next apostrophe to her: *Dux etiam votis hoc te, Fortuna, precatur, / quam retinere vetas, liceat sibi perdere saltem / Italiam* (2.699-701). "Even with prayers does the General pray to you, Fortuna, that he

⁵⁹ Fantham 1992, 190, agrees that the negative *non* carries over into the second half of this sentence. Not to do so would interrupt Pompey's delusion.

⁶⁰ Fantham 1992, 190, citing Pacuvius and Ovid, reminds us that "Fortune was traditionally accused of blindness." The first half of Pompey's apostrophe is correct in that the traditional view of *Fortuna* as blind is incorrect; what he cannot help but get wrong is the idea that *Fortuna* tends toward the preservation of Rome in the same way that Vergil's *fata* unmistakably favored the foundation of Rome.

be allowed at least to lose the Italy which you forbid him to keep." It is relevant that the narrator portrays Pompey as praying to *Fortuna* and not a sea god, to whom a prayer for safe passage would have been in keeping with the traditional custom; Pompey knows as well as the narrator that *Fortuna* is more powerful than any sea god.⁶¹ The employment of the verb *perdere*, "to lose," which foreshadows Pompey's defeat, and the delayed enjambment of *Italiam* betray the narrator's pitiful resignation in the face of *Fortuna's* power. Perhaps sensing within that *Fortuna* does not smile upon him, Pompey is characterized as clinging to a sense that the deity can be swayed by prayer, and therefore to the possibility that *Fortuna* does not completely endorse one side or the other. The reality, however, is that *Fortuna* is shamelessly favorable to Caesar and so to the destruction of the moral foundation of the Republic. As the voice of reality, the narrator therefore casts Pompey as increasingly out of touch and out of favor to the only god who actually impacts the force of history, *Fortuna*.

Book 3

Immediately after an account of the robbery of Rome's treasury and Metellus' vain attempt to stop it, the narrator catalogues the various peoples who sent men to fight in this war. In the midst of this catalogue, the narrator apostrophizes Pallas as part of a mythological reference associated with one of these places:

quique colunt Pitanen et, quae tua munera, Pallas
lugent damnatae Phoebos victore Celaenae,
qua celer et rectis descendens Marsya ripis
errantem Maeandron adit mixtusque refertur,
passaque ab auriferis tellus exire metallis
Pactolon, qua culta secat non vilior Hermus. (3.205-10)

⁶¹ Fantham 1992, 217, notes that *votis* recalls the traditional prayers made for a safe journey; but instead of prayers for a safe return, she points out the reversal of Pompey's prayers for a safe departure.

And those who cultivate Pitane (also assembled), as did Celaenae, condemned when Apollo was victorious, which mourns your gifts, Pallas, where the Marsya, swift and rolling down straight banks, approaches the wandering Maeander, and when joined with it is brought back, and where the earth has allowed Pactolus to come forth from the gold-bearing mines, where Hermus, no cheaper (than Pactolus), splits the cultivated (fields).

This is the only apostrophe in the entire work addressed to Minerva.⁶² Even after only two books, apostrophes to *Fortuna*, *superi*, Jupiter, and Apollo amplified emotionally significant moments. This lone apostrophe to Pallas, then, seemingly buried in a Homeric catalogue, probably was inserted for the sake of variety, for the same reason that he elaborated on Celaenae, the aesthetic effect created by cultivating a fascination with distant places.⁶³ The apostrophe to Pallas, unconnected here with any important character, scene, or idea, cannot be of any immediate importance beyond adding color to this portion of the catalogue. While it may well be a coincidence, it is at least interesting to point out that the scene after this catalogue portrays the people of Massilia coming out to meet Caesar with the *Cecropiae...fronde Minervae* (3.306), the olive-branch of peace. Caesar, of course, ignores Massilia's gesture, and the fleeting association of Minerva with peace dissolves as quickly as it was offered. But again, Minerva's "gift" in the apostrophe was the flute, and her association in the Massilia passage is an olive branch; that there are two completely separate associations with the

⁶² Hunink 1992, 116, observes that this is one of two apostrophes in the entire work addressed to an individual god (*Mulciber*, 10.448), and that the gods are usually addressed as a group (e.g., *superi*). His comment betrays rather strict definitions of apostrophe (I have already discussed apostrophes to Jupiter three times, Apollo twice, and Gradivus) and gods (Hunink does not consider *Fortuna* a goddess in her own right, for instance).

⁶³ Hunink 1992, 116, cites references to Celaenae in Herodotus (7.26), Ovid (*Fasti* 4.363), and Statius (*Thebaid* 4.186). Lucan may be expanding on Ovid's fleeting reference to Celaenae in the *Fasti* ("*Inter, ait, viridem Cybelen altasque Celaenas / amnis it insana, nomine Gallus, aqua.*").

goddess suggests that there is no connection, no hidden statement about the futility of peace. The apostrophe, then, is almost certainly for aesthetic flourish.

Book 4

The Rains in Spain

After Caesar's victory over the Greeks in Massilia, the scene shifts all the way to Spain, where such flooding as to defy the laws of nature overwhelms Caesar's camp. The narrator lingers so long over the details and effects of the flooding, over sixty lines (4.48-109), that he portrays himself as caught up in a burgeoning but futile hope that the inevitable fatal clash can be avoided.⁶⁴ This self-indulgent hope climaxes in an extensive and emotionally charged apostrophe to Jupiter and Neptune in their associations with weather and water:

Sic, O summe parens mundi, sic, sorte secunda
aequorei rector, facias, Neptune, tridentis,
et tu perpetuis inpendas aera nimbis,
tu remeare vetes, quoscumque emiseris, aestus.
Non habeant amnes declivem ad litora cursum
sed pelagi referantur aquis, concussaue tellus
laxet iter fluviis: hos campos Rhenus inundet,
hos Rhodanus, vastos obliquent flumina fontes.
Riphaeas huc solve nives, huc stagna lacusque
et pigras, ubicumque iacent, effunde paludes,
et miseras bellis civilibus eripe terras. (4.110-20)

Thus, O highest father of the universe, thus O Neptune, ruler of the sea's trident because of a favorable lot, may you make it so; may you (Jupiter) devote the air to never-ending storm clouds, may you (Neptune) forbid whatever tides you send forth to return. May the streams not have a downward course to the shores but be pushed back by the waters of the sea, and may the stricken earth open up a path for running streams: may the Rhine flood these fields, may the Rhone do likewise, and may the rivers turn aside abundant springs. Melt the Rhiphaean snows to this place, and to

⁶⁴ Zyroff 1971, 100-01, discusses this use of anachronism and asserts that the reader, far from being troubled by it, "is impressed by the magnitude of the personal horror which Lucan displays."

this place pour forth pools and lakes and still marshes, wherever they lie,
and rescue the poor earth from civil war.

This apostrophe is notable for its length, its fervor, and for the way in which the gods are introduced only to be eclipsed abruptly by *Fortuna*, the real *rector* of the universe. The apostrophe opens an element of prayer, a respectful address of the necessary gods. In light of the fact that the rains do stop within only a few lines of the end of this apostrophe, the address *summe parens mundi* becomes ironic and the juxtaposition of Neptune and *tridentis* farcical.⁶⁵ All the same, the anaphora of *sic* and *tu* in the opening apostrophe contributes to the reverent tone.⁶⁶ The narrator strays from his address in lines 114-17 but keeps an emotionally heightened tone with the use of optative/jussive subjunctives, straddling the line between prayer and unfulfillable wish. Indulging himself on the jussive side, the narrator reintroduces apostrophe by returning to second person address in lines 118-20, finally saying directly what he ultimately wants, a rescue from the civil war. The expression of that futile wish has the effect of bursting the bubble of emotion that the lengthy apostrophe brought to its widest circumference, since the very next line not merely returns to the factual indicative, but allies it with the prompt reassertion of *Fortuna's* actual directorship of affairs: *Sed parvo Fortuna viri contenta pavore / plena redit* (4.121-22), "But *Fortuna*, content by scaring her man a little, returns fully." The contrast between the impotent Olympians in the apostrophe and omnipotent *Fortuna* afterward parallels the contrast between the pointlessness of human hope and the ruthlessness of cold reality.

⁶⁵ Esposito 2009, 102, interestingly points out that Statius invokes Domitian with a strikingly similar *magne parens mundi* in *Silvae* 4.1.17.

⁶⁶ Asso 2010, 136, notes that Lucan "uses the anaphora of *tu*...rather sparingly, and chiefly in climactic moments of intense pathos."

Misfortune of Antonius' Men

The narrator makes a point to describe (in some detail) one instance, at least, in which *Fortuna* did not smile upon Caesar's side. Gaius Antonius' men are trapped and starving on an island, so he tries to float them across to the mainland where he knows he has allies. Some of Pompey's men hold the shore, however, and catch one of the three rafts midway across the water. Some fighting ensues which night interrupts. Vulteius, the commander of the men on this doomed raft, addresses his men to convince them of the nobility of committing suicide rather than live with the shame of surrender and pardon from Pompey's side. In the middle of this speech, he apostrophizes *Fortuna*: *Nescio quod nostris magnum et memorabile fatis / exemplum, Fortuna, paras* (4.496-97). "O Fortuna, by our deaths you prepare some great and memorable example." The example to which Vulteius refers here seems to be consistent with the Stoic ideal that suicide is noble in that it demonstrates a man's control over himself rather than a surrender to any outside force.⁶⁷ The narrator tries to cloak Vulteius' speech as consistent with *virtus* (4.470), but the seeming nobility of *Fortuna's exemplum* clashes with the narrator's own recently expressed assertion that men who have been pardoned (as Afranius' men were by Caesar) and sent home are truly fortunate: *Sic proelia soli / felices nullo spectant civilia voto* (4.400-01), "Thus only those who watch the civil wars with no allegiance are fortunate." The relatively close opposition of the narrator's expressed opinion and Vulteius' ostentatious, if macabre, display of *pietas* to Caesar calls into question just how *magnum et memorabile* death,

⁶⁷ Morford 1967, 8, in his analysis of Vulteius' speech, points the reader to Seneca, *Epistles* 77.6 for a short *suasoria* on suicide.

nostris fatis, really is.⁶⁸ Asso points out that this apostrophe to *Fortuna* morphs into an apostrophe to Caesar (4.497-501) in the very next sentence and wonders whether such proximity of *Fortuna* and Caesar implies that the two are identical, at least for Caesar's men.⁶⁹ Vulteius' apostrophes do have the effect of trying to lift the mens' coming suicide into the realm of praiseworthy self-sacrifice.⁷⁰ The conflation of the apostrophe to *Fortuna* with one to Caesar, though, turns the action from a Stoic *exemplum* to a tragic waste of life and otherwise praiseworthy *pietas*. A morally bankrupt environment, one in which *Fortuna* and Caesar are indistinguishable, renders loyalty and other righteous actions worthless, characteristic instead of *furor*.

Curio's Defeat

The narrator describes at length Curio's defeat in north Africa at the hands of Juba, then interrupts his narrative with an emotional third person address to *Fortuna* and an apostrophe to the gods above, *superi*. These impassioned exhortations give Lucan the space to express shame not only that Romans have been defeated, but that other Romans, even those for whom he has been rooting to some extent, profit by this loss.

Though the third person exhortation to *Fortuna* in lines 788-90 does not, strictly speaking, constitute an apostrophe, it does serve to break through the narrative in the

⁶⁸ See Eldred 2002 for the Vulteius episode as spectacle. Relevant to this apostrophe is her general statement that while the episode points to "an ideological reading based on traditional philosophical and epic values," it finally "denies those traditional values and substitutes an ideology based instead on spectacle." For several examples of *magnum et memorabile* in a solemn military context, see Esposito 2009, 239. Such a turn of phrase would itself lend weight to Vulteius' speech, and also heighten the tragic waste of such selfless valor.

⁶⁹ Asso 2010, 203.

⁷⁰ Asso 2010, 203, recognizes this when he says that Vulteius' apostrophe to Caesar has the "customary function of heightening the speaker's appeal to his audience."

same way that a second person apostrophic address does, and its immediate proximity with the narrator's apostrophe at 791-92 gives the resulting five line block the same emotional purpose:

Excitet invisae dirae Carthaginis umbras
inferiis Fortuna novis, ferat ista cruentus
Hannibal et Poeni tam dira piacula manes.
Romanam, superi, Libyca tellure ruinam
Pompeio prodesse nefas votisque senatus!
Africa non potius vincat sibi. (4.788-93)

Let *Fortuna* awaken the hated shades of awful Carthage with this latest sacrifice, let bloodthirsty Hannibal and the Phoenician ghosts take such terrible propitiation as that. Oh gods above, it is a crime that the Roman defeat in the Libyan land profits Pompey and the prayers of the senate! Let instead Africa conquer us for herself.

Any military action around Carthage would naturally have brought the Punic Wars and Hannibal to mind, so seared into the national memory was the threat that Hannibal posed at the time.⁷¹ On one level, Lucan here uses his near-apostrophe to *Fortuna* merely to invoke this national memory. On another, however, the emotionally charged alliance of *Fortuna* with the expiation of Carthaginian shades, as though they were waiting for such sacrifice, adds to the idea, well established now in this epic, that *Fortuna* is at best indifferent to the advancement of Rome, and at worst openly in league with its enemy, current or former.⁷²

The apostrophe to *superi* opens a space for the narrator to speak his mind even more openly than in his third person exhortation to *Fortuna*. He addresses the gods

⁷¹ Asso 2010, 282-83, also believes that the Roman reader would not have failed to bring to mind Dido's prophecy in *Aeneid* 4.625, *exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor*. He also quotes Ahl 1976, 113 and n. 51-52: "No Roman reader would have been unaware that Curio's name recalls the *sacerdos curio sacris faciundis*, the priestly *curio* in charge of sacrifice."

⁷² Asso 2010, 282, interprets the presence of *Fortuna* as allowing "this expiatory sacrifice of Roman lives in retribution, as it were, for the failure of Dido's prophecy."

above to point out a *nefas*, clear enough to the narrator, but one about which the *superi* can do nothing. The construction of these two lines helps convey the narrator's controlled indignation at the situation. Line 791 is framed by the words *Romanam...ruinam* that expresses the vastness of a Roman defeat; the following line uses alliteration of expectorating p and hissing s sounds to accompany the idea of *nefas*. The juxtaposition of *prodesse*, "profit," and *nefas*, "crime," further underscores the idea.⁷³ The narrator's old-fashioned moral assumption is that nations defeat other nations for their own profit, that a defeat of Romans means disgrace for all Romans, not a cause of celebration for some. The overturning of this assumption, as well as the idea that the gods have a duty to uphold such values and clearly have not done so, is therefore *nefas* and a cause for righteous indignation. The narrator does not linger over his address to the *superi* but reserves much more emotional energy for a long book-ending apostrophe on the wasted potential of Curio.⁷⁴

Book 5

Appius Consults the Oracle at Delphi

Appius, afraid to take part in battle, goes to consult the long unused temple of Apollo at Delphi. By this point, the reader has grown accustomed to a lack of divine presence. The reality of the god in this oracular scene, then, shakes the reader out of theological slumber. At Delphi, Appius forces the priestess to breathe in the inspiration of Apollo. During the description of the priestess' possession, and again after she has given her prophecy, the narrator apostrophizes the god.⁷⁵ The anger that Lucan directs

⁷³ Asso 2010, 283, simply refers to the pair as having "the force of an oxymoron."

⁷⁴ Asso 2010, 283, sees this apostrophe as "almost...a prelude to the longer apostrophe (799-824)."

⁷⁵ For further analysis of this scene, see Dick 1965.

at Apollo in his manifestation as god of prophecy betrays how much more seriously he takes the gods than does, for instance, Ovid, who so often ridiculed them.⁷⁶

The narrator's first apostrophe to Apollo comes at the end of a physical description of the priestess struggling against her possession by Apollo:

Bacchatur demens aliena per antrum
colla ferens, vittasque dei Phoebeaque serta
erectis discussa comis per inania templi
ancipiti cervice rotat spargitque vaganti
obstantes tripodas magnoque exaestuat igne
iratum te, Phoebe, ferens. (5.169-74)

Mad, she raves as she bears another's neck throughout the cave, and she rolls on wavering head the garlands of the god and Phoebus' wreaths, shaken off from her hair, standing on end, throughout the empty spaces of the temple, and she scatters the tripods that stand in her way as she stumbles around, and she becomes hot with a great fire as she bears your wrath, Phoebus.

It is instructive to contrast Lucan's characterization of his struggling priestess with Vergil's receptive Deiphobe near the beginning of *Aeneid* 6. Far from needing to be forced to deliver her prophecy, Deiphobe practically forces Aeneas to hurry to receive it (*Aeneid* 6.36-41). No sooner than Aeneas is called into the temple, the priestess announces the presence of the god within her, *Deus ecce deus!* (6.46). At that point, Deiphobe undergoes a physical transformation; her face and complexion change, her hair stands on end, her heart swells with frenzy (*rabie*), she appears larger than life and no longer sounds mortal (6.47-50). There is no sense yet of struggle; the changes simply occur as a matter of course. Apollo himself is not described in any way, as his existence at the temple is assumed by everyone in the scene, reader included; he certainly has no need of being addressed directly except by Aeneas in prayer, *Phoebe*,

⁷⁶ Zyff 1971, 86-8.

gravis Troiae semper miserate labores, / Dardana qui Paridis derexti tela manusque / corpus in Aeacidae (6.56-58), "Phoebus, you who have always pitied the heavy labors of Troy, who guided the Dardanian weapons of Paris and his hands against the body of Achilles."

Phe-monoe, Lucan's priestess, on the other hand, struggles mightily to resist being taken over by Apollo. The vocabulary of madness (*bacchatur, demens*) begins the description. Phe-monoe looks the part, wearing the proper garlands, but she is staggering around the sanctuary, tipping over tripods as she does so. Her hair stands on end, *erectis comis*, as Deiphobe's does, but there ends the likeness between the two priestesses.⁷⁷ In order to make a priestess so mad, *demens*, the god himself must be mad, *iratum*. The apostrophe to Apollo here associates the god with anger and the insanity of his priestess.⁷⁸ In *Aeneid* 6, *pious* Aeneas meets a proper object of his *pietas* in the Sibyl; here, *impious* Appius, struggling to take his place in a mad war, meets a priestess, struggling to fend off the madness of a mad god.

Phe-monoe finally gives her prophecy, or at least the part that involves Appius. Apollo has more to say, but he is characterized as holding back what he knows about the fate of Rome herself, *cetera suppressit faucesque obstruxit Apollo* (5.197). This is too much for the narrator to bear, for he interrupts his narrative with an explosive eleven line apostrophe to Apollo in which he takes the gods to task for their part in the crime of civil war and the imminent downfall of Pompey:

⁷⁷ Barratt 1979, 56, cites a slightly later passage, *Aeneid* 6.77ff., in which Deiphobe does struggle with Apollo. She also cites Vergil's depiction of Dido, *Aeneid* 4.300ff., and descriptions of Cassandra by Aeschylus (*Agamemnon* 1066ff.) and Seneca (*Agamemnon* 724).

⁷⁸ Barratt 1979, 58, simply remarks that "the apostrophe marks the climax of the sentence."

Custodes tripodes fatorum arcanaque mundi
tuque potens veri Paeon nullumque futuri
a superis celate diem, suprema ruentis
imperii caesosque duces et funera regum
et tot in Hesperio conlapsas sanguine gentes
cur aperire times? An nondum numina tantum
decrevere nefas et adhuc dubitantibus astris
Pompei damnare caput tot fata tenentur?
Vindicis an gladii facinus poenasque furorum
regnaque ad ultores iterum redeuntia Brutus
ut peragrat fortuna, taces? (5.198-208)

You tripods, guardians of fate, and mysteries of the world, and you, Paeon who are powerful of truth and who have hidden not one day of the future from the gods, why are you afraid to reveal the last moments of the falling empire and the slain generals and the deaths of kings and so many races fallen in Hesperian blood? Have the gods not yet decreed so great a crime, are so many fates held up because the stars still hesitate to condemn Pompey's head? Are you silent so that fate may complete the deed of an avenging sword and the punishments of madness and the kingdom returning again to an avenging Brutus?

The apostrophe to Paean/Apollo serves as an entry point into a series of emotional rhetorical questions in which the narrator, in the same breath and tone, both rants against the injustice of the civil war and Pompey's fall and offers the hope of avenging punishment against the same. The rhetorical questions are apostrophic because they use second person verbs, but after the initial address of Paeon, the focus rests on the destruction caused by the civil war. The verbs and images in lines 200-02 have to do with falling and death, *ruentis*, *caesos*, *funera*, *conlapsas*, *sanguine*. In lines 203-05, there is the fascinating contradiction between the god's decree of crime and the stars' hesitation to seal Pompey's fate and so to spare the lives of many. If the hesitation of the stars represents the projection of the narrator's revulsion at the events he is describing, then his representation of a liberating sword, punishment for madness,

and the return to an avenging Brutus indicate the narrator's vain hope for justice.⁷⁹ It is true that Caesar dies at the hand of Brutus and his fellow conspirators, but the narrator does not live in those heady days, but in the reign of Nero; the *vindicis gladii* did not ultimately bring about an end to *furorum*. The block of rhetorical questions contains both revulsion and hope, but it all culminates in Lucan's own time. Apollo may be silent (*aperire times, taces*), but Lucan cannot be; apostrophe opens for him a thin protective space in which he can vent. But he must be careful. O'Higgins points out that the use of the plurals *regna* and *Brutos* in line 207 "suggest that more than one repetition of the original Brutus's deed is meant."⁸⁰ Such a suggestion would be a way for the narrator to vent and express a hope for his own time, yet in a concealed fashion. Furthermore, Lucan's apostrophe presents himself as the antithesis of Appius; Appius asked only about himself, whereas Lucan provides what he considers a much more suitable line of questioning. Lucan is counting on his reader/emperor not to make the connection.⁸¹

Caesar Confronts Mutiny at Placentia

In a sudden change of scene, the description of Appius' unfortunate end snaps into a report that Caesar's men are tired of civil war and grow mutinous.⁸² His men are

⁷⁹ Marti 1945, 375, cites this passage among others (6.791, 7.587, 10.340, 10.540, etc.) that glorify the punishment of tyranny, and that support a portrait of an author who planted verses throughout his epic that ultimately contradict the notion expressed during the panegyric to Nero that civil war ultimately led to a beneficent ruler.

⁸⁰ O'Higgins 1988, 215.

⁸¹ According to Dick 1963, 48, "in the absence of the divine apparatus, Lucan entrusts prophecy to those qualified to predict the future: Arruns, Nigidius Figulus, the shade of Julia, Erichtho, and the Patavian augur." Apollo's priestess is not on this list, perhaps because Appius' selfish question renders her prophecy irrelevant for Lucan's purposes. Makowski 1977, 196, provides a pessimistic interpretation of this passage, that it is one in a long line of prophecies having to do with death, and that one function of prophecy in Lucan is to illustrate "the worthlessness of foreknowledge." He does agree, though, that Appius is "a fitting consulter of Apollo's riddling oracle" (197).

⁸² Fantham 1985, 121, persuasively argues that such a sudden switch in tone and scene is "part of the ebb and flow of violence, of action and inaction, in the wider context of 64-703."

given thirty-five lines of collective space (5.261-95) in which to voice their grievances and ultimately to demand their release from military obligation. In the manner of sarcastic laughter, the narrator breaks in with an apostrophe: *Sic eat, o superi: quando pietas fidesque / destituunt moresque malos sperare relictum est, / finem civili faciat discordia bello.* (5.297-99) "Let it go that way, gods above! Since devotion and loyalty are gone and we are left to rest our hope on wicked conventions, let discord bring an end to civil war." The clipped *sic eat, o superi* conveys indignation by the very brevity of the exclamation. Barratt cites this same phrase from Livy 1.26, in which Horatius kills his sister, *sic eat quaecumque Romana lugebit hostem.*⁸³ Both passages convey a sense of moral superiority on the part of the narrator. The power of the apostrophe comes not so much from the addressee, seeing that the gods (can) do nothing to stop the outcome of the whole sorry episode, but from this indignant sense of moral superiority. The sentence following the apostrophe helps clarify the tone of that apostrophe. The narrator casts himself there as a subscriber to old-fashioned Roman *mores*, disappointed to the point of bitterness to have to settle for the (vain) possibility of an end to civil war by dishonorable means. Barratt notes the violence of the line that the alliteration of f and c conveys.⁸⁴ The indignation behind the apostrophe not only colors the motives of the men but also shines a disapproving, anti-Vergilian spotlight forward to Caesar's forceful quelling of the uprising.⁸⁵

⁸³ Barratt 1979, 97.

⁸⁴ Barratt 1979, 98.

⁸⁵ Fantham 1985, 123, notes that "the picture of a seditious crowd or mutinous force quelled by a man of strong personality and eloquence is a favorite theme of both epic and historical writing in the Roman tradition," citing *Aeneid* 1.153 (*regit dictis animos et pectora mulcet*), Livy 28.27-29, and Tacitus' *Annals* 1.31-2. Fantham also notes that this apostrophe to the gods serves as the front end of Lucan's frame for his commentary on the scene. For a discussion on the history behind the mutiny, see Chrissanthos 2001,

Caesar's Near Death Experience

Taunting the gods, practically daring them to overwhelm him, Caesar persuades Amyclas to sail him alone to Italy, storms be damned. The sea rises as high as mountains and exposes the seafloor in its attempt to overturn Caesar's boat, so much so that if Caesar does not actually experience a little fear, he at least approves of the effort the sea gives to meet so great a man, *credit iam digna pericula Caesar / fatis esse suis* (5.653-54). Caesar then delivers a soliloquy (5.654-71) to the storm in order to express his acceptance of death, give a brief resume of his accomplishments, and finally reveal his hope that he will be feared even after death. Toward the end of this soliloquy, Caesar apostrophizes *Fortuna* and the *superi*:

Nulla meis aberit titulis Romana potestas,
nec sciet hoc quisquam, nisi tu, quae sola meorum
conscia votorum es, me, quamvis plenus honorum
et dictator eam Stygias et consul ad umbras,
privatum, Fortuna, mori. Mihi funere nullo
est opus, o superi; lacerum retinete cadaver
fluctibus in mediis, desint mihi busta rogoque,
dum metuar semper terraque expecter ab omni. (5.664-71)

No Roman power will be absent from my monument, nor will anyone know this, except you, Fortuna, who alone have knowledge of my prayers, that I, although I am laden with honors, both dictator and consul, go to the Stygian shades to die a private citizen. I do not need any funeral, O gods above; keep my mutilated body in the midst of the wave, let me lack a tomb and a pyre, so long as I will always be feared and awaited by the whole world.

The proximity of Caesar's apostrophes to *Fortuna* and *superi* provide an opportunity to compare his relationship with both. With *Fortuna*, he acknowledges a

who argues that the mutiny was much more serious than the ancient sources would have us believe, and that Caesar survived due to his willingness to negotiate and bow to his soldiers' demands. Lucan's portrayal of Caesar's arrogance is therefore a complete fabrication, and his use of an apostrophe to the *superi* serves both to set up such fabrication and to position himself as morally superior.

relationship based on his aspirations, *tu...sola meorum / conscia votorum es*;⁸⁶ on the other hand, he rejects the *superi* and their association with empty ritual, *funere*. Caesar is content without funeral rites so long as his aspirations to be feared survive. Given the importance shown in so much earlier Greek and Latin literature for the necessity of proper rites for the dead, Caesar's preference for *Fortuna* is both shocking and telling.⁸⁷ The *superi* are useless to him because they do not have a care for or even a vehicle for knowing of his hopes; *Fortuna* is his patron goddess precisely because she does. These apostrophes reflect in the same place the power of *Fortuna* and the impotence of the *superi* that the rest of the epic exhibits. *Fortuna* and *superi* are distinct here, with different purposes.⁸⁸

Book 6

Sextus Pompeius goes to the Thessalian witch Erichtho and asks for knowledge of the future. Erichtho then proceeds to prepare a fresh corpse to provide the prophecy. In the only example in the *Pharsalia* of a prayer to (infernal) gods that gets a response, Erichtho's corpse unwillingly comes back to life and begins speaking. The corpse begins his speech by announcing that civil war has spread even to the underworld, and lists a number of the *felicibus* who wore sadness on their faces (*tristis felicibus umbris /*

⁸⁶ Matthews 2008, 242, writes that *conscia* "personifies *Fortuna* as someone with inside knowledge of Caesar's secret thoughts and feelings," and reads *votorum* as "desires," not "prayers." She branches in a different direction than I do when she interprets these "desires" as the kingship.

⁸⁷ Matthews 2008, 244-45, cites tomb-inscriptions, the *Odyssey*, the *Aeneid*, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as examples of anxiety for the burial of the dead. She nearly calls Caesar a Stoic for showing indifference toward his own burial rites.

⁸⁸ Contra Feeney 1991, 280, for whom the proximity of *fortuna* and *superi* mean the terms are used interchangeably. Matthews 2008, 55, adds to her agreement with Feeney the observation that Stoics considered god and fate identical. In her commentary on Caesar's address of *Fortuna* (not recognized by her as an apostrophe), she does confirm that Caesar has a "close personal relationship only with *Fortuna*."

voltus erat, 6.784-85). At the end of this list, the corpse apostrophizes *Fortuna*: *vidi Decios, natumque patremque / Iustales bellis animas, flentemque Camillum / et Curios, Sullam de te, Fortuna, querentem* (6.785-87). "I saw the Decii, both father and son, souls purified in war, Camillus weeping, the Curii, and Sulla complaining about you, Fortuna." This apostrophic sentence shocks the reader (beyond the grisly mental image of just who is saying these words) first because the dictator Sulla has been included in this list of semi-legendary Roman "founding fathers," then because Sulla gains an association with *Fortuna* through the apostrophe.⁸⁹ In an attempt at Lucanian comedy, Sulla apparently has made the list of the *felices* because of his agnomen *Felix*. Sulla is otherwise so out of place in such a list that his inclusion must be intentional; that he is linked with an apostrophe to *Fortuna* must also be intentional. Throughout this epic, Caesar has been closely tied to *Fortuna*; Sulla's connection with *Fortuna* invites the reader to make a comparison between Caesar and Sulla, between the two dictators who rode a wave of good fortune to win their respective civil wars, but who eventually had reason to complain *de te, Fortuna*. If, as Ahl said, Fortune is the "force of historical destiny," then Sulla's complaint about his destiny is a source of solace to those who

⁸⁹ The juxtaposition in this list of the virtuous figures of the early Republic and Sulla, who arguably represented the beginning of its end, calls to mind Ahl's 1974, 573, analysis of the contrast between Caesar and Cato in the *Pharsalia*. Ahl thinks of Caesar and Cato as godlike archetypes of good and evil, so inflated because the absence of gods in the epic has left a moral vacuum that needs to be filled. The figures in this list of *felices* serve as the Caesar/Cato moral dichotomy in miniature. Ahl (575-76) also cites Plutarch's *Sulla*, who explains that Sulla, in his correspondence with Greeks, referred to himself as Ἐπαφρόδιτος, "blessed by Venus." As Caesar also boasted that he was descended of *Venus Genetrix*, the inclusion of Sulla in the corpse's list of *felices* provides another, if indirect, connection between the two dictators. The vacuum left by the absence of gods, again according to Ahl (579), leaves an opportunity for an exploration of *Fortuna*: "Instead of Venus, we find her closest counterpart outside the Olympian pantheon, *Fortuna*... *Fortuna* is un-Olympian enough to be consistent with his policy of avoiding conventional deities, yet divine enough to suggest them. Most important, perhaps, is the fact that Lucan, by resorting to *Fortuna* rather than Venus, keeps our attention strictly upon human relationships, and upon the significance of individual human action."

may be despondent about the current tyranny.⁹⁰ From Sulla to Caesar, perhaps even to Nero, the apostrophe to *Fortuna* is a well-disguised beacon of hope that tyrants are yet subject to a destiny about which they will one day complain.

Book 7

Before the Battle

The narrator invents scenes at the start of Book 7 to postpone his description of the actual battle of Pharsalia. The night before the battle, Pompey is allowed to have a pleasant dream in which he relives the glories of his younger days, a dream that gives the narrator the opportunity to wallow in the notion of an ideal Republic. Then day breaks, and with the dawn come the cries of soldiers to begin the battle. The narrator describes the enthusiasm of the soldiers for the fight as a frenzy; he gets caught up in his own description such that he portrays the soldiers as criticizing Pompey for being too lenient with his one time son-in-law. This is too much for the narrator: *Hoc placet, o superi, cum vobis vertere cuncta / propositum, nostris erroribus addere crimen* (7.58-59)? "O gods above, does this please you, when it was proposed to you to overturn everything, to add guilt to our mistakes?" So much does the narrator get caught up in the emotion of the moment that he places himself among the soldiers and continues from this apostrophe in the first person plural, *Cladibus inruimus nocituraque poscimus arma*, "We rush into disaster and we demand the weapons that will destroy us."

This apostrophe to the *superi* is important in several respects. It is an outlet for the narrator to release pent up anger and frustration at the now imminent destruction. *Nostris erroribus addere crimen* points a finger at the failings, *erroribus*, of Romans

⁹⁰ Ahl 1974, 581.

themselves, implying that all this could have, should have been avoided. The apostrophe also comments on characteristics of the gods as Lucan sees them. The *superi* have still not caused Pharsalia; they do not suddenly have a power over events that they have lacked throughout Books 1-6 of this epic. They are, however, capable of *Schadenfreude*. Lucan points to the *superi* in this apostrophe and says *hoc placet?*, "Are you happy now?"

Admittedly, this interpretation comes from my translation of these two lines, lines with which translators have had difficulty for rather a long time due to the word *propositum*. How the reader translates *propositum* determines whether the gods caused Pharsalia or whether they merely take perverse delight in the suffering of humankind. If *propositum* is a participle, it modifies *hoc* at the beginning of the previous line and implies that the gods have somehow come up with the idea of Pharsalia. The whole sentence, then, is a question that should start with *cum*, according to Duff's translation.⁹¹ Dilke, on the other hand, suggests that *est* be supplied with *propositum*, in which case the resulting finite verb belongs inside the *cum* clause.⁹² This preserves a more left-to-right reading, one in which there are two distinct clauses, the main clause *hoc placet* and the subordinate *cum* clause. The *superi* in that case only have the power of feeling. What has been proposed (by the soldiers, directly) to the gods (*vobis* as dative of reference, not agent) is destruction, and the juxtaposition of *propositum* with *nostris erroribus* implies that "we Romans" are responsible for it. Such a reading is

⁹¹ Duff 1928, 373. Duff actually tries to have it both ways, to characterize the gods with the power to shape events and to imbue them with *Schadenfreude*: "Ye gods, when it is your set purpose to ruin all things, does it please you to add guilt on our part to mere mistakes?"

⁹² Dilke 1965, 90.

consistent with the previous Epicurean characterization of the *superi* as having human feelings but no direct impact on human affairs.⁹³

So what divine power does have a direct impact on human affairs? The next apostrophe, to *Fortuna*, contrasts with the impotence of the *superi* in a manner consistent with the previous six books. Still before the battle itself, Lucan invents a public conversation between Cicero, who was almost certainly not at the battle of Pharsalus, and Pompey. In that exchange, *Fortuna* figures prominently, even from Cicero's first line. Pompey apostrophizes *Fortuna* in her manifestation as the bestower of favor, *res mihi Romanas dederas, Fortuna, regendas: / accipe maiores et caeco in Marte tuere* (7.110-11), "You, Fortuna, had granted it to me to rule the Roman state: take them back as better (i.e., than they were before) and protect them in blind War." The pluperfect *dederas* implies that Pompey knows his time has past, and that *Fortuna* is a power that has the ability to favor individuals actively, if indiscriminately.⁹⁴ Pompey believes he has done his best (*accipe maiores*) and that the fate of Rome is out of his hands (*caeco in Marte tuere*). Pompey juxtaposes the apparent contradiction of protection, *tuere*, and the indiscriminate nature of war, *caeco Marte*, which is apparently *Fortuna's* chosen vehicle for the transferral of her favor from Pompey to Caesar. Pompey can then wash his hands of the whole affair in line 112, *Pompei nec crimen erit*

⁹³ Heitland, in his introduction to Haskins' 1887 edition (li), hints at this when he says that, "the wavering philosophy of Lucan is reflected in his dual religion, meaning by religion his theory of the government of the world. To me it seems that his *fatum* and *Fortuna* are as Stoic and Epicurean: *fatum* is impersonal, but presupposes gods, *Fortuna* is personified only to dispense with them."

⁹⁴ According to Dilke 1965, 96, the pluperfect is here for metrical convenience.

nec gloria bellum, "the war will be neither Pompey's crime nor his glory."⁹⁵ This apostrophe emphasizes the power and indiscriminate nature of *Fortuna* and uses that power to excuse Pompey from any responsibility for the impending tragedy of Pharsalia.

Battle of Pharsalus I

Caesar, recognizing his long-awaited opportunity for a decisive battle, addresses his eager troops. He seems to feel that he is favored and attributes that favor to the *superi*: *haud umquam vidi tam magna daturos / tam prope me superos* (7.297-98), "I have never seen the gods so near me, intending to give such great things." Carried away by such giddiness, Caesar apostrophizes these same *superi*: *Quone poli motu, quo caeli sidere verso / Thessalicae tantum, superi, permittitis orae* (7.301-02)? "By what movement of the firmament, by what turned constellation of the sky, O gods above, do you grant so much to the shore of Thessaly?" Caesar believes that he is favored by the gods, but he is mistaken; it is *Fortuna* who favors him.⁹⁶ We know this because the omniscient narrator has told us so before Caesar's speech: *Non tamen abstinuit venturos prodere casus / per varias Fortuna notas* (7.151-52), "But Fortuna did not hold back from revealing the coming misfortunes through different signs." Caesar, though he has at various points in the epic recognized the favor that *Fortuna* has bestowed on him (even earlier in this same speech, at 7.285-87, *Sed me fortuna meorum / commisit manibus, quarum me Gallia testem / tot fecit bellis*), is portrayed as operating under the same assumption under which so many characters have

⁹⁵ Dick 1967, 239, also takes this line: "If *Fortuna rapax* were ultimately accountable for Pompey's defeat, the poet's purpose would be accomplished. Lucan's unswerving republicanism could not allow him to admit that Pompey was simply inferior to Caesar as a commander."

⁹⁶ Pompey is mistaken in the same way as the battle begins, *Vidit...Pompeius...superis placuisse diem*, 7.337-39.

concerning the source of omens, that the *superi* have a direct interest in and influence upon human events.

Caesar's apostrophic prayer to the *di* only a few lines after his apostrophe to the *superi* continues the anachronism:

Di, quorum curas abduxit ab aethere tellus
Romanusque labor, vincat, quicumque necesse
non putat in victos saevum destringere ferrum
quique suos cives, quod signa adversa tulerunt,
non credit fecisse nefas. (7.311-15)

O gods, whose cares the earth and Roman work has brought down from the sky, let him conquer, whoever does not think it necessary to draw the cruel sword against the defeated, and who does not believe that his citizens have committed a crime because they have brought hostile standards (against them).

This apostrophic prayer has power in its context not so much because of its addressee, but because of its content whose irony is designed to create outrage in the reader. Lucan himself has already established that the gods are not the reason why the civil war is happening and why Caesar is going to win it. Lucan, in his role as narrator, sees the future from Caesar's point of view; Caesar, as character, necessarily cannot see everything with the clarity that Lucan *qua* narrator can. Caesar, then, operating under the assumptions of his time, believing that the gods hear prayers and act upon them, properly prays to the gods to sanction and bring about what Lucan has framed as a crime. The gods, then, are implicated by association with the tragic outcome of the civil war, though they cannot have actually caused it.

Battle of Pharsalus II

The narrator interrupts the commencement of the battle with a harangue (7.389-459) impassioned by exclamations, rhetorical questions, and apostrophes. One of the many themes in the narrator's soliloquy, so to speak, is the role of *Fortuna* and the

gods. Again, *Fortuna* is the real supernatural power, the active force behind history.⁹⁷ *Fortuna* draws out men for slaughter (*quos undique traxit / in miseram Fortuna necem*, 7.415-16) and arranges nations and their leaders on the battlefield (*populosque ducesque / constituit campis*, 7.416-17) like so many toy soldiers in a child's backyard. It is *Fortuna* whom Lucan apostrophizes in line 440, *De Brutis, Fortuna, queror*, "I protest about the Bruti, Fortuna." This is a short apostrophe but one of critical importance, as it is a gateway that opened up space for Lucan to make explicit his thinking about the role and meaning of the gods, as well as his real feelings about the state of Rome and the principate in particular. Both Dilke and Duff are quick to point out that only Brutus is meant, L. Junius Brutus who expelled the Tarquins from Rome and established the Republic.⁹⁸ The narrator thinks of the Republic as a *tempora legum* (7.440); he complains because he recognizes that history does not tend toward any concept of justice or the right but is capricious and random; thus Lucan's complaint to *Fortuna*. Furthermore, he betrays a disappointed idealism: *sunt nobis nulla profecto / numina: cum caeco rapiantur saecula casu, / mentimur regnare Iovem* (7.445-47), "We surely have no gods: since the ages are seized by blind misfortune, we lie (if we say) that Jove reigns." In his ideal world, the gods would have an interest and involvement in human affairs, and they would have a Vergilian bent toward the establishment of a Rome in a never ending *tempora legum*. In Lucan's mind, if there are gods, they act for

⁹⁷ Ahl 1976, 294: "At times Lucan addresses Fortune personally as if she were akin to what we might call the process of history."

⁹⁸ Dilke 1965, 130; Duff 1928, 400. It is tempting to interpret the plural *Brutis* as meaning both the Brutus at the beginning of the Republic and one near its end, as Zyffoff 1971, 380, does.

justice.⁹⁹ If there is no justice, if the right does not prevail, it means there are no gods (*superi*): *mortalia nulli / sunt curata deo* (7.454-55), "Mortal concerns have been looked after by no god." *Fortuna* is certainly the proper addressee for the apostrophe at line 440.

Lucan does not see fit to stop his complaint here, however, but joins the political and the theological, sarcastically condemning the burgeoning practice of deifying emperors: *Cladis tamen huius habemus / vindictam, quantam terris dare numina fas est: / bella pares superis facient civilia divos* (7.455-57), "We have, however, vengeance for this calamity, one as great as it is right for gods to grant to the earth: civil wars will make emperors equal to the gods above." The loss of the civil war lays open a path to the exaltation of the emperors as gods (Lucan uses the title *divos*); the equation of the emperors with *superis* makes Rome ridiculous because the *superi* in this work do not act for the greater good of Rome. The laugh is on the emperors who are equated with a demonstrable fiction. *Fortuna*, the goddess who brought about the sanity of a Republic also brings about Caesars, both the Caesar of the *Pharsalia* and, it is not a stretch to say, the Caesar of Lucan's own time. History does not tend toward any concept of justice or the right, but is capricious and random; thus does Lucan complain to *Fortuna* about men like L. Junius Brutus.

⁹⁹ In this sense, I go a step further than Friedrich 1938 in his important article on *Fortuna* in Lucan. Friedrich's Lucan does not doubt the existence of the gods, but merely their justice or power: "Entweder kümmern sie sich nicht um die Menschen, oder es gibt über ihnen andere stärkere Kräfte, von denen die irdischen Schicksale in Wahrheit abhängen (391)." Friedrich (386) cites Euripides *Hecuba* 488-90 as a way to illustrate Lucan's ongoing declaration of the ultimate power of *Fortuna*: ὦ Ζεῦ, τί λέξω; πότερά σ' ἀνθρώπους ὄραν. / ἢ δόξαν ἡμᾶς τήνδε κεκτήσθαι μάτην, / τύχην δὲ πάντα τᾶν βροτοῖς ἐπισκοπεῖν; "O Zeus, what should I say? Do you watch over men? Or have we acquired this opinion in vain, and chance looks upon all things for mortals?"

Battle Aftermath

Lucan describes how the battle of Pharsalus goes badly for "his" side. Instead of detailing many individual deaths, the narrator explains why it would be wrong for him to do so since whole nations fell on that battlefield. He gets caught up emotionally in what that loss meant for the descendants of those original combatants, lamenting in an apostrophe to *Fortuna*: *Post proelia natis / si dominum, Fortuna, dabas, et bella dedisses* (7.645-46), "If you were intending to give their descendants a master after that battle, Fortuna, I wish you had (also) given them wars (to fight)."¹⁰⁰ Again, *Fortuna* is the obvious goddess to address, since Lucan has long since established her as both capricious and the only deity that moves history.¹⁰¹ The apostrophe is a space for Lucan to ascribe the defeat at Pharsalus to the whim of history (thereby taking it out of Pompey's blameless hands), to reinforce that the defeat has set Rome under tyranny (*dominum*), and to express how he wishes he could do something about it (*bella*), even if it means fighting and falling as so many did at Pharsalus.¹⁰²

At the end of book 7, Lucan uses rather a lot of space to describe the field of Pharsalus as so covered with the bodies of the combatants that every imaginable beast

¹⁰⁰ In my translation, I follow Dilke's 1965, 148, note on *dabas*, equating it with *datura eras*, an imperfect of intended action. I depart slightly from his note on *dedisses*, which he interpreted as a subjunctive of past obligation, "you should have given." I think a simpler explanation would be an optative subjunctive in past time. The difference in meaning, however, is slight, but important since the optative allows Lucan to insert himself more directly and appropriately into this apostrophe.

¹⁰¹ It is interesting to point out that Lucan, the voice of reality, apostrophizes *Fortuna* rather precisely, yet in the very next line, implants in Pompey a conflation of the gods and *Fortuna*. At once Lucan implants in Pompey the thought that the gods have deserted him, *Iam Magnus transisse deos Romanaque fata / senserat infelix* (7.647-8), as well as the feeling that he is simply unlucky, *fortunam damnare suam* (7.649). Pompey's epithet *infelix* and the conflation of *deos* and *fortunam* perhaps absolve Pompey himself of any responsibility for the defeat.

¹⁰² Though he does not comment on the apostrophe, Ahl 1976, 310, remarks on this passage that "Lucan leaves us in no doubt as to his personal attitude to the purchase of peace at the price of freedom." Zyroff 1971, 380, envisions Lucan with enough emotional distance from the events of Pharsalia to "inform Fortune what is fair...the chance to fight for freedom."

and bird of prey comes to feast on them. From there he dwells on the fact that Thessaly will also be the site of a second disastrous defeat for the dying Republic, Philippi, and so turns his scorn to that land. It is there, in the closing lines of book 7, that the narrator apostrophizes the gods, *O superi, liceat terras odisse nocentes. Quid totum premitis, quid totum absolvitis orbem?* (7.869-70) "O gods above, may you allow me to hate the guilty land. Why do you convict the whole world, then absolve it all?" Lucan, of course, does not need permission from anyone to hate Thessaly, much less the *superi* whom he has established as being powerless. This apostrophe and rhetorical question are a way for the narrator to express a weary exasperation that Pharsalus is only the beginning of a series of defeats leading to the death of the Republic.

Book 8

Death of Pompey

The death of Pompey inspires, as the reader expects by this point in the epic, a good deal of emotional editorializing on the narrator's part. In the midst of such histrionics, the reader also expects a number of apostrophes. Lucan does not disappoint either expectation. From the time the decision is made to assassinate Pompey to the mummification of Pompey's severed head, a space of about 150 lines, there are two apostrophes to *superi* and two to *Fortuna*.

Pompey goes to Egypt, and immediately the news spreads to Ptolemy's court, where, after a brief deliberation, the decision is made to kill Pompey. When Achillas departs in his little boat to carry out the deed, the narrator cries out in a series of rhetorical questions, the first of which contains an apostrophe to the *superi*: *O superi, Nilusne et barbara Memphis / et Pelusiaci tam mollis turba Canopi / hos animos* (8.542-44)? "O gods above, has the Nile, uncultured Memphis, and the Pelusiagian Canopus'

mob, so unmanly, (inspired) these intentions?" So shocking and tragic is the event and circumstances of Pompey's demise that Lucan breaks into the narrative in an overwhelming and, to borrow Mayer's description of the several apostrophes in Lucan's intrusion, "disconcerting" way.¹⁰³

This address to the *superi* sounds like a petulant curse. It is as if Lucan is so angry that he does not quite know where to start. Begin he does, though, by complaining that it is an outrage for foreigners, Egyptians at that, to do away with Pompey. The implication seems to be that if Pompey is to be killed, he should at least be killed by fellow Romans. I pass over, of course, the fact that civil war has been consistently denounced as a *crimen* and *nefas* throughout the epic, and that the "honor" of killing Pompey falls to a Roman in Ptolemy's hire, Septimius. Aside from shaking his fists at the *superi*, indulging in a fickle and contradictory bit of xenophobia, and using what Mayer called an "imposing" tricolon crescendo (*Nilus...Canopi*),¹⁰⁴ so apoplectic does Lucan wish to seem to be (and wish the reader to be, more importantly) that this opening sentence does not even have a verb.¹⁰⁵ Aposiopesis more properly belongs to conversation (e.g., *Aeneid* 1.135), yet Lucan uses it himself here in his role as narrator

¹⁰³ In his note on 8.542-60, Mayer 1981, 148, briefly discusses how Lucan's "tendency to abandon narrative for an editorial reflection upon events" is typical, but may be neither original nor peculiar to him. Mayer cites Seneca the Elder (*Suasoria* 6.26), who quotes the *Res Romanae* of Cornelius Severus when he condemned the death of Cicero. Severus interrupts his narrative with two rhetorical questions (6.26.9-10) and later with one apostrophe, that one not to a god, *dire Syphax* (6.26.23). Perhaps the technique is not original, but there can be no comparison between Severus and Lucan here, who strings together four rhetorical questions here, with more to come, and uses five apostrophes in a space of 30 lines to gods, objects, and mortals.

¹⁰⁴ Mayer 1981, 148.

¹⁰⁵ Mayer 1981, 149, points out that "*hos animos* is borrowed from Seneca, *Trojan Women* 339 and becomes a common form of aposiopesis."

to remind the reader that he is every bit as much a character in the epic as Pompey or Caesar.

When Septimius makes his appearance, Lucan breaks into the narrative again:

Quis non, Fortuna, putasset,
parcere te populis, quod bello haec dextra vacaret,
Thessaliaque procul tam noxia tela fugasses?
Disponis gladios, ne quo non fiat in orbe,
heu, facinus civile tibi. (8.600-04)

Who would not have thought, Fortuna, that you spared the nations because this right hand was absent from the war and you had put to flight such guilty weapons far from Thessaly? You scatter your swords, lest in any part of the world cannot occur, alas, civil crime for you.

The *superi* in line 542 were an object at which Lucan could shake his fists; those gods had no power in themselves. This apostrophe to *Fortuna* is quite different; *Fortuna* has power, nefarious at that. Lucan apostrophizes *Fortuna* in his role as omniscient observer; he sees how *Fortuna* works and reveals that to the reader. Again, *Fortuna* alone among the gods seems to have influence in human affairs. In case the reader has any remaining Vergilian notion that *Fortuna* works in favor of Rome, the idiosyncratic *putasset* in a rhetorical question attempts to put that misguided idea to rest.¹⁰⁶ The switch to the indicative mood at line 603 emphasizes the power that *Fortuna* actually has, and the insertion of *heu* at line 604 exudes both sympathy and helplessness.¹⁰⁷

As Pompey is experiencing the moment of his death, Lucan slows down time to provide enough space for Pompey to think noble thoughts to himself, thoughts that

¹⁰⁶ Mayer 1981, 156, notes that this is the first example of the pluperfect subjunctive *putasset* to be used in this way.

¹⁰⁷ Mayer 1981, 156, reminds that "a sigh of sympathy from the poet is a neoteric device," found in Catullus, Vergil, and then Ovid, who used this interjection often.

Lucan shares with the reader. In this thought soliloquy, Pompey steels himself to be brave and tolerant of the manner of his death because the eyes of reputation are watching to ensure that he ends with his self-possession intact and his mind clear enough to instruct the world that one does "not become wretched by death," *non fit morte miser* (8.632).¹⁰⁸ In order to set up this *sententia*, Pompey apostrophizes the gods: *Spargant lacerentque licebit, / sum tamen, o superi, felix, nullique potestas / hoc auferre deo* (8.629-31). "Although men may tear me to pieces and scatter me, I am nevertheless, O gods above, fortunate, and no god has the power to take this away from me." The *superi* are powerless once again, not least because Pompey declares that he has complete self-control to the very end. They are a sounding board against which Pompey can make this soul-ennobling declaration.

There is one more apostrophe to consider in the episode of Pompey's death. The narrator spends some time on the features of Pompey's face as his head is put on a pike to display to the Egyptian king. Pompey's dead face, once as powerful over Rome as Jupiter's nod was over the world in Vergil, becomes synonymous with Rome itself. To reinforce this equation, the narrator uses an apostrophe: *Hac facie, Fortuna, tibi, Romana, placebas* (8.686), "With this face, Roman Fortuna, you used to be pleased."¹⁰⁹ This *Fortuna* cannot be the same *Fortuna* as in previous apostrophes, not an active goddess with power to affect the direction of individuals and nations, but a pale representation. *Fortuna Romana* may well be Vergil's *Fortuna*, or at least the part of the

¹⁰⁸ Behr 2007, 137, characterizes Pompey as "watching himself being watched," and focuses on the Stoic nature of his immanent demise. Though she cites this passage, no mention is made of the apostrophe or its effect.

¹⁰⁹ Zyroff 1971, 382, notes that the use of the imperfect *placebas* "enforces the contrast between Pompey's past successes in life and his present disgraceful murder."

more dominant, more universe-encompassing *Fortuna* that Romans deluded themselves into thinking always arced in favor of a stronger, more powerful Rome. Mayer helpfully points out that Ovid explicitly called Augustus the "face of his country," *Hunc ego cum spectem, videor mihi cernere Romam; / nam patriae faciem sustinet ille suae* (Ovid, *Letters from Pontus*, 2.8.19-20).¹¹⁰ The concurrence of a reference to Ovid's equation of country with emperor and Lucan's subtle shift from all-governing *Fortuna* to a noble, dead ideal is surely important. Ovid referred directly and unmistakably to Augustus; Lucan keeps more distance from the emperor he subtly condemns when he applies Ovid's image to the head of Pompey, now dead and rotting on a pike. Only here is *Fortuna* apostrophized with the epithet *Romana*, signifying the defunct dream of a Republic.

Pompey's Burial

Between Lucan's stirring exaltation of what Pompey represented and Cordus' speech at the funeral he hastily arranged for what was left of Pompey, a space of only 38 lines (8.692-728), *Fortuna* has been busy. Lucan names her three times in that space, connecting her with the steep and sudden downfall of Pompey, emphasizing that what *Fortuna* gives with one hand, she surely takes with the other (8.701-08). As a transition into the Cordus scene, *Fortuna* is depicted as preparing the coming ignoble burial (8.713). The narrator makes it clear that, to his all-seeing mind (or so he would like the reader to believe), *Fortuna* is the active supernatural agent. The mortals within the story still do not understand this, and they demonstrate their misunderstanding by

¹¹⁰ Mayer 1981, 165.

continuing to shuffle *Fortuna* and the *superi*, just as Cordus does in his address to both entities (8.730, 739).

Once Pompey has been given what funeral rites were possible, and he has been given his simple epitaph, the narration is interrupted with an apostrophe to *Fortuna*: *Placet hoc, Fortuna, sepulchrum / dicere Pompei, quo condi maluit illum / quam terra caruisse socer* (8.793-95)? "Does it please you, Fortuna, to call this Pompey's tomb, in which his son-in-law preferred him to be interred than to lack earth altogether?" *Fortuna* is both the agent which conferred at least this boon to Pompey as well as the means by which Lucan can launch into another ardent set of rhetorical questions by which he can begin to raise Pompey aloft and say in his way, "Now he belongs to the ages."¹¹¹

Book 9

At the makeshift funeral that Cornelia arranges for Pompey, Cato, into whose heart the soul of Pompey has taken up residence, delivers a short, rhetorically charged eulogy.¹¹² Near the end of his speech, Cato waxes philosophical about the virtue of dying at the right time, preferably at a time of one's own choosing, or failing that, of someone else's choosing: *Et mihi, si fatis aliena in iura venimus, / fac talem, Fortuna, lubam* (9.212-13). "And if I have come by fate under another's control, make Juba, Fortuna, such to me." This apostrophe to *Fortuna*, the only one in Cato's speech, is placed emphatically at the end to reinforce the thesis that the method of Pompey's

¹¹¹ Mayer 1981, 180: "At first he [i.e., Lucan] will call it a disgrace, and will deliver over it a personal *laudatio funebris*. But from this strain of complaint he will modulate just before the close of the book to the exalted note, that a mean grave...must in time disappear and so contribute to his deification (a sentiment shared by lovers of Mozart)." Zyroff 1971, 382-83, reads this apostrophe as sarcastic. If Caesar approves of this method of burial, it must be *nefas* and not *pietas*. Lucan's use of the present tense *placet* is, for Zyroff, a subtle way of making "Fortune responsible for her acts forever afterwards."

¹¹² Wick 2004, 67-70, has a detailed discussion of Cato's *laudatio funebris*, but she did not touch upon his apostrophe to *Fortuna*.

demise is not only noble but worthy of imitation.¹¹³ The juxtaposition of *Fortuna* with Juba, for whom Wick reminds us Lucan had no sympathy throughout the epic,¹¹⁴ lets the character of Cato associate *Fortuna* with the amoral evil implied by the vilified Numidian king. His address of *Fortuna* is appropriate here, as Cato's eulogy not only marks Pompey's quasi-deification as a Stoic saint, but his own willingness to take up Pompey's standard and to accept the same trials and end that *Fortuna* had visited upon Pompey.

Book 10

Caesar has begun to hunker down in Cleopatra's palace, on the receiving end of a seige, and the narrator characterizes him as angry and fearful, penned in as he is. To help illustrate Caesar's rage and fear, the narrator compares Caesar with a caged animal (10.445-46), then with the lava that builds up in a volcano. An apostrophe to Mulciber, Vulcan, dramatizes and personifies these qualities: *Nec secus in Siculis fureret tua flamma cavernis, / obstrueret summam si quis tibi, Mulciber, Aetnam* (10.447-48).¹¹⁵ "Not otherwise would your fire rage in the vaults of Sicily, Vulcan, if anyone were to stop up the top of Etna." It has been a long time since anyone in the epic, narrator or character, has seen fit to apostrophize one of the Olympian gods, and it is notable that it is done here only to illustrate a comparison. In fact, according to Zyroff, the only epic poet who addresses Vulcan is Lucan.¹¹⁶ Vulcan is the personification of a

¹¹³ Morford 1967, 7, writes that the speech, "which had begun with reference to Pompey's death, ends by looking forward to Cato's."

¹¹⁴ Wick 2004, 79.

¹¹⁵ Zyroff 1971, 113, even believes that the apostrophe, though forced and contrived, lends a hint of sympathy for Caesar's plight by "stressing the unnaturalness of Caesar's situation."

¹¹⁶ Zyroff 1971, 113.

natural phenomenon and certainly does not have effect or power to effect any person or event of the narrative. Lucan is simply taking his place in a long line of Greco-Roman authors, from Aeschylus, Euripides, and Callimachus among the Greeks, through Plautus and Vergil among the Romans, who have used Etna as the seat of the god of fire.¹¹⁷

We are now at the end of the list of apostrophes to gods in Lucan's epic as we have it. While uncertainty about the state of the epic's completion will hinder us from drawing conclusions about the structural value of these apostrophes, we yet can appreciate their frequency and the patterns that emerge.

¹¹⁷ Berti 2000, 302.

CHAPTER 4 STATIUS, *THEBAID*

In the *Thebaid*, there are thirty-eight apostrophes to gods, addressed to twelve different gods or sets of gods. As opposed to Lucan, Statius does not heavily favor apostrophes to particular gods, though he does include eight to Muses (addressed individually or collectively) and eight to Apollo. Jupiter and Gradivus merit five apostrophes each, Bacchus four. *Fortuna*, Minerva, and one or all the Furies have two, and Diana, Pluto, Proserpina, and *superi* get one each. It is the narrator who does most of the apostrophizing to gods in the *Thebaid*, doing so twenty-four times; no other character of the thirteen who apostrophize gods does so more than twice (Amphiaras and Eteocles). Certainly in comparison with Lucan, Statius shuffles his apostrophes to gods on a roughly even basis throughout the epic.

Book 1

Proem

In accordance with epic tradition, Statius invokes the Muses at the beginning of his work. The way in which he does so reveals the nature of his epic by aligning it with Homer, Vergil, and Ovid:

Fraternas acies alternaque regna profanis
decertata odiis sontesque evolvere Thebas
Pierius menti calor incidit. Unde iubetis
ire, deae?¹ (1.1-4)

Pierian heat has fallen upon my mind to reveal fraternal hostilities, an
alternating kingship fought over with impious hatred, and guilty Thebes.
From where do you bid me start, goddesses?

¹ The Latin text is Shackleton Bailey 2003; all translations are my own.

The first two lines read like history until the technical epic term *evolvere*.² Pierian heat, an unmistakable reference to the Muses, then surrounds the *menti* of the narrator.³ *Mens* denotes the intellect, one's conscious intention; *incidit* denotes happenstance.⁴ Pierian heat has suddenly come upon the *mens* of the narrator, but the narrator does not know exactly what the parameters of the task should be. The apostrophic rhetorical question that comes next reinforces this paradox of inspiration. The Muses do not provide the boundaries, so it falls to the *mens* of the poet to do so.

Statius may well be balancing competing interests. On the one hand, Vessey has described how acutely aware Statius was of the literary preferences of his audience and how intentionally he used his talent to gain the approval of his patrons and his emperor in the *Silvae*.⁵ The deferential tone of the rhetorical question, set by *iubetis*, is consistent with that predisposition.⁶ It is important to note that there are no first person pronouns, adjectives, or verbs in these four lines; only after establishing his subject matter, his literary intentionality, and his desire to please does Statius introduce the first person *canam*, and even there as a deliberative subjunctive, as though asking permission. On the other hand, there is real intention brought to bear on the poem by

² Caviglia 1973, 87.

³ Hershkowitz 1998, 63 n.263, writing on the madness of the epic poet, notes that *calor* refers to "specifically Bacchic poetic inspiration," and so suitable for an epic about Thebes. Further, *calor* contrasts with the *frigidus sanguis* of Vergil's *Georgics* 2.484.

⁴ For the force of *incidit*, see Ahl 1986, 2817.

⁵ Vessey 1973, 15-54. Newlands 2002, 1-45, adds that in the *Silvae*, Statius balances praise with reservations, extravagance with complexity.

⁶ White 1993, 266-68, lists instances of Augustan authors who used forms of *iubere* to talk about "literary instigation;" *iubere* denotes a weaker command than other verbs of ordering. If Statius followed that precedent, then he has tempered his poetic madness (*calor*) immediately after asserting it. The poem reveals madness, then, but from a position of deference.

the poet.⁷ *Menti...incidit* may well be a variation of *fert animus* found in both Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 1.1) and Lucan (*Pharsalia* 1.67),⁸ but it is more than *variatio* here. Ovid and Lucan used *animus* as the subject of *fert* to emphasize the active role that each poet played in their respective poems. Along the same line, *menti* is an active participant in this epic, the tool used to bring about what is asked of it, to provide the boundaries for the epic that the Muses did not provide.

This apostrophe to the Muses, then, opens the place in which Statius sets boundaries for his work, establishes what the narrator's place will be within it, and even reveals the judgment that the narrator passes on the characters' actions.⁹ The apostrophe to a specific Muse, Clio, helps marks the end of that space:¹⁰ *Quem prius heroum, Clio, dabis* (1.41)? "Which of the heroes will you present first, Clio?" The form of the rhetorical question recalls Horace, *Odes* 1.12.1, *Quem virum aut heroa lyra vel acri / tibia sumis celebrare, Clio?* "Which man or hero do you begin to celebrate with your lyre or high-pitched flute, Clio?" The use of this particular Muse recalls Statius' own *Silvae* 1.5.14, *mea Clio*. The mannered intertextuality of the *Thebaid* rivals the Neoteric poets, done for its own sake.¹¹

If Vergil, Ovid, and Lucan represent a devolution of Latin epic from patriotic Homerism to godless screed, the subservient traditionalism of the opening lines of the *Thebaid* inform the reader of a return to the time-honored subject matter and formula for

⁷ Ahl 1986, 2817-22.

⁸ Caviglia 1973, 88, cites Friedlaender as one scholar with this opinion.

⁹ Georgacopoulou 2005, 192.

¹⁰ Alternately, this apostrophe to Clio marks the beginning of the list of heroes. According to Georgacopoulou 2005, 181-83, Clio is therefore used precisely.

¹¹ See Vessey 1973, 7-14, for a discussion of mannerism in the *Thebaid*.

creating an epic. There would seem to be no hidden agenda in the *Thebaid*, no longing to criticize the emperor or the imperial form of government. The party line is that the narrator's job is to narrate; any editorial commentary will be general and inoffensive, not political or controversial. This, however, is the genius of Statius and why he survived in a way that Ovid and Lucan did not; the return to mythological epic, the comfortable antiquity that is Thebes, and traditional epic forms provide cover for whatever mannered speech is to come.¹²

Theban Soliloquy

A soliloquy given by one of the Theban *plebs* reinforces the narrator's expressed disapproval (1.152-64) of the brothers' burgeoning conflict. Most of the ordinary people are silent in the face of this strife (*tacitum...vulgus*, 1.169), but in the manner of Homer's Thersites, one refuses to submit. Rhetorical questions comprise much of this speech, in the midst of which this unnamed plebeian apostrophizes Jupiter in his role as supreme creator: *Tibi, summe deorum / terrarumque sator, sociis hanc addere mentem / sedit?* "Were you resolved, highest father of gods and creator of lands, to add this intention to the brothers?" This indignant question punctuates the plebeian's complaint about the fate of Thebes and himself, doomed to serve revolving exiles.¹³ At first glance, this speech seems unnecessary, this gateway between the narrator's commentary and

¹² For Thebes as an "emblem of antiquity," as recognizably ancient as the story of Troy, see Braund 2006. Further, there is much discussion and debate as to whether Statius in fact has used mythology to help mask otherwise unsafe criticism, or whether Statius has written a baroque epic for its own sake; Dominik 1994 is an example of the former, Vessey 1973 and Braund 2006 the latter. For Braund 2006, 268, Thebes is merely a "viable vehicle for reconsidering Rome's origins and character."

¹³ Ahl 1986, 2828, considering the whole of the plebeian's speech, observes that the sentiments this "anonymous critic" expresses are likely those that many Romans thought during the year of the four emperors. Ahl also notes that the speech has a restrained quality about it. If Statius has put some of his own sentiments into this speech, this restraint, together with the seeming disapproval from the narrator surrounding this speech, gives him plausible deniability were he ever questioned about the likely parallel between the turnover and turmoil over the throne of Thebes and that of the Roman principate.

Jupiter's convening of a council of the gods.¹⁴ On the one hand, this plebeian is like Thersites who dares to speak against his betters; on the other, the sentiments expressed are consistent with those that the narrator just expressed. In the mouth of a plebeian, Statius has placed harsher sentiments against these fated events, but even then he stops short of a direct condemnation of Jupiter. The address is respectful, the action impersonal. The impersonal *sedit tibi* reveals the hope that this conflict might not be unalterable, and so seems a sort of indirect prayer that Jupiter's upcoming speech addresses. Furthermore, the appearance of Jupiter following the plebeian's apostrophe to him emphasizes the nature of the gods in this epic. The gods are real and they do appear often, starting with the council of the gods that Jupiter convenes immediately after this plebeian's speech. It is not appropriate in the *Thebaid* for anyone, even a character, to condemn directly what the gods have decreed, no matter how much they may deserve it.

Apollo's Vengeance

When Adrastus recognizes how Tydeus and Polynices fulfill the prophecy that a lion and a boar would come to marry his daughters, he rejoices and orders a feast in celebration. In the midst of that feast, Adrastus relates to his guests a story to explain why the Argives honor Apollo in particular. Apollo, having recently slain Python, comes upon the humble abode of Crotopus, whose daughter Apollo then impregnates. Crotopus' daughter, in fear for her life lest her father discover the loss of her virginity, gives the child to a shepherd. When the child meets an unfortunate death, Crotopus'

¹⁴ For Caviglia 1973, 110, the speech of *aliquis* expresses the sentiments of the whole of Thebes.

daughter laments openly and confesses the truth to her father, who then puts her to death. At this point in the story, Adrastus apostrophizes Apollo:

Sero memor thalami maestae solacia morti,
Phoebe, paras monstrum infandis Acheronte sub imo
conceptum Eumenidum thalamis, cui virginis ora
pectoraque. (1.596-99)

Late mindful of your union, Phoebus, you prepare as a consolation for her sad death a monster conceived in the unspeakable bedrooms of the Eumenides under the depths of Acheron, with the face and chest of a young woman.

Inserted at the moment of the death of Crotopus' daughter, this lone apostrophe in Adrastus' story reveals his sense of justice by emphasizing his sympathy for her. Immediately after the order goes out for her to meet her end, *occumbere leto* (1.595), Adrastus subtly admonishes Apollo for not saving the young woman as she deserved when he says that Apollo is *sero memor thalami*. Such an admonishment is buried in nearly the exact middle of Adrastus' story (1.557-668), soon overwhelmed by the narration of the gruesome havoc that the monster wreaks. It is not, of course, Adrastus who inserts this apostrophe in this particular place, but Statius. Statius uses the apostrophe to Apollo to supplement his characterization of Adrastus as a ruler with a sense of justice and sympathy. The rebuke to Apollo in this apostrophe, though, is subtle, buried as it is not just within the narration of a story, but within one of the characters of the epic. Yet it is consistent with the developing theme of respectful deference to authority, particularly to gods, for after the scene of Tydeus and Polynices' introduction to Adrastus, there immediately follows the council of the gods in which the gods, including Juno, defer respectfully to Jupiter and his unquestionable power.

In light of the establishment of such awesome authority, Statius implies that Crotopus' daughter was treated harshly and that Apollo could have done something for

her before it was too late.¹⁵ There is much about Apollo that Statius/Adrastus could have condemned, from his rape of Crotopus' daughter to his blood-thirsty slaughter of innocent children, but the god cannot be questioned. Ovid likely would have subjected Apollo to some sort of ridicule; Lucan perhaps would have angrily denounced the actions in some way. Statius uses apostrophe here in a comparatively restrained way, not so much to chastize Apollo, though that is present to a small degree, but to establish Adrastus' character and to reinforce the directly unquestionable authority of the gods.¹⁶

Book 2

Laius Reenters Thebes

Mercury brought Laius from the underworld back to Thebes to goad Eteocles into starting a war with his brother Polynices. Laius is portrayed as hesitant to reenter Thebes, which in turn is in a state of revelry, celebrating the birth of its patron god Bacchus:

Et tunc forte dies noto signata Tonantis
fulmine, praerepti cum te, tener Euhie, partus
transmisere patri. (2.71-73)

And then by chance it was the day marked out by the familiar bolt of the Thunderer, when your forestalled birth brought you, tender Euhius, to your father.

This birthday party in honor of Bacchus provides the reason for Eteocles to be in a (wine-induced) sleep deep enough to receive the ghost of Laius and the message he

¹⁵ Neither Caviglia 1973 nor Heuvel 1932 remark on this passage as an apostrophe, nor do they comment on the emotional content of this passage.

¹⁶ Though the gods are not to be questioned directly, Ganiban 2007, 9-13, in his discussion of the irrelevance of *pietas* in the *Thebaid*, demonstrates how Statius instead used the descriptions of the characters in this episode and their implicit contrast with the actions of Apollo to criticize the god's *nefas*. Vessey 1970, justifying the inclusion of the scene in the *Thebaid*, also emphasizes the contrast between the *pietas* of Adrastus and Coroebus, and the lack of the same in Apollo. Criticism of authority figures can only be made implicitly; the first words of the apostrophe here are as close as Statius has come so far to a direct condemnation.

brings.¹⁷ The narrator seems to imitate the revelers by the manner in which he addresses Bacchus, *Euhie*. Mulder reminds us that *Euhius* is another name for Bacchus because Bacchantes are accustomed to shout εὐοῖ, in the same way that Bacchus gains the alternate name *Euhan* from the Bacchic exclamation εὐάν.¹⁸ *Euhie* denotes revelry in contrast to the seriousness of the following scene in which Laius, at first disguised as Tiresias, provokes Eteocles into attacking his brother. *Euhie* here is *tener*, "tender" and therefore harmless, but this description eventually becomes ironic once Bacchus actually enters the scene in Book 4 as a combatant, fighting for his city in the same way that Juno fought in *Aeneid* 7.¹⁹ At first glance, the use of apostrophe here seems superfluous, but, as Georgacopoulou points out, it is the first time that the narrator apostrophizes a god other than the Muses, bringing together two important moments in the history of Thebes, one in the distant past (Bacchus), the other in the recent past (Laius) in order to push forward the tragedy of Thebes.²⁰

Tydeus Praises Adrastus

Upon Adrastus' announcement that Tydeus and Polynices will marry his daughters, the stunned and grateful Tydeus acclaims his soon to be father-in-law, praising his wisdom and his reputation for good governance:

Atque utinam his manibus permittere gentes,
Iuppiter aequae, velis, quas Doricus alligat intus
Isthmos et alterno quas margine summovet ultra. (2.181-83)

¹⁷ Mulder 1954, 75, compares the revelry in this passage with the Book 8 celebration in which the Thebans mark Amphiaras' disappearance.

¹⁸ Mulder 1954, 77: *Euhius* is another name for Bacchus because Bacchantes are accustomed to shout εὐοῖ, in the same way that Bacchus gains the alternate name *Euhan* from the Bacchic exclamation εὐάν.

¹⁹ See Ganiban 2007, 96-116, for a full comparison of Statius' Bacchus and the Ovidian and Vergilian Juno.

²⁰ Georgacopoulou 2005, 133.

And may you, fair Jupiter, be willing to entrust to these hands the peoples that the Dorian Isthmus binds within and those which it pushes beyond on its other border.

The theme of Tydeus' eulogy (2.176-88) is that the wise man deserves to rule. It is not surprising, then, that he addresses Jupiter, the ultimate ruler, with the epithet *aeque*, fair. Tydeus projects Jupiter as an arch-Adrastus with the same virtuous qualities and the same sense of law and the right as Adrastus himself. Statius expresses through Tydeus a vision of an ideal governor, marked by virtue (*virtute*, 2.178), the rule of law (*componere legibus*, 2.180), and fairness (*aeque*, 2.182). This apostrophe to Jupiter helps express this vision by aligning the king of the gods with a Stoic ideal for governance.²¹ Violence, however, will soon overwhelm this fleeting philosophical ideal and call into question the alliance of Jupiter with that ideal.

Eteocles Plans Ambush

Upon Tydeus' hasty departure, Eteocles musters men to attack him from behind. The narrator expresses with exclamations and rhetorical questions his shocked displeasure at what he considers an egregious transgression of the sacred laws of diplomacy; one of the rhetorical questions also contains an apostrophe to *Fortuna*: *Quas quaereret artes / si fratrem, Fortuna, dares* (2.488-89)? "What arts would he seek (to use) if you, Fortuna, gave him his brother?" In contrast to the qualities that Tydeus ascribed to Adrastus in his apostrophe to Jupiter at 2.180-83, Eteocles does not observe the rule of law.

²¹ Mulder 1954, 132. Though Behr 2007, 103-04, is writing about Lucan, not Statius, she discusses how careful Vergil was to align the *Aeneid's* winners (Aeneas and Augustus) with the Olympians; Lucan, conversely, links Jupiter with an indifference to human affairs.

The addressee here, *Fortuna*, also appeared in Tydeus' eulogy, as a frenetic force, but tameable by virtue (*quantum... ferentem / Fortunam virtute domas*, 2.177-78). Here, the contrary-to-fact subjunctives imply that *Fortuna* could have chosen to let Polynices represent himself, but instead sent Tydeus. The contrast between *ferentem Fortunam* and *Iuppiter aequae* is stark in Tydeus' earlier speech, and the implied volatility of *Fortuna* in this passage is all the more emphasized by the lack of any other supernatural force, as though Jupiter (in an ideal world) is present in good rulers, but conspicuously absent in the bad.

Tydeus Beats Back Ambush

In the middle of the action-packed, *aristeia*-laden battle scene in which Tydeus fights and defeats Eteocles' fifty henchmen, the narrator employs a number of apostrophes, so tense and significant is this conflict. Two apostrophes each address Bacchus and Minerva.

Tydeus hurls a boulder that takes out four victims: *Pentheumque trahens nondum te Phaedimus aequo, / Bacche, genus* (2.575-76). "And Phaedimus of the Penthean race (lies dead), with you, Bacchus, not yet benevolent." The apostrophe draws in the vengeful nature of Bacchus through the story of Pentheus, one of whose descendents is Phaedimus. Pentheus was torn apart by the participants of the Bacchic rite after he had forbidden the worship of Bacchus as well as the participation of Theban women in his rites. Pentheus anticipates Capaneus' blasphemy and parallels Oedipus because of the vengeance that is wrecked upon his descendents for generations. We might contrast this judgment of multi-generational retribution with Jupiter's comment in book 7: *ast ego non proprio diros impendo dolori / Oedipodionidas* (7.215-16), "But I do not weigh out (punishment for) the awful sons of Oedipus for a private injury." Jupiter seems to

criticize Bacchus' retribution, while taking no similar responsibility for the destruction of Oedipus' line.²² If there is criticism of the gods for the length and reach of their anger, it is as subtle as it is powerful.

Given a spotlight among the victims of Tydeus' *aristeia* is Chromis, who tries to encourage the remainder of his wavering comrades but ends up receiving a spear in his open mouth as he shouts.²³ To bolster his qualifications for such intended leadership, the narrator describes him descended from "Tyrian Cadmus" (2.613), with a tough Bacchic worshipper for a mother. During the description of Chromis' mother, the narrator apostrophizes Bacchus:

Hunc utero quondam Dryope Phoenissa gravato
rapta repente choris onerisque oblita ferebat,
dumque trahit prensis taurum tibi cornibus, Euan,
procidit impulsus nimiis conatibus infans. (2.614-17)

Him once Phoenician Dryope brought forth from her pregnant womb, suddenly enraptured in the dances and having forgotten her burden, and when for you, Euan, she was dragging the bull by the horns she had grabbed, the baby fell forth, pushed by too much exertion.

On one level, the apostrophe provides Statius an opportunity to display some flourishes for their own sake (e.g., the alliteration in line 615 and the unbelievable image of a pregnant Bacchant dragging a bull by the horns, then dropping her child mid-tug), as well as for the fortification of Chromis' leadership *bona fides*. The apostrophic address of Bacchus using a name derived from some of the shouting in Bacchic rites is placed at the moment of Dryope's delivery and so doubles as a cry of the pain of delivery.²⁴ On

²² Georgacopoulou 2005, 134-35, pointing out this contrast with Book 7, also notes that where Jupiter speaks to an intratextual Bacchus in person, the narrator speaks to an extratextual Bacchus.

²³ Mulder 1954, 318, sees this kind of death as borrowed from Vergil, but embellished by Statius.

²⁴ Georgacopoulou 2005, 136.

another level, the focalization of Dryope, a loyal Bacchic worshipper, offers a contrast with the recent focalization of Pentheus, a Bacchic blasphemer. Both produce, in one generation or many, offspring destroyed by Bacchus, regardless of their piety toward the god.

Directly relevant to Tydeus and his victory over the fifty Theban unfortunates are the two narrator's apostrophes to Minerva. Having slain forty-nine of the fifty, weariness finally checks Tydeus' ardor for slaughter (2.668-81). At this point, the narrator uses an apostrophe to Minerva, creating a space for her to address Tydeus in turn:

Ille etiam Thebas spoliis et sanguine plenus
isset et attonitis sese populoque ducique
ostentasset ovans, ni tu, Tritonia virgo,
flagrantem multaque operis caligine plenum
consilio dignata virum. (2.682-86)

He even would have gone to Thebes, glutted with spoils and blood, and rejoicing, would have shown himself both to the people and their leader, had you, Tritonian maiden, not thought worthy of counsel the man, ardent and suffused in a great fog from his labor.

Once Minerva bids Tydeus simply to go back to Argos, he commands the lone survivor from the carnage to return to Thebes and tell the tale. At that point, the narrator apostrophizes Minerva again:

Haec ait, et merita pulchrum tibi, Pallas, honorem
sanguinea de strage parat, praedamque iacentem
comportat gaudens ingentiaque acta recenset. (2.704-06)

He said these things and prepares a beautiful tribute to you, Pallas, who have earned it, from the bloody massacre, and he rejoices to collect the strewn booty and survey his impressive deeds.

In each case, Minerva is authoritative, commanding obedience and respect, not only from the character Tydeus, but from the narrator who elevated her in apostrophe. In neither instance was an apostrophe necessary from the narrator, who could have

described in third person fashion how the goddess appeared in order to redirect Tydeus' fervor, and then how Tydeus honored her with spoils. In fact, *Iliad* 10 offers an example of a narrator doing just that, describing in the third person the sudden appearance of Athena who offers advice to Diomedes, and the offering of spoils to Athena.²⁵ When Aeneas builds a trophy to Mars after killing Mezentius (*Aeneid* 11.7-8), Vergil employed an apostrophe to highlight the importance of Mars *Bellipotens*.²⁶ Statius, then, seems to combine these two epic predecessors to emphasize the importance of Minerva to Tydeus personally and to model how mortals show deference and respect to the gods.

Book 3

Eteocles Learns the Ambush Failed

Book 3 opens with a sleepless Eteocles worrying what had happened to the band he had sent to waylay Tydeus. After six lines of introductory narration, Eteocles gives a soliloquy in which he reveals his agony with several rhetorical questions. Each rhetorical question proposes a reason why Eteocles' men might have failed; the last contains an apostrophe to Mars: *Paucosne, pater Gradive, manuve / legimus indecores* (3.11-12)? "Did we choose, father Gradivus, too few men, or men inglorious in fighting?"

Mars is the appropriate god, of course, to whom Eteocles should complain since this was a military operation. Eteocles addresses Mars using the anachronistic Roman term *Gradive*, probably related to the verb *gradi*, "march," a term that Statius very often uses throughout the epic; as we shall see, there are several apostrophes to Gradivus in

²⁵ Mulder 1954, 343 and 349; *Iliad* 10.507-08, 570-71.

²⁶ Mulder 1954, 350, provides this Vergilian reference.

the second half of the *Thebaid*.²⁷ Eteocles' rhetorical questions already provide the mood of frantic anxiety; this apostrophe does not add appreciably to the scene.²⁸ It is likely that Statius saw an opportunity to use the trochaic ending of *Gradive* to form a nifty homoioteleuton with *manuve*. Snijder supposes that the words *paucosne...Gradive manuve* combine trochaic endings with homoioteleuton to suggest "the stalwart gait of rough warriors."²⁹ Statius was certainly aware of the metrics of the sentence since he chose to use the rare word *indecores* in order to fit the meter (the more common *indecorus*, with its long penult, does not fit hexameter).³⁰

Mourning Over the Fallen

Wise old Aletes gives a eulogy before the pyres of the forty-nine Thebans sent to be slaughtered by Tydeus. Aletes recounts previous hardships which his city has suffered but withholds direct blame for them because they were due to the actions of the gods, whose intentions and undertakings cannot be questioned openly, no matter how innocent the victim or how widespread the suffering. Among the afflictions he recalls is the punishment of Actaeon at the hands of Diana:

...Nec quod tibi, Delia, castos
prolapsum fontes specula temerare profana
heu dominum insani nihil agnovere Molossi,
deflerim magis... (3.201-04)

²⁷ Though his article is on the *Silvae*, Hulls 2007, 205 n. 50, points out that Statius uses the term *Gradivus* twenty times (as opposed to only two instances in Vergil), perhaps out of a more standard than pointed usage.

²⁸ Snijder 1968, 50, guides the reader simply to "notice the apostrophe," but ends the note there without specifying why.

²⁹ Snijder 1968, 50.

³⁰ Snijder 1968, 50.

Nor would I weep any more over the fact that the maddened Molossian (dogs), alas, recognized not at all their master, who had erred in his defilement of your chaste springs, Delia, by his unholy gaze.

Dominik rightly asserts that Aletes certainly does hold Jupiter and the gods responsible for the tribulations visited upon Thebes in the past and that he is right to do so since most of the victims were innocent.³¹ While Aletes does hold this sentiment, he is careful not to say so directly. When he addresses Diana in this apostrophe, the collocation of the respectful patronymic *Delia* with *castos* conveys respect. It is ironic that Aletes refuses to openly criticize the gods, who are not present, but does not hesitate to cast blame for the death of the forty-nine upon Eteocles, who is.³² This apostrophe to Diana helps emphasize a distinction between critique of the gods and a mortal ruler, even if both equally deserve censure.³³

Consulting Omens

After Tydeus returns to Argos from the ambush and tries to rouse his friends to arms, Adrastus hesitates to rush headlong into war. Finally deciding to ask the gods whether war will bring peace or ruin for him, he entrusts the task to the seers Amphiaraus and Melampus. Since they find clearly awful portents through extispicy, they decide to try augury. As they watch the sky, Melampus points out the swarming birds of prey. Aghast, he exclaims, *Hisne dari, Thymbraee, polum* (3.513)? "Is the firmament entrusted to these (birds), Thymbraeus?" This apostrophe emphasizes the

³¹ Dominik 1994, 16-17.

³² Dominik 1994, 17, considers Aletes' condemnation of Eteocles misplaced since the flames of his conflict with Polynices have been stoked at various time by the gods but excuses Aletes on the ground that he had no way of knowing that.

³³ Statius' editorial aside at 3.253-54 reinforces this idea. When Jupiter announces to the rest of the gods the destruction that will be visited upon Thebes, the other gods are stunned, but say nothing: *mortalia credas / pectora, sic cuncti vocemque animosque tenebant*, "You would believe their hearts mortal, so all of them withheld both voice and spirit."

sense of dread that comes upon the seer. Though they had originally asked Jupiter to provide the signs (3.471ff.), it is appropriate to address Apollo in his specific role as the revealer of Fate's decree.³⁴ The apostrophe *Thymbraeus* seems appropriately respectful, echoing the same respect that Aeneas demonstrated when he prayed to Apollo using this same epithet in *Aeneid* 3.85.

Amphiaraus uses the same title in a subsequent apostrophe when he, goaded by the blasphemer Capaneus, at last reveals to the Argives what the omens revealed:

Consulti testor penetralia mundi
et volucrum affatus et te, Thymbraee, vocanti
non alias tam saeve mihi, quae signa futuri
pertulerim. (3.637-40)

I call to witness the innermost workings of the earth that I consulted, the pronouncements of the birds, and you, Thymbraeus, who at no other times were so cruel to me when I called you, what signs of the future I endured.

In this scene, the respectful deference that the name *Thymbraee* implies stands in contrast to the boastful blasphemy of Capaneus, who follows Amphiaraus' revelation with mockery of the art of augury itself (*Tuus o furor auguret uni / ista tibi*, 3.648-49; *vanis avibus*, 3.652; *mollis infula*, 3.666-67). If Masterson is correct in his reading that Amphiaraus is an "allegory of the realization of Roman manhood," which in the time of Statius was not "demonstrated with heroic extroversion," then the extremism and blunt honesty of Capaneus' blasphemy serve to discredit whatever truths he reveals (*primus in orbe deos fecit timor!*, 3.661) and whatever version of old Roman manhood he represents.³⁵ On the other hand, the deference that Amphiaraus and Melampus'

³⁴ Snijder 1968, 245. Snijder also notes that Jupiter has his own specific role, as "the Stoic all-God...identical to the cosmic predetermination of events itself and as such is ultimately behind everything."

³⁵ Masterson 2005, 289.

apostrophes reinforce represent an extremism of their own, an introversion from which Amphiaraus eventually escapes as he becomes a Mastersonian "heroic extrovert" later in the epic, rejecting deferential withdrawal for action.

Book 4

Parade of Argives

As Adrastus' forces are finally mustering, Statius introduces a catalog by apostrophizing the personified abstract concepts *Fama* and *Vetustas* in addition to the Muse Calliope:

Nunc mihi, Fama prior mundique arcana Vetustas,
cui meminisse ducum vitasque extendere curae,
pande viros, tuque, o nemoris regina sonori,
Calliope, quas ille manus, quae moverit arma
Gradivus, quantas populis solaverit urbes,
sublata molire lyra. (4.32-37)

Now, earlier Fame and secret Antiquity of the world, whose care it is to remember the leaders and extend their lives, and you, O queen of the resounding grove, Calliope, reveal to me the men, what bands and arms that Gradivus set in motion, how great the cities he made desolate of their peoples, play the lyre you have taken up.

Invoking a Muse in the introduction to an epic catalog is standard operating procedure since Homer's catalog of ships, yet Statius makes this invocation original.³⁶

Both Micozzi and Steiniger point out that the invocation of abstract concepts at the beginning of an epic catalog is without precedent.³⁷ The explanation of the functions of *Fama* and *Vetustas* reveals that Statius is using these personified qualities precisely, just as Amphiaraus and Melampus apostrophized Apollo instead of Jupiter in Book 3.

³⁶ *Iliad* 2.484: ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι. In addition to providing this reference, Steiniger 2005, 83, notes also that Statius chose to omit the otherwise obligatory invocation to a Muse before the catalogs in Books 7 and 12.

³⁷ Micozzi 2007, 70; Steiniger 2005, 83.

Referring to Statius' use of *Vetustas* in *Silvae* 4.1.28-29, the poem in honor of Domitian's seventeenth consulship, Georgacopoulou goes so far as to say that *Vetustas* is a new Statian Muse, specializing in recalling leaders and their deeds.³⁸ The ability to remember, long the prerogative of the Muses as daughters of Mnemosyne, has been transferred to these new personifications.³⁹ As for *Fama*, Hardie points out that Statius not only fully personifies her in the *Thebaid* but made her a virtual employee of Mars (3.426-31).⁴⁰ Her association here with the stirrings of war fits perfectly.

The mere presence of Calliope, as chief Muse, lends a sublime, lofty air to the proceedings. Statius acknowledges Calliope as the traditional Muse of epic and innovates by invoking her before a catalog, the only such instance in Latin epic.⁴¹ Georgacopoulou makes the important point that Statius may also be borrowing an association with delay that Calliope gained in Horace and Ovid.⁴² This original apostrophe anticipates the comprehensive nature of the Argive force that draws from all over the Peloponnese.⁴³

³⁸ Georgacopoulou 2005, 165.

³⁹ Micozzi 2007, 70.

⁴⁰ Hardie 2012, 205.

⁴¹ The other examples of apostrophe to Calliope in Latin literature are Lucretius 6.94, Propertius 4.16.12, Vergil, *Aeneid* 9.525, Homerus Latinus, *Ilias Latina* 1064, Horace, *Odes* 3.4.2, *Laus Pisonis* 81, Sulpicia, *De Statu Rei Publicae* 12, Juvenal 4.34, Silius Italicus 3.222, 12.390, and Statius, *Thebaid* 8.374 and *Silvae* 3.1.50. It is interesting to contrast the usage here with that of *Silvae* 3.1.50, the temple to Hercules built by Pollius Felix.

⁴² Georgacopoulou 2005, 168-69; *Odes* 3.4.1-2, *Descende caelo et dic age tibia / regina longum Calliope melos*; *Metamorphoses* 5.462-63, *Quas deas per terras et quas erraverit undas / dicere longa mora est*. McNelis 2007, 76-96, shows how the ensuing delay, inspired by Callimachus' aetiological account of the Nemean games in *Aetia* 3, injects a non-martial element into the poem, providing it with a conflicting narrative strategy, peace in the midst of war.

⁴³ Lovatt 2005, 181-88, examines the Argive catalog, in which each of the Seven has a contingent, in terms of coming funeral games in *Thebaid* 6.

Parthenopaeus' Troops

Parthenopaeus, Atalanta's son, receives a long description of his courage, his lineage, and his youthful appearance. The narrator also provides a list of places that sent him troops; in the middle of that list is an apostrophe to Apollo:

Non Tegea, non ipsa deo vacat alite felix
Cyllene templumque Aleae nemorale Minervae
et rapidus Clitor et qui tibi, Pythie, Ladon
paene socer candensque iugis Lampia nivosis
et Pheneos nigro Styga mittere credita Diti. (4.287-91)

Tegea was not idle, nor was Cyllene itself, happy in the winged god, nor Aleae, the sylvan temple of Minerva, swift Clitor and Ladon who was nearly father-in-law to you, Slayer of Python, and Lampia, gleaming on snowy ridges, and Pheneos, believed to send Styx to black Dis.

Of the seven places named, four are associated with gods; by association, this affiliation lends importance to all the places in the list. In turn, that such god-sponsored places would send troops to the inexperienced, yet eager Parthenopaeus lends him a sense of authority. The apostrophe to Apollo in the middle of this list heightens the implied significance of this affiliation because an epithet for Apollo so rare in Latin poetry draws the reader's attention to the pathos.⁴⁴

The apostrophe needs the reader to enter into the text to make the connections necessary to laugh at or criticize figures that the narrator cannot openly.⁴⁵ The erudite reader has to draw upon knowledge of mythology to understand the reference to Daphne. Furthermore, such a reader may also bring to mind Ovid's version of the

⁴⁴ In addition, Georgacopoulou 2005, 118-19, notes that these lines are highly stylized. Places are arranged by type (town, mountains, rivers, mountain-lakes), and the enjambment of *paene socer* emphasizes the story of Apollo and Daphne that the reader needs to know in order to supplement the reference to Apollo implied in *Pythie*. Steiniger 2005, 161, notes the scarcity of the epithet in poetry, citing Naevius *carmina* fragment 24 and Horace *Odes* 1.16.6, both of which contain the nominative *Pythius*; there are two other poetic instances of the nominative (Propertius 2.31.16 and *Priapea* 75.5), as well as one other poetic instance of the vocative *Pythie* in the fragment *SerAet.* 50.1.

⁴⁵ Georgacopoulou 2005, 118-19.

Apollo and Daphne story in *Metamorphoses* 1. The next sentence contains an apostrophe to *Amores* that also requires an erudite reader to make the same connections, both to mythology and to the *Metamorphoses*:

Venit et Idaeis ululatibus aemulus Azan
Parrhasiique duces, et quae risistis, Amores,
grata pharetrato Nonacria rura Tonanti,
dives et Orchomenos pecorum et Cynosura ferarum. (4.292-95)

And Azan came, rivaling the wailing people of Ida, and the Parrhasian leaders, and the Nonacrian countryside which you laughed at, Loves, pleasing to the quiver-bearing Thunderer, and Orchomenos rich in cattle and Cynosura rich in wild beasts.

The "Nonacrian countryside pleasing to the quiver-bearing Thunderer" refers to the place where Jupiter raped Callisto. Jupiter and Apollo are risible figures here and in Ovid, but while Ovid openly ridicules these gods by name in the *Metamorphoses*, Statius does so obliquely here, by inference and not by name, buried in the middle of a list of places that sent troops to the main character of the scene, Parthenopaeus. The references to these gods' love affairs, though, stand out in the context of troops being sent to war, changing the focus from Parthenopaeus' troops to the foibles of the gods.⁴⁶ Statius does not criticize or laugh at authority figures directly in the *Thebaid*, but here he has found a way to use the reader to do it for him.

Preparation for the Underworld

Desperate for knowledge of the war to come, Eteocles consults Tiresias who advises necromancy. Whether to build anticipation of dread, as in a horror movie, to delay further the inevitable conflict, to provide detail for its own sake, or some combination thereof, the narrator provides a description of the preparations that Tiresias

⁴⁶ Georgacopoulou 2005, 120.

must undertake in order to see into the underworld. Among other preparations, altars are erected to Hecate, the Furies, Proserpina, and Pluto:

tibi, rector Averni,
quamquam infossus humo superat tamen agger in auras
pineus. (4.457-59)

To you, ruler of Avernus, a mound of pine reaches into the air, though dug into the ground.

As Pluto is the most important of the underworld gods and goddesses listed, he gets not only the highest altar from Tiresias but the rhetorical flourish from Statius. This mark of respect is consistent with that shown in several earlier apostrophes to authoritative gods such as Apollo and Jupiter.⁴⁷ In the necromancy scene in Lucan Book 6, the one apostrophe to a god spoken by the resurrected soldier to *Fortuna* is much more shocking and grotesque to the reader; Statius' apostrophe to Pluto is tame and pedestrian by contrast.

The Seven on the March

As soon as Eteocles has his prophecy from Laius, the narrator pivots to a vision of the Seven on the move, zealous for combat. The narrator apostrophizes Apollo to introduce what will become the Hypsipyle interlude:

quis iras
flexerit, unde morae, medius quis euntibus error,
Phoebe, doce: nos rara manent exordia fama. (4.649-51)

Instruct me, Phoebus, who bent their anger, whence came delay, and what wandering interrupted the marchers. Scant origins of its fame remain for us.

⁴⁷ Georgacopoulou 2005, 149, remarks that, at 8.193-94, the Argives use the same phrase, *rector Averni*, to refer to Pluto in their collective mourning after the descent of Amphiaraus. There may be a hint of sarcasm in the non-apostrophic use in book 8, but more likely it is used as respectfully as that of all the other gods' references in the Argives' speech.

This is the first time in the *Thebaid* that the narrator has apostrophized Apollo, and he does so in a place where one might expect an apostrophe to a Muse to inspire the poet to reveal the story of Hypsipyle, which runs all the way through Book 5.⁴⁸ An apostrophe to Apollo, however, is more appropriate here as it continues the sense of prophetic revelation that the most recent episode of necromancy so powerfully injected into the narrative. The scene changes quickly, but an apostrophe to Apollo in his manifestation as god of prophecy reinforces the importance of this change of scene. The narrator has created space to emphasize particularly the *morae* and the *error* of the Argive army, which in turn creates an intertextual cue to read this alongside not only the *morae* and *error* of Vergil's Aeneas, but also the delaying tactics of the narration itself.⁴⁹

Book 5

Hypsipyle's Story

Hypsipyle tells the Argives how the women of Lemnos, seemingly abandoned by their husbands as they fight the Thracians, slaughter the men upon their return. Aged Polyxo, addressing the Lemnian women in a frenzy, claims that Venus herself had appeared to her, promising better husbands if they only get rid of the ones they have. Polyxo persuades the others (except for Hypsipyle) to act, and Hypsipyle's narrative includes the scene of their solemn promise to carry out the deed. Hypsipyle then apostrophizes Enyo and Proserpina:

⁴⁸ To help connect the Vergilian and Homeric predecessors to Bacchus' involvement in *Thebaid* 4, Ganiban 2007, 97 n. 8, cites this apostrophic passage for its emphasis on *morae* in the Bacchus episode. In *Aeneid* 1.34-179, Juno sends a storm that shipwrecks Aeneas and his companions in Carthage; in *Aeneid* 7.286-571, Juno sends Allecto to create *furor* by which the Trojan's settlement in Italy might be delayed. In *Odyssey* 5.262-96, Poseidon sends a storm shipwrecking Odysseus at Phaeacia.

⁴⁹ Georgacopoulou 2005, 124-25; Vessey 1973, 165-67.

Tu Martia testis Enyo
atque inferna Ceres, Stygiaeque Acheronte recluso
ante preces venere deae. (5.155-57)

You, Martian Enyo and Ceres of the Underworld, were witness (to the pact), and, Acheron opened, the Stygian goddesses came (even) before their prayers.

The blatant mixing of Roman and Greek names (*Martia...Enyo, Ceres, Stygiae*) may be a way for Statius to inject novelty;⁵⁰ the fact that Enyo has never before in extant Latin literature been given any epithet also supports that notion. The use of Enyo instead of Bellona may also be for metrical reasons, since Bellona, with its initial long vowel, would not fit as the last word of a hexameter verse. Most likely--or in addition to these reasons--Bellona was originally a positive goddess, long associated with victory and one of the revered benefactors of Rome.⁵¹ Enyo, on the other hand, was depicted since Homer as delighting in blood and destruction.⁵² The mingling of Greek with Roman aside, the apostrophe to these particular goddesses intensifies the tone of dread, marks the point of no return for the Lemnian women, and provides a fascinating juxtaposition with the next sentence in which the repetition of Venus emphasizes her role in the coming massacre (*sed fallit ubique / mixta Venus, Venus arma tenet, Venus admovet iras*, 5.157-58).

Serpent Kills Archemorus

As soon as Hypsipyle finishes telling her tale, the scene turns abruptly to the child that Hypsipyle unwittingly left alone, then to a lengthy description (5.505-33) of the

⁵⁰ That Polyxo instigates the Lemnian women already makes Statius' version novel. Vessey 1970b, 45, notes that neither Valerius nor Apollonius' versions of the story gave Polyxo this role.

⁵¹ Wiseman 1982, 58.

⁵² Homer, *Iliad* 5.333, 592. In the former example, Enyo has the epithet πτολίπορθος, "city-sacking." Because Enyo has a modifier in this apostrophe as nowhere else in Latin literature, Statius may have had this Homeric example in mind.

serpent that is about to kill the child accidentally. At the end of this description, the narrator apostrophizes Apollo:

Quantus et ille sacri spiris intorta movebat
cornua Parnasi, donec tibi, Delie, fixus
vexit harundineam centeno vulnere silvam. (5.531-33)

And it (the serpent) was as big as the one that used to move on with its coils the entangled horns of holy Parnassus, until it, pierced by you, Delian, bore a reedy forest with a hundred wounds.

This apostrophe brings the description of the serpent to a climax and the narrator to a breathless frenzy, which he continues in the following lines by means of rhetorical questions and another apostrophe to the child:

Quis tibi, parve, deus tam magni pondera fati
sorte dedit? Tune hoc vix prima ad limina vitae
hoste iaces? An ut inde sacer per saecula Grais
gentibus et tanto dignus morerere sepulcro? (5.534-37)

What god, little one, gave you by lot the weight of so great a fate? Do you by this enemy lie dead, though barely at the first gates of life? Or so that you will henceforth be revered through the ages to the Greek nations, worthy of so great a tomb?

Apollo was addressed, of course, because he slew the Python described in the apostrophic sentence. This apostrophe differs from that addressed to *Pythie* in 4.289 because the environment here does not evoke the story of Apollo's failed seduction of Daphne. It is not so important that the narrator addresses Apollo particularly as it is that he uses apostrophe to bring the tone of the passage to a fever pitch that he can then extend into an emotional commentary on the awful fate of the innocent Archemorus, himself apostrophized not by a name, but with the pathetic *parve*.

Aftermath of Archemorus' Death

In the manner of a *deus ex machina*, Hypsipyle's sons by Jason are restored to her after the Argives save her from the angry Lycurgus. Statius uses a rhetorical

question and an apostrophe to Bacchus to elevate a sympathetic tone in favor of

Hypsipyle:

Quis superum tanto solatus funera voto
pensavit lacrimas inopinaque gaudia maestae
rettulit Hypsipyle? Tu, gentis conditor, Euan,
qui geminos iuvenes Lemni de litore vectos
intuleras Nemeae mirandaque fata parabas. (5.710-14)

Which of the gods from so great a prayer soothed her loss, balanced her tears, and returned unhopd for joy to sad Hypsipyle? It was you, Euan, founder of the race, who had brought in her twin young men, borne from the shore of Lemnos to Nemea, and began to prepare an amazing fate.

Nugent points out that this reunification is a second consequence of the telling of her tale to the Argives (the first, of course, being the death of Archemorus).⁵³ The whole episode is a series of balances and swings between opposites: life and death, fathers and sons, salvation and damnation, loss and restoration.⁵⁴ The reunification of Hypsipyle and her sons balances the loss of Archemorus and enduring rape at Jason's hands and represents the reward for saving her father.⁵⁵ Statius deems such a moment worthy not just of an emotion-heightening apostrophe, but one to Bacchus particularly in his manifestation of *gentis conditor*, King Thoas' father. Thus does the theme of fathers and sons in the Hypsipyle episode continue.

Immediately after this reunification, Amphiarus stresses that the games in honor of Archemorus are another happy event that springs from his unfortunate demise.

⁵³ Nugent 1996, 52.

⁵⁴ Vessey 1970b adds that the whole of Hypsipyle's tale, the way she tells it, offers a parallel to the fate of Argos that the Argives fail to comprehend.

⁵⁵ Nugent 1996, 52, balances Hypsipyle's own belief that the death of Archemorus was the price to be paid by *not* killing her father with the possibility that the restoration of her sons is the reward for the same.

Amphiaraus credits *certus Apollo* (5.734) with the idea, and the warrior-priest apostrophizes Apollo both to give him due respect and to offer a prayer:

Et meruit; et pulchra suis libamina Virtus
manibus, atque utinam plures innectere pergas,
Phoebe, moras, semperque novis bellare vetemur
casibus, et semper Thebe funesta recedat. (5.742-45)

And he (i.e., Archemorus) deserves (games); and may Virtue give noble offerings with her hands, and may you, Phoebus, hasten to weave more delays, and may we always be forbidden to make war due to new happenstance, and may deadly Thebes always recede.

This is a rare sort of apostrophe to a god in the *Thebaid* because, in Lucanian fashion, it opens space for a prayer, in this case the futile hope that the war can be postponed indefinitely. It is appropriate for Amphiaraus to apostrophize Apollo because Amphiaraus is a seer, but inappropriate because Apollo does not have the power or authority to grant his request. The apostrophe, then, reinforces the futility of the wish.

Book 6

Before the first event of Archemorus' funeral games, the chariot race, the narrator apostrophizes Apollo:⁵⁶

Primus sudor equos. Dic incluta, Phoebe, regentum
nomina, dic ipsos; neque enim generosior umquam
alipedum collata acies, ceu praepete cursu
confligant densae volucres aut litore in uno
Aeolus insanis statuatur certamina ventis. (6.296-300)

The first sweat is for the horses. Tell, Phoebus, the renowned names of the drivers, tell the (horses) themselves; for never was a nobler array of swift-footed beasts gathered together, as though a crowd of birds were contending in a nimble onrush or Aeolus were setting up races for the wild winds on one shore.

⁵⁶ For a thorough discussion of Greek and Roman epic funeral games, including a full treatment of those in Statius, see Willis 1941.

Apollo is the keystone that connects all the varied levels of interpretation, from the intratextual to the metapoetic.⁵⁷ On the most basic level, this apostrophe to Apollo signals his involvement in the outcome of the race on behalf of Amphiaraus. From there, meaning expands quickly and in many directions; the connection between Apollo and games immediately make this apostrophe different in function and significance than that found in 4.649-51. Both Apollo and Amphiaraus are poet figures, Apollo with his long-standing association with the Muses, inspiration, and poetry, and Amphiaraus as *vates*, the receiver of Apollo's inspiration and the instrument by which that inspiration is relayed. Since Pindar has there been a metaphorical link between athletic competition and poetry;⁵⁸ in the *Silvae*, Statius has already recognized Apollo as the *rector*, driver, of his forays into epic.⁵⁹ Though Statius is outwardly modest about the placement of his *Thebaid* in the Greco-Roman epic tradition, this apostrophe to Apollo also helps signal the pride that Statius has in his poem (*neque...generosior umquam...collata acies*).⁶⁰

Statius' apostrophe at the beginning of funeral games is an original contribution to the epic tradition. In *Iliad* 23 and *Aeneid* 5, neither the opening events of the games for Patroclus nor those for Anchises begin with an apostrophe. The first contest for Patroclus is also a chariot race, even though the chariot race was not the customary

⁵⁷ Lovatt (2005, 1-54) provides many important contributions to the multi-level understanding of the games in Statius.

⁵⁸ *Pythian* 10.65; *Isthmian* 2.1-5, 7.17-19, 8.61-63; *Olympian* 6.22-25.

⁵⁹ *Silvae* 4.7.21-24.

⁶⁰ Lovatt 2005, 29-32, convincingly places Statius in a tradition of Roman poets (Lucretius, Propertius, and Vergil) who link chariot race imagery and the act of poetic composition. In this metapoetic tradition, Apollo and Amphiaraus, linked as figures of revelation, signal that the chariot race can be read as a dramatization of the process of poetic composition.

first event for funeral games (it was usually last),⁶¹ but there is no apostrophe that introduces the contestants, only the list of prizes and the names of the contestants. With this original apostrophe, Statius asserts the importance of the scene, in every level of interpretation, as though willing it to stand with their epic predecessors.⁶² Taken along with the games of *Iliad* 23 and *Aeneid* 5, the resulting triad fills out a progression: games for a baby (Archemorus), a young man in the prime of life (Patroclus), and a man full of years (Anchises).

Book 7

Jupiter Sends Mercury to Gradivus

Upon the conclusion of Archemorus' funeral games at the end of book 6, book 7 changes the scene to Jupiter, gazing disapprovingly at the delay of the war. Angry and impatient, Jupiter intends to send Mercury to order Mars to start the martial festivities. As Smolenaars points out, the primary models for this Jovian intervention are the command to Calypso in *Odyssey* 5.28-150 and Vergil's imitation of that episode in *Aeneid* 4.219-95.⁶³ In those scenes, Zeus/Jupiter hears a prayer that in turn prods the king of gods and men into action. In *Thebaid* 7, Jupiter acts very much on his own without needing to be asked. Also original to Statius' scene is the apostrophe that Jupiter employs to express his indignation: *Hicne tuus, Gradive, furor (7.20)? "Is this your frenzy, Gradivus?,"* where *this* refers to the contests of the funeral games. To reinforce his point in sarcastic fashion, the next two lines combine imagery of the games

⁶¹ Willis 1941, 417.

⁶² Apollonius mentions in *Argonautica* 1 that funeral games were held for Kyzikos, but there is no detailed description. Interestingly, Georgacopoulou 2005, 126-27, points out that the narrator often interrupts in the lines following this apostrophe, cancelling out the invocation of Apollo's direct involvement in revealing this information.

⁶³ Smolenaars 1994, 3.

and of war: *sonat orbe recusso / discus et Oebalii coeunt in proelia caestus* (7.20-21), "the discus resounds upon the reverberation of the circle and Oebalian gloves meet in battle."⁶⁴ Jupiter's apostrophe to Mars here simply shows his irritation, but is also used to differentiate this scene of divine intervention from the Homeric and Vergilian models.⁶⁵

Beginning of the Fighting

To mark the beginning of the long-delayed war, a critical moment in the epic, Statius invokes the Muses:

Nunc age, Pieriae, non vos longinqua, sorores,
consulimus, vestras acies vestramque referte
Aoniam; vidistis enim, dum Marte propinquo
horrent Tyrrhenos Heliconia plectra tumultus. (7.628-31)

Now come, Pierian sisters, we do not consult you of distant events, but recount your battle lines and your Aonia; for you have seen it, while Helicon's quills were shuddering at the Tyrrhenian uprisings, with Mars close at hand.

Besides indicating the start of the conflict, this apostrophe creates another opportunity to take elements from similar invocations in Homer, Vergil, and Valerius, and create something new.⁶⁶ The name *Pieriae* alone makes the invocation Statian, recalling the opening lines of his epic (*Pierius...calor*, 1.3).⁶⁷ The repetition of second

⁶⁴ Lovatt 2005, 7, cites this passage as an example of the importance of the relationship between games and war in Statius.

⁶⁵ Smolenaars 1994, 14, recognizes the apostrophe and cites its "strong dramatic force."

⁶⁶ For a full comparison of these invocations, see Smolenaars 1994, 280-83, 414-15.

⁶⁷ Significantly, Ahl 1986, 2903, goes much further. Pierian means Emathian or Macedonian; Lucan's civil wars between Caesar and Pompey (as well as between Octavian and the Republicans) were Emathian, Macedonian. Ahl also points out the contest in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 5.300-678 between the Pierian and Heliconian sisters (Helicon being the place for Thebes' civil wars), in which the Pierians criticize the gods and the Heliconians praise them. In spite of the many examples of consequences that follow criticism of the gods (Arachne in the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid and Lucan in real life), Statius' Muses are Pierian.

person pronouns/adjectives (*vos... vestras... vestram...*) bestow on the Muses ownership for knowledge of the scene, a touch original to Statius. This sense of ownership is reinforced with the verb *vidistis*, a verb which resurrects more completely than Valerius' usage did (6.33, *quos vidistis*) the comprehensive sense of seeing, knowing, and presence with which Homer imbued his Muses: ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαὶ ἔστε πάρεστε τε ἴστε τε πάντα (*Iliad* 2.485), "for you goddess exist, are present, and know all things."

More significantly, this apostrophe heightens the emotional level which Statius maintains through the pathetic scene of Eunaeus, himself addressed with a sympathetic apostrophe (7.649-52). Neither Vergil, Valerius, nor Homer have anything as emotionally intense following their invocations as Statius chose to incorporate here. The invocation to the Muses at 7.628-31 is not of great significance in itself beyond its clever originality, but as a way to open emotional space for the Eunaeus/Capaneus episode, it is very important.

Amphiaraus' Final Moments

Of the Seven who fight and are given an *aristeia*, Amphiaraus comes first, perhaps, as Smolenaars suggests, to keep him as far away from the madness to come as possible.⁶⁸ The gods Apollo and Mars ensure that Amphiaraus will earn glory on the battlefield and will not be slain or humiliated by any mortal. To emphasize the latter point, the narrator apostrophizes Mars:

Nec tarde fratri, Gradive, dedisti
ne qua manus vatem, ne quid mortalia bello
laedere tela queant. (7.695-97)

Nor were you slow, Gradivus, to grant your brother that no mortal hand, no mortal weapons could harm him at all in battle.

⁶⁸ Smolenaars 1994, 322.

Compared with the opening lines of *Iliad* 5, in which the narrator simply describes Athena giving Diomedes strength and courage to excel on the battlefield, the narrator's apostrophe to Mars makes this passage original.⁶⁹ It begins to bestow a sense of sympathy upon Amphiaraus, who has been transformed, physically and mentally, from priest to warrior. The narrator builds sympathy for Amphiaraus through an editorial comment (*si vacet*, 7.702) about what he could do with his new found strength if only he had time left in his life. The rhetorical question and exclamation at lines 705-08 in turn punctuate the end of the introduction of Amphiaraus before his *aristeia*.⁷⁰ In another sense, the fact that the apostrophe is to Gradivus emphasizes the end result of Amphiaraus' transformation into a warrior. The rhetorical question and exclamation ten lines later emphasize his psychic overhaul from priest to warrior. Masterson concludes that Amphiaraus has "embraced his masculine destiny."⁷¹

Book 8

As a transition from mourning over Amphiaraus to an account of the renewed fighting at Thebes, the narrator invokes Calliope:

Sed iam bella vocant: alias nova suggere vires,
Calliope, maiorque chelyn mihi tendat Apollo. (8.373-74)

But now the wars call (me): provide more strength anew, Calliope, and let a greater Apollo tune my lyre.

While these lines mark an abrupt transition into the next battle scene, there is a peculiar emphasis on novelty in this apostrophe. Besides the juxtaposed *alias nova*,

⁶⁹ For the consent of Mars to Apollo as an original Statian touch, see Georgacopoulou 2005, 143.

⁷⁰ Smolenaars 1994, 321, calls these lines an apostrophe even though there is neither a direct address nor any second person words.

⁷¹ Masterson 2005, 292.

this is the only example of *nova Calliope* and *maior Apollo* in Latin literature. From this point, there is more or less constant fighting into Book 11, culminating in the duel between Polynices and Eteocles. As so often in the *Thebaid*, Statius reveals his consciousness of his epic predecessors and his desire to meet the requirements of epic in a way that both acknowledges the old masters and adds himself alongside them.

Vergil apostrophized Calliope once in the *Aeneid* to introduce an aristeia for Turnus. Statius' apostrophe to Calliope is *nova* because it provides a higher emotional level which he uses to describe over a space of fifty-three lines (8.375-427) the presence of Death, the Furies, and Mars on the battlefield, then a general portrait of the melee, before zooming in the narrative camera on individual mortals in the fight. The *nova Calliope* and *maior Apollo* is the Flavian equivalent of turning this epic battle into a 3-D, wide-angle movie experience.

Book 9

Tydeus' Cannibalism

Book 8 ends with the gruesome scene of Tydeus's mouth befouled with the brains and blood of Melanippus, whose head had been brought to him. Book 9 begins with the horror that the Thebans and even Tydeus' own allies feel at the report of Tydeus' savagery; the narrator adds an apostrophe which intensifies this sense of revulsion:

Quin te, divum implacidissime, quamquam
praecipuum tunc caedis opus, Gradive, furebas,
offensum virtute ferunt, nec comminus ipsum
ora sed et trepidos alio torsisse iugales. (9.4-7)

O most savage of the gods, although you raged at that time in the work of extraordinary slaughter, they say that you were offended by his "gallantry", that you yourself did not turn your face (toward the act), but even turned your frightened yoked (horses) elsewhere.

The apostrophe gets its power from its placement, from the different voices that speak in it, and from some unexpected turns. This address to Mars is the height of a crescendo that starts with the shock of the Thebans and rises with that of Tydeus' own side. Georgacopoulou observes how the verb *ferunt* injects an objective voice of rumor into the apostrophe that interacts with that of the narrator.⁷² The adjective *implacidissime* is surprising, the only instance in which it describes gods, who are usually *placidus*.⁷³ Statius stresses Mars' savagery by associating him further with *caedis* and *furebas*, then shocks the reader with the oxymoron *offensum virtute* and with the image of Mars being so disgusted by the act that he does not even want his horses to see it.⁷⁴

The heightened effect of the apostrophe continues with a speech by Eteocles, in which he apostrophizes Jupiter:

Sic pergant rabidi claraque hac laude fruuntur,
dum videas haec, summe pater. (9.21-22)

Thus may they go on in the madness and enjoy this sort of renowned praise, so long as you see it, highest father.

Eteocles' apostrophe recognizes Jupiter as an ultimate, omniscient judge who must finally support Eteocles' cause because he is not so evidently mad as his brother and his blood-thirsty allies. Dewar points out that this assumption, like so much in the narrator's apostrophe to Mars, is unexpected because characters in ancient poetry

⁷² Georgacopoulou 2005, 145-46.

⁷³ Dewar 1991, 59, contrasts the usage here with Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 11.623, *placidissime*, *Somne, deorum*. Before Statius, only Horace (*Odes* 4.14.10) and Propertius (4.9.14) used a form of *implacidus*.

⁷⁴ Dewar 1991, 59. For a discussion of the devaluation of *virtus* in the *Thebaid*, see Fantham 1995 and Masterson 2005. Ganiban 2007, 125, takes the discussion of *virtus* an important step further: if a god can be shocked by *virtus*, then the meaning of *virtus* in this epic world and its relationship to the gods are both called into question.

usually complain that Jupiter sees wrongdoing but does not act.⁷⁵ This apostrophe marks the rhetorical climax of the crescendo that began at the beginning of the book.

Hippomedon and Crenaeus

After Hippomedon's horse is killed at 9.284-86, his *aristeia* gathers both momentum and cruelty over the following thirty lines. Near the end of those lines, the narration builds to an emotional peak through the succession of a rhetorical question, an exclamation, and an apostrophe to one of Hippomedon's victims. At the emotional height of Hippomedon's *aristeia*, Statius inserts an apostrophe to the Muses:

Nunc age, quis tumidis magnum expugnaverit undis
Hippomedonta labor, cur ipse excitus in arma
Ismenos, doctae nosse indulgete Sorores:
vestrum opus ire retro et senium depellere Famae. (9.315-18)

Come now, learned Sisters, and grant me the favor of knowing what labor overcame great Hippomedon in the swollen waves, why Ismenos himself was roused into arms: it is your work to reach back and drive away the senility of Fame.

Stylistically, these lines combine contemporary vocabulary with elements borrowed from unexpected sources. Vergil began an apostrophe to Erato with *nunc age* in *Aeneid* 7.37, but the phrase evokes didactic both in Vergil and particularly in Lucretius, who used it fifteen times.⁷⁶ *Doctae* recalls Neoteric usage and so makes *doctae sorores* a rare turn of phrase.⁷⁷ Statius uses *indulgete* with a meaning coined in his generation along with a construction (dative and infinitive) devised by him.⁷⁸ He

⁷⁵ Dewar 1991, 63.

⁷⁶ *Georgics* 4.149; *De Rerum Natura* 1.265, 921, 953; 2.62, 333, 730; 3.417; 4.110, 176, 269, 673, 722; 6.495, 535, 738.

⁷⁷ cf. Ovid, *Fasti* 6.811 and Martial, *Epigrams* 1.70.15, 9.42.3. McNelis 2007, 135, notes that Statius used the adjective in *Silvae* 5.3.108, *doctave Cyrene* to refer to Callimachus.

⁷⁸ Dewar 1991, 120.

models Crenaeus, Hippomedon's last victim, on Homer's Asteropaeus in *Iliad* 21.139-204.⁷⁹ In Homer, no apostrophe introduces the scene. Lovatt suggests that Hippomedon is associated with Hercules (*labor*), hoping to succeed Achilles in a way similar to Statius asking the Muses' help to refer back to Homer.⁸⁰

Novel also is the mid-scene placement of a four line apostrophe to the Muses since such invocations usually come at the beginning of a work or before particularly difficult parts of the story.⁸¹ Statius has moved the traditional placement of an invocation of the Muses in order to emphasis both the message within the apostrophe, the consequences of impiety, and to highlight the related theme of the following scene, respect for the gods and what is theirs.

Book 10

Menoceus

Inviting comparison with the apostrophe to the Muses at 9.315-18, Statius salutes the virtues of Menoeceus with another apostrophe to Clio:

Nunc age, quis stimulos et pulchrae gaudia mortis
addiderit iuveni (neque enim haec absentibus umquam
mens homini transmissa deis), memor incipe Clio,
saecula te quoniam penes et digesta vetustas. (10.628-31)

Come now, remembering Clio, and begin (telling) who put before the youth the incitement and joy in a beautiful death (for this resolve has never been conveyed to a mortal without the gods), because in your hands is the arrangement of generations and the time of old.

⁷⁹ Dewar 1991, 121.

⁸⁰ Lovatt 2005, 120-21. Lovatt also notes that the wording of line 318 recalls Lucan 4.812: *a quibus omne aevi senium sua fama repellit*.

⁸¹ Dewar 1991, 119.

The two apostrophes have similar structures: an indirect question immediately follows the opening *nunc age*, the addressee comes in the third line, and the entire fourth line is devoted to the Muse's attribute of remembering what happened long ago. The previous apostrophe introduced the impiety of Hippomedon; this one the heroic piety of Menoeceus. The two scenes provide opposite poles of the spectrum of pious virtue.⁸²

A note on the addressee Clio is also appropriate. Georgacopoulou points out the irony in the invocation to Clio as the traditional muse of history.⁸³ Because Statius invented a key aspect of Menoeceus' suicide, the involvement of *Virtus* under the guise of Manto, the episode cannot really be a historical event for Clio to remember. Rather, she marks and gives solemnity to the episode.

Capaneus

Statius uses apostrophe to the Muses again to introduce the end of Capaneus, the paragon of blasphemous impiety. Capaneus' blasphemy is on a different plane from that of Hippomedon. While Capaneus has been consistently profane throughout the epic, Hippomedon became profane gradually as his martial ardor grew into madness. Because Capaneus is in a category all his own, Statius interrupts his narrative to exclaim that his inspiration and method of telling of Capaneus' final struggle must itself border on madness:

Maior ab Aoniis poscenda amentia lucis:
mecum omnes audete deae! (10.830-31)

⁸² This may help explain why Statius placed the whole Menoeceus episode so late in the story, as opposed to the beginning of the fighting where Euripides put in the *Phoenissae*. See Vessey 1971 for a complete comparison of Statius' Menoeceus and Euripides'.

⁸³ Georgacopoulou 2005, 177-79.

I must seek a greater insanity from the Aonian groves: all you goddesses,
dare with me!

According to Georgacopoulou, a bold character requires a bold narrator; the *insania* of Capaneus must be matched with the *amentia* of the narrator.⁸⁴ The required boldness helps explain why the madness must be *maior*, but the adjective could also recall and contrast *Aeneid* 7.44-45, where Vergil invokes Erato and talks of her *maior ordo*, *maius opus*.⁸⁵ This is the third consecutive apostrophe to Muses highlighting impiety or piety; that correlation is likely meaningful.

Book 11

The Tide of War Turns

With the death of the blasphemer Capaneus, the momentum of the fighting shifts in favor of the Thebans. To express amazement at this turn of events, the narrator apostrophizes the god of war, appeased by the self-sacrifice of Menoeceus, in an exclamation: *Quas volvis, Gradive, vices* (11.40)! "What changes you roll, Gradivus!" The vocabulary echoes Vergil, *Aeneid* 3.375-76: *sic fata deum rex / sortitur volvitque vices*. Vergil's line is a matter-of-fact sentiment about the power of Jupiter, meant to be unquestioned. While the vocabulary here likens Mars to Vergil's Jupiter, this apostrophe reminds one of an excitable sports commentator after a critical score. Georgacopoulou sees the apostrophe as lending a commiserating voice to the narrator, comparing him to a tragic chorus lamenting the changability of fate.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Georgacopoulou 2005, 205-06.

⁸⁵ Georgacopoulou 2005, 207.

⁸⁶ Georgacopoulou 2005, 144-45. Interestingly, Georgacopoulou cites two examples in Greek tragedy of statements from characters, not choruses, about the changable nature of the gods, Euripides, *Suppliants* 331 (ὁ γὰρ θεὸς πάντ' ἀναστρέφει πάλιν, "for the god turns everything upside down again") and Aeschylus, *Seven Against Thebes* 412-16 (especially 414: ἔργον δ' ἐν κύβοις Ἄρης κρινεῖ, "and Ares will determine the outcome with dice"). The matter-of-fact tone of these statements, from Theseus and

Polynices at Prayer

At 11.205, Polynices prays to Jupiter. Though unmistakable omens come forth indicating at least something wrong, Polynices continues the ritual. A messenger, Aepytus, runs to Polynices with the message that Eteocles is at the walls calling for him. His brief address to Polynices begins with an appeal to break off his *pious cultus* and ends with an apostrophe to Jupiter, surprising in its accusatory tone: *Nunc tempus erat, sator optime divum. / Quid meruit Capaneus* (11.248-49)? "Now was the time (to hurl your thunderbolt), best father of the gods. What did Capaneus deserve?" After the narrator used intricate apostrophes to the Muses to highlight consequences for impiety and the virtue of piety, this insignificant character plainly and without consequence blurts out that Polynices' pious observance is useless. Not fearing divine retribution, his address of Jupiter with the normally respectful *sator optime divum* is here ironic after he criticizes Jupiter for not using his thunderbolt against Eteocles to end the conflict.⁸⁷

After the Duel

Because the end of the duel between Polynices and Eteocles is one of the climactic moments of the epic, Statius constructs an intricate, dramatic apostrophe that has intratextual, intertextual, and arguably political implications:

Ite, truces animae, funestaque Tartara leto
polluite et cunctas Erebi consumite poenas.
Vosque malis hominum, Stygiae, iam parcite, divae:
omnibus in terris scelus hoc omnique sub aevo
viderit una dies, monstrumque infame futuris

Eteocles, respectively, are akin to Vergil's. The contrast with the emotion in Statius' apostrophe is clearer as a result.

⁸⁷ This is not the first time that the *Thebaid* has had a nonentity addressing Jupiter as *sator* in the midst of criticism (cf. 1.178-80, discussed earlier). It is probably best not to make too much of this because there are so many other uses of this kind of address by major characters and in a respectful way, cf. 3.488, 5.22, 7.155, 7.734, 9.511.

excidat, et soli memorent haec proelia reges. (11.574-79)

Go, savage souls, and pollute deadly Tartarus with your death and exhaust all the punishments of Erebus. And you, goddesses of Styx, spare now the evils of mankind. Let one day see this crime in all the world and under every age, let this notorious event fall away from future times, and may only kings recall these battles.

The emotional nature of apostrophe makes it a natural punctuation for the duel.

On a basic, superficial level, the suffusion of so much underworld imagery (*Tartara, Erebi, Stygiae*) and vocabulary of evil (*truces, funesta, leto, polluite, poenas, malis*) in such a short span of lines gives this passage the darkness it needs. The turn of phrase *parcite, divae* adds a particular air of desperation to the passage.⁸⁸ Four hundred lines earlier, Jupiter used *parcere* to keep the other gods from watching the duel (*stat parcere mundo / caelitibusque meis*, 11.131-32), his concern being only that of the gods, and not the prevention of human suffering. Because Jupiter is clearly uninterested in human welfare, Statius depicts himself, in desperation, as having to turn to the Furies for relief.⁸⁹ Statius therefore adds himself to the other figures in the *Thebaid* who invoke the Furies (Oedipus, Dis, and Tisiphone), distinguishing himself as the only member of that list seeking to prevent, rather than promote *nefas*.⁹⁰

Models for this important apostrophe are found in Vergil, Ovid, and Lucan.⁹¹

Vergil's intrusion into the Nisus and Euryalus episode provides clear verbal echoes for Statius' apostrophe:

⁸⁸ On an intertextual note, Venini 1971, 147, recalls Ovid's hysterical use of *parcite, divi* in *Tristia* 1.2.1-5, where Ovid bemoans his fate as an exile, though dutiful to the emperor; there are two other uses of *parcite divi*, both in Seneca's *Medea*, 595 and 668-69.

⁸⁹ Ganiban 2007, 201.

⁹⁰ Ganiban 2007, 204.

⁹¹ See Ganiban 2007, 201-04.

Fortunati ambo! Si quid mea carmina possunt,
nulla dies umquam memori vos eximet aevo,
dum domus Aeneae Capitoli immobile saxum
accolet imperiumque pater Romanus habebit. (*Aeneid* 9.446-49)

Fortunate both! If my poem can (do) anything, no day will ever remove you from remembering time, so long as Aeneas' home stands near the Capitol's unmoveable rock and the Roman father has power.

Nulla dies corresponds with *una dies*, *memori* with *memorent*, and *aevo* with *aevum*.

The goals of the passages, however, are opposed. Vergil intended to immortalize the Trojan effort and by association the new principate; Statius wants the brothers' strife forgotten by all but kings, for whom this negative example could help preserve a king's reign.⁹² In Statius, the Furies stay to wreak more havoc, such as Creon's prohibition of enemy burial. In *Aeneid* 7 (Allecto) and *Metamorphoses* 4 (Tisiphone), the Furies return to the underworld, their job on earth finished. Where Statius does not hesitate to provide this negative example after the brothers' fight, Lucan addresses himself, struggling in the midst of telling of the battle of Pharsalus with providing immortality to the battle and those who fight (and win) it:

Hanc fuge, mens, partem belli tenebrisque relinque,
nullaque tantorum discat me vate malorum,
quam multum bellis liceat civilibus, aetas.
A potius pereant lacrimae pereantque querellae:
quidquid in hac acie gessisti, Roma, tacebo. (*Pharsalia* 7.552-56)

Mind, flee this part of the war and leave it to the shadows, and let no age learn of such great evils from me as the bard, how much is permitted in civil war. Rather, let the tears perish and let the complaints perish: whatever you committed in this battle line, Rome, I will be silent about it.

⁹² McNelis 2007, 148, cites *Odyssey* 8.580 for the traditionally epic expectation that heroic exploits are preserved for future generations; "Statius' *futuris* particularly inverts the Homeric ἐσσομένοι." Ahl 1986, 2887, supposes that this apostrophe also serves as a historical point: in neither myth nor history is civil war confined only to the two or few parties that have a disagreement.

Lucan internalizes the conflict about his representation of *nefas*, while Statius ascribes that representation to the power of the Furies.

On another, potentially dangerous level, the strength of this apostrophe becomes all the more significant if one reads a parallel between the Theban (Oedipus and his twin sons) and Flavian (Vespasian and his two sons) dynasties. After all, this apostrophe asserts a connection between kings and Furies, assuming one between myth and reality.⁹³ Reading the *Thebaid* in this way, Dominik considers this apostrophe one of several passages that has "an implicit reference to the responsibilities of a monarch and a subtle warning against failing to heed them."⁹⁴ Also important in this same line is Lovatt's contrast of the *damnatio memoriae* of the lines immediately following the apostrophe proper (11.577-79) with Vergil's apostrophe to Nisus and Euryalus (*Aeneid* 9.446-49), in which their poetic immortality is linked with that of Rome.⁹⁵

Book 12

Creon's Eulogy

Creon gives a eulogy for his son Menoeceus during which he briefly apostrophizes Jupiter in a sarcastic way. When it occurs to Creon that he and Oedipus, having each lost sons in the war, share the same grief, he exclaims, *Quam similes gemimus, bone Iuppiter, umbras!* (12.87) "How alike, good Jupiter, are the shades over which we

⁹³ Ahl 1986, 2816.

⁹⁴ Dominik 1994, 152. Another such reference, according to Dominik, is the description of the altar of Clementia (12.481-518).

⁹⁵ Lovatt 2005, 77-78, 256. In these same pages, Lovatt remarks on the metapoetic statement embedded in this apostrophe. Statius expresses the desire that such an awful event be witnessed that day and never again; the immortality of his work makes such a desire impossible. In this way, he is like Lucan (7.552-6), who is reluctant to immortalize the civil war, but does exactly that by writing of it.

groan!" Creon addresses Jupiter in his fate-like role as director of destiny; the epithet *bone* contrasts so sharply with the mood in the funereal scene and the increasingly desperate tone that Creon's apostrophe cannot be taken otherwise than bitter sarcasm.⁹⁶ The placement of the adjective *similes*, separated as it is from *umbras* gives it the opportunity to have three different connotations at once, all of them suitable and all of them sarcastic. *Quam similes gemimus*, read left to right, can mean, "How similar (Oedipus and I are) who mourn," as well as "How alike are the deaths that we mourn." With *umbras*, Creon scorns the notion that his sainted son and Oedipus' deranged son can be compared in any way. Creon's apostrophe, particularly the sarcastic epithet *bone*, seems to blame Jupiter for this calamity, but only for a split second, as though too much open censure of the gods, however justified, is not allowed. Instead, Creon's immoderation in grief allows him to become as *saevum* and *immitem* as he implied Jupiter has been, not caring whether he is thought as such when he forbids burial of the Argive dead: *Saevum aedum immitemque vocent si funera Lernae / tecum ardere veto* (12.94-95), "So be it, let them call me harsh and pitiless if I forbid Lerna's dead to burn with you."⁹⁷ Creon's apostrophe is the point of no return between grief and madness; once Creon crowns his dead son immediately after this apostrophe, his *ira* becomes *accensa violentius* (12.93). The apostrophe opens a small space in which to censure Jupiter, an exposure disguised functionally in the passage as a pivot between Creon's indignation and grief.

⁹⁶ Pollmann 2004, 111.

⁹⁷ Vessey 1971, 242, focuses on Creon's misinterpretation of Menoeceus' death and his failure to understand what becoming a "second Oedipus" means. Vessey does not treat the apostrophe, but it does mark Creon's complete unwillingness to entertain the possibility that he and Oedipus can be profitably compared.

Argia Finds Polynices

The last apostrophe to gods in the *Thebaid* comes in impromptu thanksgiving from Argia when she finds the body of her husband Polynices. Argia goes through many different emotions upon her discovery, from grief to guilt to gratitude because she has found him at all; it is here that she apostrophizes the gods and *Fortuna* briefly: *sed bene habet, superi, gratum est, Fortuna* (12.338), "But it is well, gods above; it pleasing, Fortuna." There is not an apostrophe to gods quite like it in the *Thebaid*, not least because these deities are so addressed only one other time (2.488-9), but also perhaps because it is very much suited to the denouement in which it is placed. All that remains is to find what can be found and to grieve.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Pollmann 2004, 168, instead sees this line of self-consolation as ironic. Hoffmann 1999, 37, does not see irony in the line, comparing *Silvae* 2.1.154, *gratum est, Fata*, an expression of what he considers genuine consolation.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

We have just reviewed 105 apostrophes to gods: twenty-four from the *Metamorphoses*, forty-three from the *Pharsalia*, and thirty-eight from the *Thebaid*. This is the first attempt to compile such data, the analysis of which provides new insights into the individual works and across the epics.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* ends in a completely different place from where it began. With novel and unconventional language, the beginning of the work establishes Ovid and his reader as creators and moral agents; with traditional, conventional language, the end of the work cedes power to the newest god in the heavens and his successor on earth. In between, Ovid helps the reader decide how to interpret the apotheosis of Caesar and the reverence of his successor by providing the characteristics of the gods with whom Caesar and Augustus are compared. Apostrophes to the gods are one tool by which Ovid guides his reader to the ultimate conclusion that mortal citizens owe reverence to their divine rulers out of fear, no matter how cruel, unjust, or mad those rulers might be. It is this knowledge of the nature of rulers and the relationship of subjects to those rulers that helps Ovid and his reader retain the exhilarating creative power asserted at the beginning of the work, tempered though it must be by the necessity of subjecting that power to the survival imperative.

The first two apostrophes to gods in the *Metamorphoses* establish power in the author and his reader. In the invocation, Ovid asserts himself as the ultimate creator, ascribing to himself the authority to define the gods and their characteristics. In the beginning was not Epicurean void or a cast of Olympian deities, but *animus*, rational intelligence, imbued with the authority to interpret the religious, ambiguously introduced

as *di*. Ovid builds on the assumption that the reader also has this *animus*. In his apostrophe to Juno during the Callisto episode, for instance, Ovid's apostrophe to Juno introduces the reader as a moral agent to judge the actions of the lustful Jupiter and the mercilessness of Juno herself.

In several places, Ovid uses apostrophes to gods to draw attention to episodes characterizing gods as cruel, unjust, insane, consumed with lust, or otherwise associated with death and tragedy. The Callisto episode portrays Jupiter as uncontrollably lustful and Juno as callously indifferent to mortal suffering. Then in the Coronis story, Apollo's essence combines the worst of Jupiter's licentiousness and Juno's cruelty. Following both these shocking episodes is an apostrophe to Apollo emphasizing his helplessness and highlighting the Chiron and Ocyrhoe episode featuring gods that are not omnipresent and cursed mortals who are helpless in part because their fervent prayers are not heard. An apostrophe to Bacchus emphasizes the Procne and Philomela scene in which gods are absent in the face of horrific injustice; the reader is left to infer that gods are neither omniscient nor omnipresent, lacking any moral sense outside of themselves and their narrow world. Ovid expands on Euripides' version of the Polyxena story to hold all the gods accountable for her sacrifice and the imminent murder of Polydorus. In fact, the only instance of an apostrophe to gods featuring a deity who plays a positive role is in the Iphis episode. There, although Iphis apostrophizes Juno and Hymenaeus, the foreign god Isis comes to her aid. By contrast, the Roman gods are impotent and uncaring. On the whole, Roman gods, especially those who traditionally had the most power, are depicted as least deserving of reverence and worship. By extension, placing Caesar and Augustus

alongside an unworthy Roman pantheon at the end of Book 15 invites the reader's judgement of the worthiness of Caesar and Augustus, as well as the new reality they founded.

The only god that Ovid features through apostrophes to gods as, if not worthy of, then at least due reverence is Bacchus. The narrator's apostrophe to Bacchus during the women's hymn in book 4 is the first apostrophic instance of reverence for a god in the epic. Bacchus is the most real of the gods presented to that point, the one who inspires real fear, demanding as he does worship under pain of gruesome death. Two later apostrophes to Bacchus during the Procne/Philomela and Byblis episodes emphasize this sense of dread by comparing mortals' horrible acts with Bacchic frenzy. Even in the Byblis episode, however, Ovid cannot resist denigrating Bacchus as acting on the same lascivious impulses as Jupiter and Apollo. Be that as it may, the threat of Bacchus' vengeance inspires fearful worship; out of this fear of divine retribution comes the apotheosis of Caesar and the necessity of the worship of his earthly son.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* begins on its feet and ends on its head. With novel and untraditional language in the proem, Ovid asserts himself and his reader as powerful in themselves, capable of creating meaning and new traditions out of the old. On the other hand, using hyper-reverent language, the panegyric to Augustus appears to surrender that creative power to the newest god and his son. Ovid's intervening apostrophes to gods, however, emphasize the gods as capricious and unjust, in which the victims of rape are ennobled, and in which reverence is paired with fear. In that environment, although Ovid's fear may be real enough to inspire such a baroque display of reverence to Augustus, still it is not deep enough for that reverence to be genuine.

Even in the final episode, there is evidence of irreverence just beneath Ovid's display of best behavior. In that way, Ovid refuses to yield the creative power that he asserted at the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*.

The first of two major functions for Lucan's apostrophes to gods is to reorganize Roman theology in a historical context. Apostrophes to the traditional Olympians (Jupiter, Apollo, Mars/Gradivus, Neptune, and Minerva/Pallas individually or *superi/di* collectively) help reveal at best indifference, or at worst an inferred antipathy toward Rome's descent into disaster. Nearly all the apostrophes to individual Olympians are found in the first half of the epic, with many of them grouped in the first two books, often in scenes of helpless prayer from blameless mortals. In the space of seventy lines near the end of Book 1, three mortals apostrophize Jupiter, Apollo, and Gradivus in the context of the dire omens the Romans are trying to interpret. The priest Arruns follows his ritual precisely and with full faith in the gods, yet the omens he sees are horrific. In his apostrophe to Jupiter, Arruns explicitly blames himself, but implicitly censures the gods for their betrayal of Rome. Arruns is confused and frustrated because the religious contract has been broken; if mortals demonstrate their *pietas* by giving the gods their due, the gods should (but no longer) bestow favor and protection. Figulus' apostrophe to *superi*, Apollo, and Gradivus expresses fear alongside his true belief in the gods and their power. A matron then apostrophizes Apollo, betraying frenzied despair. When Book 2 begins, the narrator is no longer confined by the *pietas* of the characters just represented. He therefore apostrophizes Jupiter in an openly contemptuous way, censuring the gods for allowing mankind to know of the coming catastrophe in advance. Shortly after, the young men in Rome who will shortly be

fighting and dying apostrophize the *superi* and Jupiter. They reproach the gods for not giving Rome proper foreign enemies to conquer, and they scold Jupiter for his cruelty.

Up to the end of Book 5, individual Olympians are apostrophized only three times, then only once after that, in a one-time Book 10 apostrophe to Vulcan meant merely to liken the besieged Caesar to lava in a volcano. Effortlessly, the apostrophes to gods shift almost entirely to address *Fortuna*. This shift is significant, a deliberate affront to the traditional, Vergilian theodicy in which the Olympians not only see Rome's destiny as the center of their existence, but in which they hear and respond to mortal prayers, so long as the rituals are done properly. Lucan bluntly establishes his version of theological reality early in the epic.

Instead of allowing the reader to shield himself from or deny the startling, overwhelming consequences of this shift, Lucan uses apostrophes to *Fortuna* for the remainder of the epic to press home his point that capricious, amoral *Fortuna* controls the destiny of Rome, a deity whom no amount of prayer can sway, no matter how meticulously or dutifully the sacrifice is done. The narrator resigns himself to this fact in Book 2 in an apostrophe to *Fortuna* during Pompey's withdrawal from Italy. No less a character than Cato implies in his Book 2 apostrophe to the *superi* that there is no link between virtue and the gods. His seemingly reverent apostrophe to Jupiter and Neptune during the Spanish deluge in Book 4 contrasts the power of *Fortuna* with the impotence of these traditionally dominant gods. Caesar's apostrophe to *Fortuna* and the *superi* during his Book 5 near-death experience signals his recognition and alignment with Lucan's reality. Not only must the reader come to terms with the

demolition of dearly held theological beliefs, but also with the new political reality that the new theology supports.

The second major function of Lucan's apostrophes to gods is to provide a place to vent emotion, drawing on the connection between gods and complaint that Lucan established in the proem. It is interesting, and likely not coincidental, that Lucan directly says that he is not complaining in the proem, yet puts an apostrophe to *Fortuna* two hundred lines later in the mouth of the people of Ariminum to open space for the people to complain--silently. Once Caesar has crossed the Rubicon, only the narrator can speak openly. There are six subsequent examples in which an apostrophe to a god provides an emotional outlet, with the narrator making the address in each of them. Apostrophes to Jupiter in the beginning of Book 2 express fear and exasperation. Curio's defeat in Book 4 prompts an apostrophe to *Fortuna* expressing shame. When Appius consults the Delphic oracle in Book 5, the narrator unleashes upon Apollo a lengthy apostrophe to rant about the injustice of the civil war. Still caught up in anger less than one hundred lines later, the narrator conveys sarcastic indignation over the loss of *pietas* and *fides* (5.297). Predictably, such expressions of fury and vexation continue around the battle of Pharsalus itself in apostrophes to the *superi* before and after the battle. Interestingly, all of these apostrophes to gods expressing anger and frustration are always from the narrator to the *superi* or Olympians, deities whom Lucan has been so careful to establish as impotent and indifferent to human suffering, never to *Fortuna*, whom Lucan has been equally careful to establish as the real, amoral power behind the advancement of history. Just as Lucan (loosely) distanced himself from criticizing Nero directly in the proem, so also did he not direct any anger directly at the

reigning power in the universe, *Fortuna*. It is tempting, then, to establish a link between Nero and the volatile *Fortuna* who has wreaked so much havoc on Rome. If such a link exists, Lucan has created a subtle, ingenious way for him to express his disapproval of the political environment and ascribe to the sitting emperor the same capricious, destructive power as *Fortuna*.

In the *Thebaid*, far more so than in either the *Metamorphoses* or the *Pharsalia*, the Olympian gods are real. They have an interest in human affairs (as opposed to an interest in affairs with humans). Most importantly, they cannot be questioned. Respectful epithets often accompany or stand for the names of gods addressed in the *Thebaid's* apostrophes, setting the gods apart from and above even the unfolding drama of legendary kings, or at least establishing a deferential tone rarely broken in the epic. Jupiter is Homeric again as *summe deorum / terrarum sator* (1.178-79) or simply *aeque* (2.182). Minerva seems more powerful as *Tritonia virgo* (2.684). Apollo becomes mysterious as *Pythie* (4.289) or *Delie* (5.532). Though depicted elsewhere as vengeful, the narrator addresses Bacchus respectfully as *gentis conditor* (5.712) before the reunification of Hypsipyle with her two lost sons.

In a Statian world in which the gods have regained an awe-inspiring distance and much of their traditional power, mortals do express dissatisfaction with their lot and the gods' actions, but in a muted, restrained way. Deep within the wider context of explaining why Argos worships Apollo particularly, Adrastus merely chides Apollo in an apostrophe lamenting that the god did not come to the aid of Crotopus' daughter whom he impregnated; Ovid would have made much more of this. The depth of the gods' anger and the multi-generational reach of their retribution does not go unnoticed by the

narrator, but he does not scold the gods directly. The narrator instead uses litotes in his apostrophe to Bacchus to temper his disapproval of the god's vengeful nature (*nondum te...aequo*, 2.575). All the way in Book 7, the narrator then counts on the reader to catch Jupiter's hypocrisy when he criticizes Bacchus' retribution against the line of Pentheus, but not his own ongoing punishment of Oedipus' house.

Apostrophes to Muses capture and focus what is quintessentially Statian about this epic, the tension between tradition and novelty, between submission and open criticism. The apostrophe to Clio in the proem marks the end of the space that establishes a return to traditional epic subject matter. In the same proem, though, an apostrophe to the Muses contains the phrase *menti incidit*, establishing an intertextual connection with his controversial epic predecessors Ovid and Lucan. The narrator's apostrophe to Calliope that opens the parade of Argives in Book 4 balances tradition (Homer apostrophized a Muse before the catalogue of ships in *Iliad* 2) with originality (using Calliope to open a catalog, perhaps also borrowing from Horace and Ovid an association of delaying). The last five apostrophes to Muses come during various fighting scenes in Books 7-10, emotionally intense moments that Statius gradually used to instruct the reader on the consequences of impiety. Marking the beginning of the fighting in Book 7, an apostrophe to the *Pieriae sorores* is superficially an opportunity for Statius to play with a traditional place to invoke the Muses, again with intertextual references (here to Vergil, Homer, and Valerius) but one that heightens the emotional level of the epic leading into the pathetic Eunaeus scene.

Though Statius invented a new way of invoking Calliope in Book 4, he announces a need for a *nova Calliope* and a *maior Apollo* in Book 8 to renew the fighting at Thebes

after the mourning over Amphiaraus. Within that scene, the terms can be understood simply as an excuse to raise the dramatic intensity for the battles to come, and in a way that allows Statius to show off his ability to mold a traditional invocation in a novel way. The midpoint of a series of seven apostrophes to Muses in the *Thebaid* is the gate between apostrophes to Muses in traditional roles and those with a novel, didactic character. The apostrophes to the *doctae sorores* at the height of Hippomedon's *aristeia* in Book 9 and to Clio introducing Menoeceus in Book 10 invite comparison because of their similar construction and the contrasting nature of the heroes that the apostrophes emphasize. Both passages begin with *nunc age*, a phrase taken straight from the didactic of Vergil and Lucretius. The apostrophes are far enough apart that the reader would likely not readily notice their connection, but they definitely introduce opposing characteristics; Statius is trying to teach, to assert piety as a moral good and impiety as a moral evil without the reader realizing it.

Well aware of the importance and potential volatility of his subject matter, Statius makes a point not to insert himself too conspicuously into his apostrophes to gods. Instead, to apostrophize gods in episodes requiring bluntness, Statius uses as mouthpieces two minor characters, the only characters apparently allowed to criticize the powerful openly. In Book 1, an unnamed *plebs* scolds Jupiter for allowing, even compelling the brothers to plunge the people into war. In Book 11, a messenger named Aepytyus runs to Polynices to announce that Eteocles awaits him. Polynices is at prayer to Jupiter; as though sharing the sentiment of the Book 1 *plebs*, Aepytyus becomes incensed at Polynices' useless display of piety and addresses him to stop his *pious cultus*. Capaneus may be the red herring of the epic, a way for Statius to mask criticism

of the brothers' strife, the implication of the gods in the downfall of a proud city, and any connection to Statius' own time. Both minor characters addressed Jupiter sarcastically as *sator divum*, both share an implied helplessness to affect the situation. The addresses are far enough apart that it is unlikely that a reader would make any connection between them. Aepytus' connection of Capaneus with Polynices implies different kinds of piety, one desirable and praiseworthy (like that of Menoeceus, who sacrificed himself for his country), one undesirable and useless (like that Polynices, following empty rituals to Jupiter, a god responsible for the war). Neither the *plebs* nor Aepytus seemed to fear divine retribution for their utterances; it seems that Statius did not feel such immunity for himself.

Ovid, Lucan, and Statius usually employed apostrophes to create space to comment on, emotionally charge, or otherwise emphasize particular scenes, figures, or ideas. Apostrophes to gods create a distinct, wider space due to the automatic vertical power disparity between the god being addressed and whoever is calling out the god. As a sort of prayer, apostrophes to gods are an appropriate place for the expression of hope and fear. The awareness of the power disparity is a good place for commentary, direct or indirect, not just of the nature of the gods themselves, but on the nature of power relationships as the narrator/author or character sees them. Naturally, then, this commentary on power relationships should lead at some point to judgments or opinions, again direct or indirect, about the power structure of the author's own time and the sitting emperor.

When cast against the backdrop of the establishment of the principate, the ways that Ovid, Lucan, and Statius used apostrophes to gods reveals an evolution of

permissible speech. During the reign of the first emperor, a time when we may imagine poets were exploring the limits of speech, Ovid clearly felt comfortable enough to play Arachne, portraying the most powerful Roman gods as openly lustful, cruel, and unjust. The tone of the *Metamorphoses* takes an unexpected turn as it approaches the apotheosis of Caesar and the panegyric to Augustus. To the point of recklessness, the apostrophes to gods that Ovid used for this final scene are in every way different from those used throughout the work. After mocking gods all the way through the epic well into the final book, Ovid becomes positively sycophantic, suddenly seeming to care how the regime views him. Such inconsistency points to the conclusion that the reverence given to the new dynasty is manufactured, not genuine.

There is no such playing around in the *Pharsalia*. Lucan begins his epic with a panegyric to Nero, connecting him to the traditional gods with an apostrophe to all the gods. Subsequent commentary on the gods reflects back on the panegyric. Apostrophes to gods are part of the great lengths to which Lucan goes to demonstrate the indifference of the gods; they cannot be swayed, no matter how sincere or dutiful the suppliant, no matter how just the cause. *Fortuna* has ultimate power over the direction of history, and the disparity of power between her and mortals is a gulf, an unimaginable distance that emphasizes the ultimate helplessness of humankind. Lucan also uses his apostrophes to gods to express fear and vent understandable anger and frustration over the real state of affairs. With respect to the principate, Lucan represents an inversion of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. He flatters the emperor at the beginning, then spends the rest of the poem contradicting the premises of his flattery. Lucan appears not to have cared what the reaction of the emperor would be.

Stattus, on the other hand, certainly did care what his superiors thought of the content of his work. His apostrophes to gods are deferential and assert that the gods cannot be questioned. Jupiter has supreme power and *Fortuna* has a significantly reduced, anti-Lucanian role. Though apostrophes to Jupiter often have the epithet *aequus*, some of Stattus' apostrophes to gods hint that the gods can be unjust, while others lift up the mortals Adrastus and Menoeceus as ideals of justice and piety, respectively. Direct criticism is granted only to minor characters, far from the narrator or the author himself. If Domitian read through the entire work and made any connection between Stattus' portrayal of the gods and the imperial panegyric, the emperor would likely have not found anything amiss. While it is unlikely that the emperor would have taken such notice of details in the *Thebaid*, Stattus, perhaps having learned lessons from the fates of Ovid and Lucan, clearly was not taking any chances.

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