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Pomona's *pomarium*: The "Mapping Impulse" in *Metamorphoses* 14 (and 9)*

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SUMMARY: Romans experience a dramatic shift in awareness about the physical space of their empire in the age of Augustus. More than simply apprehending the extent of the world that was theirs, Romans under Augustus exhibit a "mapping impulse," an urge for ordering space, demarcating empire, counting people and resources. The propensity for controlling space reverberates in all contexts of public life—political, social, cultural, economic. This paper explores a literary context of the Augustan cultural preoccupation with space, taking the story of Vertumnus and Pomona in *Metamorphoses* 14, together with the (connected) story of Iphis and Ianthe in *Metamorphoses* 9, as a case-study. I argue that these narratives too participate in the "mapping impulse," revealing in their fantasies about firmly delineated gender categories one literary instance of the concern with space, the desire for wholeness, order and fixed boundaries so pervasive under Augustus.

> "To ask what a map is and what it means to map, therefore, is to ask: in what world are you mapping, with what belief systems, by which rules, and for what purposes?" (Pickles 2004: 76–77)

INTRODUCTORY ROADMAP

THIS PAPER OFFERS A LITERARY CASE-STUDY OF A "MAPPING IMPULSE" THAT I suggest is pervasive in the age of Augustus. I read the story of Vertumnus and

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Pomona in *Metamorphoses* 14, along with two narratives about a similarly-named Iphis into which the tale of the rustic minor divinities opens, as a way of thinking through Ovid about the various manifestations of a concern for order, wholeness and fixed boundaries that we run up against at every turn in Rome under Augustus. The map of Agrippa, a public monument erected to flaunt Roman territorial bulk, represents one, concrete instance of the impulse to demarcate empire and define Romanness. Drawing on theories of cartography that explain the drive to make and contemplate world maps, and intertwining them with the theories of Jacques Lacan where their movements seem to mirror one another, I suggest that Ovid's narrative relentlessly explores the tensions and fissures that paradoxically underlie all dreams of totality.

MAPPING AN EMPIRE

a. Augustus and the "Mapping Impulse"

Let us begin not with Ovid, but instead with a map—or rather, to be more precise, with a map that is no longer extant. Initiated under the supervision, and from the geographical commentaries,[1] of Augustus's right-hand man, Agrippa, and completed after Agrippa's death in 12 B.C.E. by Augustus himself, the map once occupied a prominent position in the Porticus Vipsania, located in the Campus Martius (Plin. *HN* 3.17). Unfortunately, we can say little with any certainty about this map. We do not know its shape, its layout or the medium in which it was executed, nor have we discovered exactly when, between the years 7 B.C.E. and 14 C.E., the Roman public could first view it.[2] Indeed, its very status as a map has recently come into question. There are now arguments, as well as counter-arguments, about whether it was actually

[1] These commentaries are no longer extant, but were used by Pliny and Strabo. See especially Nicolet 1991: 95–122. Pliny refers to Agrippa as an *auctor* (3.86) and lists him in his index as such. More specifically, Nicolet notes that Pliny cites Agrippa more than 30 times in books 3–6 for geographic distances "concerning the dimensions of the provinces and of the regions of the world, the seas, the islands" (98) and that Strabo cites Agrippa at least seven times (101).

[2] The Porticus Vipsania was built by Agrippa's sister Vipsania Polla and was not yet complete in 7 B.C.E., as we know from Dio Cass. 55.8. Plin. *HN* 3.17 makes it clear, however, that the project was completed in Augustus's lifetime—*is* [= *Augustus*] *namque conplexam eum* [= *orbem terrarum*] *porticum ex destinatione et commentariis M. Agrippae a sorore eius inchoatam peregit* ("For Augustus completed the porticus that enclosed the map, the porticus begun according to the specification and commentaries of Marcus Agrippa by his sister").

a map or rather a list of landmarks and their distances from Rome,[3] though the arguments that it revealed some sort of pictorial representation of the world are quite powerful and persuasive, as we shall see below.

Most of the little we do know about Agrippa's map comes from the writings of Pliny the Elder. The *Naturalis Historia*, Pliny's encyclopedic compendium, informs us of numerous specific geographic measurements for which Agrippa is responsible.[4] Moreover, as Claude Nicolet has pointed out in his groundbreaking work, *Space, Geography and Politics in the Early Roman Empire*, Pliny twice refers to something that appears to be a map, first when he speculates about whether Agrippa could have carelessly mismeasured geographical distances "when he was about to exhibit the entire world for the city [Rome] to examine" (*cum orbem terrarum urbi spectandum propositurus esset*, *HN* 3.17), and a second time when Pliny indicates that he saw the precise location of the town called Charax on the wall of the Porticus Vipsania (1991: 98–99).[5] Nicolet concludes (1991: 95–122), and he is by no means alone in doing so,[6] that Agrippa's geographic *commentarii* were the basis for his map, revealing not just the Roman world but, as the presence of Charax situated at the mouth of the Euphrates river demonstrates, depicting the entire inhabited world, *orbis terrarum* (1991: 99). This is an exciting conclusion; Agrippa's would be the first publicly displayed map of the world in Rome. Yet, as Nicolet shows, the creation and exhibition of a world map seems very well suited to the *Zeitgeist* of the Augustan age.

In his wide-ranging exploration Nicolet powerfully marshals evidence to support what might be, at first blush, a strange assertion: "Rome had an empire before becoming an empire" (1991: 1). The transition from "having" an empire to "becoming" one, entails, he argues, a dramatic shift in awareness about space for Romans in the Augustan age (Nicolet 1991; Whittaker 1994). The ability to conquer vast expanses of territory had long been a Roman specialty, but the inability to establish a way of governing the territory effectively and coherently was one of the factors that led to the demise of

[3] Brodersen 1995 is the main proponent of the argument against the existence of a map. The other side is perhaps best represented by Nicolet 1991; Clark 1999: 201n17; and Salway 2001.

[4] See n1 above.

[5] Nicolet 1991: 99 accepts an emendation to Pliny's text to read *Vipsania porticus* at *HN* 6.139.

[6] Similarly see also Dilke 1985: 39–54. Sherk 1974 discusses the importance of *commentarii* to communicate geographical knowledge possible because of Roman expansion. Crook 1996b: 71 acknowledges that Agrippa wrote *commentarii* and 1996a: 139 that Agrippa's map performed an important service in Augustan ideology.

the Republic. The age of Augustus, however, managed both to conquer and subsequently to rule, a feat that simultaneously depended on and demanded a new and active interest in spatial boundaries. On the one hand, Romans began to apprehend, in a unified fashion, the physical extent of the world that was theirs. Strabo composes his extensive geography under Augustus. The *princeps*'s great summary of his own accomplishments, the *Res Gestae*, a text he wanted inscribed outside his Mausoleum at his death, "can be considered at least in its second half as a genuine geographic survey" of Augustus's conquests, pointing out annexed territories and looking towards potential future acquisitions (Nicolet 1991: 9). A global map of the world, publicly displayed "for the city to examine," embodies a similar push for Romans to conceptualize their world in a unified fashion.

On the other hand, successfully governing conquered territory, people and resources equally demanded that Romans under Augustus conceive of physical space with new interest and in a coherent way. Though ultimately deciding not to adopt the *name* Romulus, Augustus went to great lengths to associate himself with Rome's legendary founder, ideologically establishing himself as a second founder of the city. To assert this claim the *princeps* perhaps even expanded the city's *pomerium*, its sacred boundary and the line Romulus initially drew to found Rome.[7] Augustus divided Rome and Italy into districts or *regiones*. Rome became the primary vantage point for the administration of a unified empire. Documents recording numbers of people and extents of land circulated and flowed to central repositories, allowing for more tightly controlled, unified and centrally administered record-keeping—in theory, at least. Censuses no longer stipulated that citizens come to Rome to be counted; magistrates in local municipalities throughout Italy counted Roman citizens and sent documents preserving the number to a central administrative repository in Rome. Similar techniques applied to censuses now taken at the provincial level, and increased the ease and frequency with which such counts could occur. In addition, it became obligatory in the Augustan period to register births (Nicolet 1991: 132). In a manner that displays a similar tendency towards considering and recording inventory, people's land was surveyed,

[7] On Augustus as a second Romulus, see Suet. *Aug.* 7.2 and Dio Cass. 53.16.7–8. Also see von Ungern-Sternberg 1998: 166–82 and, for visual connections, Zanker 1998, especially 201–10. The question of whether Augustus actually presided over a pomerial extension remains debated, despite the literary evidence of Tac. *Ann.* 12.23, Dio Cass. 55.6.6 and SHA *Aurel.* Though often simply accepted (e.g., Ober 1982: 317–19), Augustus's extension of the *pomerium* still has its doubters (e.g., Syme 1983: 131–45; Boatwright 1986; Richardson 1992 s.v. *pomerium*). For more about Romulus and the *pomerium*, see pp. 174–76 below.

measured, divided, bounded, and these operations were logged and centrally maintained (Nicolet 1991: 123–70).

The points of intersection between world map, geographical writing, territorial divisions and the recording of numbers of people and their property are not difficult to comprehend.[8] All partake of the "mapping impulse," a drive to represent, to circumscribe, to unify, to control, a desire particularly appealing to imperialist powers seeking to achieve and retain mastery over a large extent of territory, people and resources. An explosion of theoretical work on maps and mapping, primarily at first by geographers, in the 1990s and early 2000s, has opened up fruitful perspectives on this impulse, exploring why one draws, and how one interprets, cartographic lines.[9] Challenging the accepted wisdom that maps are scientific and objective representations of a reality "that exceeds our vision, our reach, the span of our days, a reality we achieve in no other way," historians of cartography now question a map's pretensions to totality, cohesion and "reality" (Wood 1992: 4–5). Maps are texts, and map-makers individual subjects embedded in networks of political, social, cultural relations. As such, maps cannot escape the fact that they are subjective, constructed products. A map, by nature, requires a choice, a decision about what to represent, and from which focal point.[10] A map flattens, uncomplicates, unifies space; it betrays "a metaphysical urge to harness geographical diversity—and often thereby cultural diversity as well—to a dream of order" (Cosgrove 2001: 13).[11] It presents its audience with the fantasy of a unified, knowable, orderly space with fixed boundaries over which mastery is possible. It feeds and creates illusions of power and control.

b. "To ask what a map is, and what it means to map ..."

So let us return to Agrippa's map. Set up, as Pliny points out, "for the city (Rome) to examine," it allows Romans to see how much of the world is theirs. A map, a visual conceptualization of empire, invites viewers to acquire knowledge, and control, of the land depicted. Armed with information about Rome's

[8] "[M]aps have never been used to the exclusion of other strategies for simplifying spatial complexity. Even in modern industrial societies, maps are routinely used in conjunction with other, noncartographic descriptions of space," Edney 2007: 119.

[9] To cite a few significant examples: Gould 1985; Olsson 1992; Wood 1992; King 1996; Cosgrove 2001; Harley 2001; Pickles 2004.

[10] The classic example here is Saul Steinberg's New Yorker cover, "View of the World from 9th Avenue," featuring an exaggeratedly large Manhattan centrally located within a significantly compressed United States.

[11] To put it bluntly, maps "could never be ideologically neutral," Helgerson 1992: 147.

latest conquests, the dutiful imperial subject can trace the empire's boundaries.[12] This fixed, unified space on the wall—suggests the map—represents the Augustan empire. Setting boundaries, however, as we have just seen historians of cartography point out, is often more problematic than it seems on the surface. Recent studies about frontiers of the Roman empire have argued for apprehending frontiers in fluid rather than rigid terms, thus belying the possibility of clear, bounded spatial divisions.[13] Moreover, the Augustan empire was not a static entity. The territorial limits of the Augustan empire one day/month/year were not necessarily those of the empire the next. Tiberius's controversial claim that Augustus informed him that the limits of empire had been reached and Tiberius should undertake no further expansion reinforces the point.[14] Even if we accept that Augustus issued such advice at the end of his life, this represents a new policy. Under Augustus the Roman empire experienced, on several frontiers, the greatest territorial expansion since the Mediterranean conquest of the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C.E. (Gruen 1996). If Augustus did indeed attempt to call a halt to additional land acquisition,[15] then it was only after a period in which Roman power and the limits of the

[12] Indeed, as Nicolet 1991: 180 astutely points out, Augustus went to great lengths to emphasize his conquests and keep them front and center in people's minds. His death provides a nice example. On this occasion two documents were read out, his *Breviarium* in which he offered an accounting of the empire's lands, peoples and monies, and his *Res Gestae*, which listed his conquests. His funeral procession, as Dio Cass. 56.34.3 records it, then featured a parade of allegories of conquered peoples.

[13] Here see in particular the work of Whittaker 1994 and 2004.

[14] Tac. *Ann.* 1.11: *quae cuncta sua manu perscripserat Augustus addideratque consilium coercendi intra terminos imperii* ("All these things Augustus had written in his own hand, and he had added the counsel that the empire should be maintained within its current boundaries").

[15] The question of whether Augustus, at the end of his life, actually advocated a policy of no new expansion is much debated. Wells 1972: 1–13 and Nicolet 1991: 41–47, e.g., argue for a determinedly expansionist Augustus who was compelled by the Pannonian revolt (6–9 C.E.) and the defeat of Varus (9 C.E.) to check his imperialist urges and advise resistance to future annexation. And Levick 1976: 142–47 constructs a Tiberius who, adhering to his adoptive father's tenets, conducts a Roman foreign policy actively resistant to expansion, especially where one can find no threats to Roman interests. Ober 1982, however, suggests that the document read to the Senate purportedly divulging the advice of Augustus to maintain the boundaries of the empire as they currently stood (Tac. *Ann.* 1.11.4 and Dio Cass. 56.33.5–6) presented views that Tiberius himself made up after Augustus's death in order to achieve posthumous Augustan support for Tiberius's own foreign policy. Gruen 1996: 188 concurs, though in the context of a larger argument about Augustan imperialist tendencies.

world seemed coterminous. Boundaries were not only markers of the end of empire at any given time, but also the line beyond which Romans constantly aspired to reach. To insist on the fixedness of boundaries necessitates the unthinkable imposition of closure on future Roman imperial expansion. After all, Jupiter's famous prophecy in the *Aeneid* culminates in the promise of *imperium sine fine* ("empire without end," 1.279). Boundaries always contain within themselves that which will invite an imperial power to dismantle, deconstruct, re-erect them further on down the line. Despite the desire that they be fixed, they must be fluid.[16]

It is important to remember that maps do not exist in a vacuum. The impulse to impose fixed and stable boundaries, to imagine a large expanse of land, people and resources as a coherent unity, the "mapping impulse," re-emerges in countless aspects of a culture, in a myriad of ways. In "Toward a Cultural History of Cartography," Christian Jacob explains:

> The historian of cartography can consider maps in isolation, as self-defined artifacts to be classified and analysed. Or an attempt can be made to understand maps within the culture that produced and used them, so long as such a contextual approach does not lose sight of the map itself.
>
> The cultural context of a map might be compared to a pattern of concentric circles surrounding the map. We can move from the inner circle of map making to the remote circles of economic, social, political, intellectual and artistic context (1996: 193).

As we have seen, Nicolet argues that the impulse to create a map of empire cohabits with other propensities for controlling space in the Augustan period—census-taking, cadastration, writing of geographic literature, division of Rome and Italy into discrete units, etc.

While Nicolet by no means remains within what Jacob terms the "inner circle" of interpretation, I would like to explore how the "mapping impulse" might manifest itself in what Jacob labels more "remote" circles. The impulse to gain control of space, the desire to impose boundaries and to create a coherent unified whole out of the empire's territory and its people spills over into almost every aspect of Roman public life. Political, social and cultural

[16] Consider here the following quotation, as cited in Clarke 1999: 345, from Daniel Defoe's *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724–26): "But after all that has been said by others, or can be said here, no account of Great Britain can be what we call a finished account, as no clothes can be made to fit a growing child; no picture carry the likeness of a living face; the size of one, and the countenance of the other always altering with time: so no account of a kingdom thus daily altering its countenance can be perfect."

discourses in Augustan Rome, rotating around questions of what it means to be Roman, especially Roman and male, display a striking tendency towards order, stability and fixity. Augustus lobbies for, and lends his name to, social legislation concerning the boundaries of marriage. Civic space and public monuments—the Augustan Forum[17] and *Ara Pacis* and the immense sundial, the *solarium Augusti*, to name but a few examples—equally reveal this Augustan desire for order and fixity. Because the "mapping impulse" exhibits itself so pervasively in the Augustan age I propose to explore how the Roman poets of the time also participate in this cultural preoccupation.[18]

Before we move on, however, to examine a series of metaphorical expressions of the "mapping impulse" in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*—perhaps, one could argue, the text best suited to this line of exploration—we must consider one further question. Why the pronounced desire for stability, fixity, unified coherence under Augustus? The answer, I suggest, comes in two parts, the first addressing the presence of the desire, the second, its manifestation in the particular historical moment. The question, why do human beings long for a sense of unified, bounded, stable identity, conjures up matters of desire and the collective unconscious, and thus leads us rather naturally to the realm of psychoanalysis. The theoretical writings of the 20th-century French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan engage this very line of inquiry. Indeed, for Lacan, the constitution of the subject mirrors both the strategy behind, and the ultimate failure of, the "mapping impulse." The subject, Lacan argues, is inherently fractured and lacking; irremediable division, or inescapable alienation, characterizes subjectivity itself (1981: 203–15). Language (among other factors) renders the subject divided, a proposition Lacan nicely illustrates with the paradox: "I am lying." The statement lays bare two, irreconcilable "I"s, the subject of the statement and the subject of the enunciation (1981: 138–42).

Language exists before the subject and exerts controls over her; she emerges into a network of signifiers that have been in place since long before her ap-

[17] Nicolet 1991: 21–23, 41–45, 171–72 (especially) has much to say about the Augustan Forum. See also Zanker 1998.

[18] I draw here on the model of cultural historians in the field of Early Modern Studies. The period has many affinities with the Age of Augustus, seen by contemporary authors themselves—in particular (for my purposes) the importance of empires and of the simultaneous development of the cartographic imagination. The last fifteen years have witnessed Early Modern scholars productively marrying geography and literature, the cartographic impulse and literary production, seeing both as responses to the same historical conditions. Leaders in the field are Helgerson 1992; Conley 1996; McRae 1996; Sullivan 1998; Klein 2001. See also the special issue of the journal *Early Modern Literary Studies* (= Helgerson and Grenfell eds. 1998) devoted entirely to literature and geography.

pearance and with which she strives to align herself. But language itself is lacking. The subject desires wholeness and attempts to paper over her fundamental lack and dividedness; she embraces apparently firm, fixed, unified cultural identities and presents herself accordingly, a totality, undivided, coherent—a "woman," a "Roman," "Pomona." She anchors her sense of self, however, on a signifier (or several), which, as is the way with signifiers, turns out to be itself falsely unified, stable and coherent. On the one hand, language's construction of meaning is not finite; the possibility constantly exists that a new signifier will come along that will retroactively require all other signifiers to shift their meaning. On the other, signifiers acquire meaning through a relation of difference with other signifiers (hence the prevalence of binary opposition—e.g., Man/Woman, Roman/Non-Roman), for which one must posit a complete and closed system of signifiers to which nothing new can be added. Ultimately the subject cannot escape a bind: the symbolic order (the realm of language, law, society), in which she must operate, cannot successfully define her because it is only capable of accounting for her through signifiers that cannot but fail to represent her.[19] Although she struggles to present herself according to a signifier that her culture enshrines as an unproblematic totality, ultimately contradictions, divisions and incoherence emerge.[20]

In important book-length studies Micaela Janan and Paul Allen Miller have recently demonstrated the value Lacanian insights offer to the interpretation of poetry in the age of Augustus.[21] Miller argues that the genre of elegy emerges as a symptom of the collapse of the Republic. As the Republic comes to an end, cultural values and identities are in flux; a gap emerges, Miller argues, between Imaginary and Symbolic registers, between the subject's sense of self (Imaginary) and "its recognition *as a subject* in the world of codified,

[19] Lacan 1981 defines a subject as that which is represented by a signifier for another signifier. The signifier stands in for the subject that is eclipsed by language. In his lucid book about the Lacanian subject, Bruce Fink 1995: 52–53 explains: "The signifier is what founds the subject; the signifier is what wields ontic clout, wresting existence from the real that it marks and annuls. What it forges is, however, in no sense substantial or material."

[20] See here the formulation of Porter and Buchan 2004: 3: Lacanian theory "is less a worldview than a theory of why worldviews can never entirely cohere ...." The section entitled "Classical Antiquity with Lacan" (2–6) sets forth very lucidly the Lacanian notion of the subject as empty, something to be considered for what it lacks, for desire, rather than for the narratives it offers about itself.

[21] Porter and Buchan eds. 2004 attempts, as a collection of essays, to bring together Lacanians and classicists in order to probe the overlap between Lacan's theories of the subject and classical antiquity's theories of the subject and to consider what light ancient concepts of the subject might be able to cast on modern Lacanian notions.

signifying practices" (2004: 28, his emphasis).[22] The contradictory, incoherent, conflicting self-presentation of the elegist is one form of response, one manifestation of Republican ideology in crisis. Janan, in turn, suggests that late Propertian elegy relentlessly explores the tensions and holes in the new imperial ideology so carefully constructed by Augustus, revealing the fractures that lie at the heart of the falsely coherent image of the model Roman citizen as well as the good lover (2001). The collapse of the Republic and the rise of the principate are moments of trauma and upheaval. That the poetry of the time should reveal responses to the trauma, offering narratives that attempt yet fail to paper over the traumatic kernel, does not surprise.

Civil war, by definition, reveals pervasive fractures to what should be unified and wreaks havoc, therefore, on any notion of coherence or totality. In addition, imperial expansion can be a mixed blessing. Tremendous territorial acquisition brings tangible benefits: an influx of people and goods from various cultures to Rome, a mix of identities within the boundaries of empire, a heady sense that only the end of the habitable world can bring a halt to Roman expansion.[23] It also has consequences. These elements combine to provoke anxiety in the form of the rather uncomfortable possibility that with each conquest what it means to be Roman may not be stable but rather up for renegotiation. Enter Augustus, who, at every turn, encourages, and responds to, the desire for unified, bounded wholeness—centralizing, consolidating and justifying his overarching administrative, financial, military, moral and religious power.[24] Indeed, as Janan suggests, Augustus "represents a desperate and determined effort to make 'wholeness' possible, to locate a redeemed and healed subject in a purified, coherent Roman State" (2001: 19). This is not to impute entirely pernicious motives to the *princeps*; as a subject himself Augustus operates according to his own desire for wholeness.

This paper builds on the work of Miller and especially Janan, first (as I have already done) suggesting that we consider the map of Agrippa as a way of seeing in this microcosm a larger phenomenon at work in the Augustan world, a small-scale encapsulation of the "desperate and determined effort to make

[22] Miller further argues that elegy comes to an end as a genre when Augustus imposes a new ideology so dominant that it erases the tensions that gave rise to the elegiac "I."

[23] Ovid himself offers this oft-cited formulation: *gentibus est aliis tellus data limite certo:/ Romanae spatium est Urbis et orbis idem* ("to other nations territory is granted with fixed boundaries; the extent of Rome and of the world is one and the same," *Fast.* 2.683–84).

[24] See Dio Cass. 53.17.1: "And thus, the entire power of the people and of the senate passed to Augustus, and from that time (27 B.C.E.) a veritable monarchy was established." And indeed, as his principate continued, Augustus consolidated more and more elements of power in his own hands.

'wholeness' possible," then turning to Ovid. I offer now a case study, the first of what I hope will be a series of readings in Augustan poetry[25] in which I explore how the concern with space, the desire for wholeness, order and fixed boundaries—a desire which the construction and public display of a world map nicely encapsulates—find both literal and metaphorical expression in literary works actively engaged in discussing and shaping Augustan imperial ideology.

ROME, GENDER AND THE "MAPPING IMPULSE"

a. Pomona's pomarium

Scholarship on the *Metamorphoses* has long noted the unbounded nature of Ovid's epic narrative.[26] The end of a book does not necessarily impose a conclusion on a story; narratives spill over wantonly from one book to the next. In a similar vein, new tales frequently emerge in the midst of others, with a Chinese box-like effect, until beginnings and endings become highly desirable, but ever-receding holy grails. As we turn our attention to Vertumnus, the variously disguised and ultimately cross-dressed minor divinity who seeks with his costume changes to woo an insistently virginal nymph, Pomona, we should, therefore, take a moment to examine the surrounding stories. We shall discover that Ovid carefully intertwines this story with questions of physical boundaries. On the one hand, we discover Ovid's "*Aeneid*," which straddles the division between books 13 and 14, and, on the other, the story of Romulus, which, perhaps surprisingly, comes decorously to its conclusion as book 14 does.[27] Vertumnus's narrative finds itself wedged in the midst of stories that turn out to be thematically linked. Always intimately connected with Aeneas and Romulus are notions of founding, and establishing boundaries for, a young city.

As we approach the story of Vertumnus and Pomona, Ovid dispatches Turnus to the underworld with the intentionally flat *Turnusque cadit* ("and Turnus fell," 14.573). The action is swift and devoid of (physical or emotional) mess. We all know the rest; the victorious Aeneas marries the Latin princess Lavinia and establishes a new city, precursor to Rome. We certainly

[25] I am currently working on a larger project that explores the "mapping impulse" in multiple literary manifestations as a broad and fundamentally recurrent pattern of the Roman collective unconscious in the Augustan Age.

[26] For an interesting synthesis and nice notes suggesting further readings, see Barchiesi 2002.

[27] Myers 1994a: 128 remarks on the "unusual degree of finality" with which *Metamorphoses* 14 comes to its end.

expect to hear about founding the city since the Virgilian wordplay, present in the moment of Turnus's death at Aeneas's hands, cannot be far from our minds.[28] What we get instead—this is Ovid, after all—is a jarring narrative flash-forward that seemingly elides the city. Aeneas's life approaches its end, and his mother, Venus, petitions Jupiter to grant the immortality that he so famously promised Aeneas in another text (*Aen.* 1.259–60). Aeneas's own son, Iulus, we are reassured in a terse ablative absolute, *bene fundatis opibus crescentis Iuli* ("since the power of growing Iulus was well founded/established," 14.583), is ready to step into his father's shoes. And yet, a careful consideration of Aeneas's apotheosis, as well as of the specific words Ovid uses about Iulus's preparedness for succession, indicates that the idea of founding, of establishing a city's unified and bounded physical space, which we expect but do not immediately discover, may not, in fact, be missing.

In order to see the foundation aspect in Ovid's version of Aeneas's narrative, however, we must skip ahead in book 14, past the tale of Pomona and Vertumnus, to the story of Romulus. And indeed, we are invited to make just such a leap, since without warning, and through a striking prolepsis, we learn that after Aeneas's deification *turba Quirini* ("Quirinus's throng," 608) worshiped the new divinity. The genitive (*Quirini*) points us directly towards Romulus who, 220 lines later in the Ovidian text, will become conflated with Quirinus and will himself take on the name as his own (14.828, 834, 851). Moving then to the-soon-to-be-Quirinus himself, we find the *conditor urbis* ("founder of the city," 14.849) founding Rome, raping the Sabine women, defeating the women's male kin in battle, and then coming to the end of his life in very quick succession. We should linger for a moment, even if the *Metamorphoses* does not, on the founding of Rome: *festisque Palilibus urbis / moenia conduntur*—"the walls of the city are founded on the festival of the Palilia" (14.774–75). A quick glance at another Ovidian text, the *Fasti*, provides a more detailed account of the festival, notably linking it with Romulus's act of founding Rome.[29] On the festival of the Parilia,[30] Romulus ploughs the

[28] *Aen.* 12.950: *ferrum ... sub pectore condit* ("Aeneas buried his sword in Turnus's breast," where the English translation cannot capture the double meaning of *condere*—to bury, and also to found a city). There is much recent scholarly debate about the lack of foundation in the Aeneas and Romulus stories of *Metamorphoses* 14. Johnson 1997 and Wheeler 2000: 110–14 represent opposite ends of the "anti-Augustan" vs. "Augustan" interpretive spectrum.

[29] In fact, Bömer 1986 ad loc. suggests that Ovid does not fill out the details of the story in the *Metamorphoses* because he will do so in the *Fasti* instead.

[30] Because the festival was ostensibly linked to the divinity named Pales it was called Palilia as well as Parilia. Beard, North, and Price 1998: 174–76 discuss the festival and at 174n25 bring up the issue of the double name.

actual outlines of this city's walls and marks them with a furrow, thus creating the *pomerium* (*Fast.* 4.819 and 825–26).[31] The walls offer a tangible illusion of totality and coherence, clearly dividing Rome from not-Rome, outside from inside. As we have already seen, however, claims for integral, bounded space often co-exist with assertions to the contrary. And here is no exception. Remus will soon leap over Rome's rising walls, questioning the firmness of the boundary (*Fast.* 4.837–44). By crossing that which should be impermeable, Remus exposes a problem fundamental to boundaries; they can offer only the illusion that the space they enclose is a well-defined, unified totality. Remus dies for uncovering this truth, but the truth is as uneasily erased as his death turns out to be.

To return to the *Metamorphoses*' version of Romulus, the narrative's pace becomes more expansive after Rome is founded. In a noteworthy doubling of Venus's request to Jupiter on behalf of Aeneas, Mars too asks his divine father to keep a promise made in an earlier text (in this case, Ennius's) that would grant immortality to Mars's offspring.[32] Venus knows when the time is right for Aeneas's translation to the sky; the hero becomes *tempestiuus ... caelo* ("ready for heaven," 14.584) once Iulus's power has become well founded (*bene fundatis opibus ... Iuli*, 14.583). With twin verbal echoes Mars similarly perceives that the moment has come: *tempus adest, genitor, quoniam fundamine magno / res Romana ualet* ("The time has arrived, father, since the Roman state flourishes on a strong foundation," 14.808–9). The *Metamorphoses* explicitly create Aeneas and Romulus as doublets of one another; both heroes are good *conditores*. They have established their cities so well that the strong foundation (*bene fundatis*, 583; *fundamine magno*, 808) allows their cities to function without them, renders the founding fathers superfluous and frees them up for deification.

The theme of setting out the boundaries of a new (Roman) city, with all its inherent problems (always already at hand in the shadowy absent presence of Remus), hangs over *Metamorphoses* 14, from Aeneas to Romulus, and thus also over the story of Pomona and Vertumnus that falls in between the tales of the two *conditores*. Moreover, the story of these two Italian, rustic semi-divinities is yet further harnessed to questions of physical, Roman boundaries. One cannot help but notice the proximity between the end of the Pomona and Vertumnus narrative and the statement, a mere three lines later, announcing Romulus's founding of Rome. As if the specter of Remus hanging over the

[31] On the *pomerium*, including its connection with the festival of the Parilia, see Beard, North, and Price 1998: 174–81.

[32] See Conte 1986: 57–63; Barchiesi 1997: 25. Wheeler 2000: 113 and Myers 1994a: 113–32 both note the double apotheoses in the context of arguments about whether book 14 accommodates or subverts larger Augustan concerns.

proceedings did not suffice, the efficacy of establishing Rome's boundaries is immediately more explicitly called into question this time through a very compressed reference to the story of Tarpeia. Like Remus, the young woman undermines the possibility that established boundaries actually serve to set up whole, neatly-packaged unities with borders that cannot be crossed. From other texts we remember that Tarpeia betrays her city to the enemy either for love (Prop. 4.4) or for money (Livy 1.11.6–7). And indeed, Propertius's Tarpeia perpetrates her act of treachery on the very same day, some years later, as Remus's transgression—on the festival of the Parilia, the day the city got walls and a *pomerium*.[33] Ovid's laconic *arcisque uia ... reclusa* ("with the way to the citadel having been opened," 14.776) leads the reader to seek a fuller version of the tale. Livy explains that Tarpeia ventures beyond the city's walls (*extra moenia*, 1.11.6) in order to retrieve some water for a sacrifice. Finding her alone, Tatius approaches and offers her gold *ut armatos in arcem accipiat* ("in order that she allow armed enemies into the citadel," 1.11.6). When she complies with his wishes, she reveals once again how easily what should be impermeable can be transgressed. And again, as was the case with Remus, the memory of the transgression cannot simply be obfuscated by the removal of the tell-tale evidence, in other words, by the murder of Tarpeia.

So what light do these stories, of Aeneas, Romulus and Remus, Tarpeia and Tatius, cast on the narrative of Vertumnus and Pomona provocatively placed in the midst of the more traditional tales of Rome's early history? What do ideally impermeable city walls, the *pomerium*, and the violently punished, but never erased, transgressors of supposedly stable, closed spaces have to do with a beautiful nymph and an ardent minor divinity who pursues her? In many ways, in fact, the narrative of Vertumnus and Pomona rehearses the major themes of the stories of Roman foundation, working through the same impossible search for definition, wholeness and impermeable boundaries, but now metaphorically transposed to an erotic register.

Lovely Pomona, object of a great deal of unwanted male attention, encloses herself in her garden and, for good virginal measure, tends her apple trees. When Pomona, "fearing the violent aggression of rustic dwellers" (*uim ... agrestum metuens*, 14. 635), locks herself within the boundaries of her orchard (*pomaria claudit*, 14.635) we are reminded of similar activities undertaken in an earlier book of the *Metamorphoses*. Atlas, in dread anticipation of Perseus's violently plundering hands, seeks to protect his golden apples by walling off

[33] Prop. 4.4.73–74: *urbi festus erat (dixere Parilia patres), / hic primus coepit moenibus esse dies* ("The city had a festival [the Fathers called it the Parilia]; it was the birthday of the city's walls").

his orchard—*id metuens solidis pomaria clauserat Atlas / moenibus* ("fearing this [theft of his apples] Atlas had enclosed his orchard with firm walls," 4.646–47).[34] The allusion to the earlier passage provides us with information about how Pomona manages to enclose her orchard; Pomona, like Atlas, and more importantly like the good *conditores* her story mirrors, seeks protection for her physical space (orchard) and its inhabitants (herself) by means of a wall whose purpose is to create a unified, safe, impermeable enclosure. In addition, Frederick Ahl has intriguingly suggested that when she *pomaria claudit* ("closed off her orchard," 14.635) "the nymph placed herself and her fruits off limits" with a provocative pun, inescapable to Roman ears, on the word *pomerium* (1985: 316). I am inclined to accept the undertones Ahl hears, especially in light of the proximity of, and shared themes with, the tale about Romulus and his act of founding Rome (and marking out the *pomerium*) on the festival of the Parilia. At the heart of Pomona's story lurks a wall, a wall that through allusion and in context suggests the *pomerium*.[35] Finally we should note the connection the Romans made, based on ancient tradition (claims Tacitus, at least), between the *pomerium* and the boundaries of empire. The historian asserts that Roman military leaders who increased the boundaries of empire correspondingly had the power to enlarge the city limits. Pomona's *pomarium* draws the *pomerium* and the *termini imperii*, lines to be traced on Agrippa's map, into the interpretive mix.[36] So let us consider the tale, as we are invited to, in light of the "mapping impulse." In Pomona's story the impossibility of fashioning a securely bounded orchard is ineluctably intertwined with, and reproduced in, the constant but problematic struggle to construct firm and unified gender identities that haunts the narrative.

[34] Hill 2000 ad loc. notes the intratextual allusion.

[35] Ahl 1985: 316 cites Varro, *Ling.* 5.143: *qui* [*orbis*] *quod erat post murum, postmoerium dictum* ("[the circle of land] is called *postmoerium* [ancient form of *pomerium*] because it was after the wall"). For a nice discussion of the *pomerium* as a sacred boundary central to constituting and marking the physical space of Rome, see Beard, North, and Price 1998: 177–81.

[36] Tacit. *Ann.* 12.23: *et pomerium urbis auxit Caesar, more prisco, quo iis qui protulere imperium etiam terminos urbis propagare datur. nec tamen duces Romani, quamquam magnis nationibus subactis, usurpauerant nisi L. Sulla et diuus Augustus* ("and Caesar [Claudius] increased Rome's *pomerium* according to ancient tradition by which it is granted to those who have extended the boundaries of the empire to enlarge the boundaries of the city. Roman military leaders, however, except for Sulla and Augustus, had not seized upon this power even though they had conquered great nations").

b. Et quod erit iussus, iubeas licet omnia, fiet

Pomona seeks to erect a firm and impermeable boundary between herself and her would-be-suitors. In order to avoid all *accessus ... uiriles* ("men's advances," 14.636) she sets up a wall and thus creates a fixed, unified physical space that she can define and control. Since *Veneris ... nulla cupido* ("no desire for love," 14.634) touches her, and since she prefers cultivated gardens (*hortos*, 14.624) to more unruly forests (*siluas*, 14.626), she attempts to fashion a physical location uniquely tailored to reflect her aspirations. Her orchard abounds with trees all teeming with fruit (*poma*) to which her very name is etymologically connected, as Ovid himself is at pains to point out (14.625–26).[37] With exemplary care, Pomona banishes any potential wildness from her garden, making use of her pruning hook to curb the anarchic spread of foliage (*luxuriem*, 14.629) or branches (*spatiantia passim / bracchia*, 14.629–30). She also bans all potentially unmanageable "men" from entering her space—the libidinous and overly-phallic Satyrs, Pans, Silenus and Priapus (14.637–41) as well as Vertumnus in all of his "male" costumes (14.643–53, on which more below). For Pomona stable, fixed, knowable dichotomies exist; she does not hesitate to draw distinctions between inside and outside, men and women, unruly and tame nature. We ourselves, however, might begin to question, if only slightly, her ability to maintain such neat categorization when we learn that the nymph, introduced to us as an impossible blend by the "amusingly contradictory" juxtaposition *Latina Hamadryas* (14.623–24),[38] also enjoys uniting disparate plants through the practice of grafting (14.630–31). By the time Vertumnus, himself an enthusiastically vocal proponent of grafting (14.661–68), finishes his performance, however, we shall not be able to escape the sense that totalizing, bounded unities remain illusory.

Vertumnus, like all the other salacious rustic divinities courting Pomona, is smitten. He must have the beautiful nymph, but to achieve his goal, he must first get into her garden. Since she shuns all suitors, he realizes that to gain access to her he requires an alternative identity. Fortunately, as his very name implies, this is a slippery and changeable character. He announces his readiness to adopt any disguise: *adde quod est iuuenis, quod naturale decoris / munus habet formasque apte fingetur in omnes,/ et quod erit iussus, iubeas licet omnia, fiet* ("add that he is young, that he has the natural gift of seemliness, and he will be molded suitably into all shapes and he will become whatever he

[37] The etymological links are well-attested. See Myers 1994b: 230n17, who notes explanations from Servius and Festus.

[38] Myers 1994b: 230 explains that Ovid self-referentially refers to his poetry, a learned blend of Greek and Roman traditions, through Pomona.

will be ordered to become, even if you should order him to become all things," 14.684–86). He appears at Pomona's garden gate as a reaper (14.643–44), a soldier (14.651), a fisherman (14.651), a gardener (14.645–46), even an old woman (14.654ff.). He accessorizes with a band of hay encircling his forehead (14.645), with a pruning hook (14.649), with long white hair (14.655). In fact, he dons and sheds identities eight times, reconstituting himself, even across gender lines, each time he changes his clothes.[39] It is only when, at long last, Vertumnus conjures himself as an old woman that Pomona opens her walls (14.656); women alone are welcome inside her *pomarium*, and the difference between man and woman is available and clear to the naked eye. Indeed, for Vertumnus to succeed in his erotic pursuit of the nymph, he must shed the accoutrements of the crone (*anilia ... instrumenta*, 14.766–67) and become a youth again (*in iuuenem rediit*, 14.766). As if to dispel any suspicions about his gender identity as man, the narrative doubly stresses his masculine power. He metamorphoses again into his divine self that emerges from the old-woman costume just as the sun's rays penetrate the clouds with such force that the clouds abandon their resistance and allow the sun to burst through (14.767–69). Vertumnus prepares to use violence/rape (*uim*, 14.770),[40] but finds force unnecessary since Pomona discovers feelings metaphorically described as *uulnera* ("wounds," 14.771).[41] Man and woman unite, and they live happily ever after.[42]

Or do they? Let us consider the narrative again, this time shedding Pomona's belief in fixed, unified identities. We might wonder why, when we know that Pomona shuns all *accessus ... uiriles* ("men's advances," 14.636), the majority of the costumes by means of which Vertumnus makes his initial attempts to breach the *pomarium*'s walls remain male. After all, since he can reconstitute

[39] Tarrant 2000: 425–27 proposes to remove the Ovidian line in which Vertumnus takes on the disguise of soldier, then fisherman, arguing that it is an interpolation by a reader familiar with Propertius 4.2. I would suggest that Propertius 4.2 is Ovid's intended intertext and that the echo is therefore Ovidian; see Lindheim 1998b. Ovid's Vertumnus seems to add Propertius's Vertumnus to the repertoire of his multiple possible incarnations.

[40] For violence (*uis*) against the body as a stand-in for rape, see Richlin 1992. Indeed, earlier in the narrative, Pomona builds a wall, "fearing force/rape" (*uim ... metuens*, 14.635).

[41] Gentilcore 1995: 119 reminds us not to overlook the sinister aspect of *uulnera*; how is the idea of wounding compatible with an ostensibly happy love story?

[42] Scholars are divided on this question. Some consider Pomona and Vertumnus one of the few stories with a happy ending in the *Metamorphoses*, e.g., Littlefield 1965; Fantazzi 1976. Others, however, focus on the ostensibly elided violence, e.g., Parry 1964; Curran 1984; Richlin 1992; Myers 1994b; and Gentilcore 1995.

himself in any and every shape (*omnes formas*), would female guises not yield more advantages? And yet, only one of his eight outfits presents him as woman. Even when he chooses a female costume, Vertumnus portrays an old woman who has a role in his narrative not so much in her own (female) right as in the guise of amanuensis for (male) Vertumnus, one who articulates the desire of the young male god.[43] And Vertumnus insistently underlines the old woman's role as his mouth-piece claiming to Pomona that the crone loves the nymph *plus quam credis* ("more than you believe," 14.677) and presenting her credentials for advocating on Vertumnus's behalf with the assurance: *neque enim sibi notior ille est / quam mihi* ("for he is not more known to himself than he is to me," 14. 679–80). Vertumnus is once again thinly veiled when the woman presses Pomona: *et ipsum / quod petit ore meo praesentem crede precari* ("and believe that he himself is present, praying through my mouth for that which he seeks," 14.691–92). Moreover, in his capacity as shape-shifter, and especially in his costume as an old woman, Vertumnus carries strikingly phallic props—the ploughman strolls along toting the goads he uses to prod his oxen (14.647), the fruit-picker carries a ladder (14.650), the soldier brandishes a sword (14.651), the fisherman harpoons his prey with a javelin (14.651), and the old woman wields a long stick (14.655). Why would these gambits, with their particular focus on Vertumnus as "man," assist the god in his endeavors to cross into Pomona's female-only *pomarium*?

If Pomona is content to believe in the signifier's power to produce coherent, whole selves, if she has faith that the difference between "Man" and "Woman" is grounded in something essential and knowable, Vertumnus and his actions seem to reveal him acquiescing to her world-view on the surface but ultimately calling her certainty into question. When he cannot get into her garden as a man, he finally accepts that she denies all *accessus uiriles*, changes tack, dresses as a woman and successfully breaches the walls. He seems to buy into her division of the world into men and women. And yet, what kind of stability can there be in the signifying system, what kind of knowable essence can underlie the signifiers Man and Woman, if a simple change of outfit and accessories changes one's alignment with a signifier? And how is Man defined other than by impossibly circular logic when Pomona locks out Vertumnus dressed as a fisherman but welcomes into her orchard the same Vertumnus with long white hair and the garments of an old woman? How different can these two

[43] Senelick 1993 discusses grades of cross-dressing in the 19th-century theater, arguing that the effect of cross-dressing is mitigated when the cross-dresser takes on the role of someone who is, according to social conventions, minimally sexually active, e.g., young boys and older women.

Vertumni actually be, both brandishing their long sticks?[44] The text does not elaborate. What we are left with is a circle: men cannot enter the garden, with men defined only as those who cannot enter the garden.

Furthermore, Vertumnus, at his core, is a shape-shifter, without essence as his allusively present Propertian incarnation underscores, a creature who proudly proclaims: *quod erit iussus, iubeas licet omnia, fiet* ("he will become whatever he will be ordered to become, even if you should order him to become all things," 14.686) (Lindheim 1998b; Janan 2001: 14–15). The multiplicity of appearances and self-presentations suggests that Vertumnus's identity consists of no more than the possibility of infinite, cross-gendered, public re-construction. The phallic props he carries in his male, but also his female, guises protest too much; masculinity is a masquerade, the props ostentatiously figuring what is actually lacking. The double-entendres that the crossdressed Vertumnus deploys to point to the god beneath the clothes function similarly. Vertumnus exposes the instability of the signifiers Man and Woman by drawing attention to the tensions and fractures, the lack of coherence and wholeness, that attends the subject who cleaves to the signifier for self-definition.

Moreover, Vertumnus redoubles his arguments about gender, moving from his own body to an inset narrative about Iphis and Anaxarete.[45] Disguised, he offers Pomona an admonitory *exemplum*, describing the behavior of a cruel woman towards her suitor—behavior justly punished with the petrifaction of the woman whose heart was always already as hard as stone. The careful reader has much to learn from this tale. When the cross-dressed Vertumnus compares his plight to that of Iphis, what are the ramifications? A glance at Antoninus Liberalis, a mythographer who shared Hellenistic sources with Ovid, reveals a similar story, also set in Cyprus, of a hard-hearted woman who refuses the pleas of an ardent suitor. But while Antoninus Liberalis's protagonists are Arsinoe and Arceophon, Vertumnus's become Anaxarete and Iphis (see Hill 2000 on 698–764). So ultimately, what's in a name? A lot, especially when readers of the *Metamorphoses* have seen an "Iphis" before, in

[44] Liveley 2003: 160–61, in a somewhat different argument about gender, Lacan and Ovid, advances a similar claim about a phallic prop underscoring the lack of a substantive phallus for Tiresias in *Metamorphoses* 3. For Liveley, Ovid suggests that gender markers are not immutable when as *both* man and woman Tiresias wields an (excessively phallic) staff to beat snakes.

[45] Fabre 1987, Myers 1994b: 237–39 and Gentilcore 1995: 116–18 all consider the relationship between the Iphis and Anaxarete story and the Pomona and Vertumnus narrative. Wheeler 1999: 57 mentions that the Iphis of book 14 "evokes an earlier Iphis" who was cross-dressed.

book 9. Another glance at Antoninus Liberalis reveals, as we might expect, that in book 9 too Ovid has enacted transformations upon his source text, most notably transforming a Leucippus into an Iphis.[46]

c. The Vir in the Virgo

When Ovid selects the name Iphis for the male protagonist in Vertumnus's *exemplum* so that it matches the name of an earlier character also explicitly chosen by the poet, we are once again invited to see boundaries as falsely constructing fixed, unified, separate wholes. The stories of Pomona and Vertumnus and of Iphis and Ianthe, books 14 and 9 of the *Metamorphoses* respectively, no longer stand apart, but now come together encouraging a rather chaotic and disorderly back-and-forth reading. So let us turn now to the earlier Iphis and his gender issues. To be absolutely clear, when we first encounter Iphis, we are rather adamantly informed that he is not a he at all, but rather a she.

In Crete, a poor couple is expecting a child. Ligdus sorrowfully informs his wife, Telethusa, that for financial reasons only a male child can be allowed to live (9.669–81). For Ligdus, the distinction between male and female is stable, instantly readable and knowable—so clear, in fact, that he feels competent to base a life or death decision on it at the very moment of a child's birth. The words Ligdus uses, however, to proclaim his rational and totalizing belief in the knowable and stable signifier upend the certainty of a careful reader. He cannot raise a daughter: *onerosior altera sors est,/ et uires fortuna negat* (9.676–77). The first part of the statement is clear—"the other [= female] sex is more burdensome." Complications arise in the next part of the sentence, which says either "and fortune denies me the resources [to pay for her dowry]" or "fortune denies them [girls] strength." In the second alternative the reader hears the full etymological play of *uires* ("strength") and *uir* ("man"), providing the statement with an additional layer of meaning, an emphatic and rather tautological "women are women because fortune denies them virility" (Ahl 1985: 153; Wheeler 1997: 196–97). Or perhaps we cannot choose between the readings, and both resonate for us. The impossibly circular "women are women because they are not men," moreover, recalls Lacan, who points out this very problem in the definition of woman; woman comes into being not as something positive, but rather something negative, "not-man," and then the two

[46] Antoninus Liberalis, *Metamorphoses* 17 provides a summary of the story of Leucippus (a.k.a. Iphis). Similarities between Antoninus Liberalis and Ovid suggest a common source generally assumed to be Nicander: see Bömer 1977: 469–72, though cf. Anderson 1972 on 9.666–797.

signifiers "man" and "woman" remain ineluctably intertwined, co-dependent, rather than representatives of two fixed, separately bounded categories.[47]

Ligdus clings to clear, unified concepts of gender, despite the acknowledgment his words grant of something more slippery: *certa sua est Ligdo sententia* ("Ligdus's opinion is definite," 9.684).[48] But the goddess Isis intervenes. Appearing to Telethusa, Isis instructs the woman to disregard her husband's commands—*nec dubita ... / tollere quidquid erit* ("do not hesitate to raise the child whatever sex it will be," 9.698–99). Telethusa and her child adopt a somewhat softened modification of Ligdus's view. They try to cleave to the position that stable, unified gender identities exist and remain fundamental to a subject, but that, with luck and a little divine assistance, they can be obfuscated somewhat, for a finite period of time and with varying degrees of success. Telethusa gives birth to a child whose biological sex is unequivocally pronounced—*femina* (9.705). She conceals the "actual" sex from everyone but the child's nurse; the mother raises her daughter as a son (9.705–7). The narrative highlights Telethusa's deceit; the mother lies (*mater ... mentita*, 9.706), cheats the will of her husband (*mandataque fall[it] mariti*, 9.697), who remains unaware of the deception (*ignaro ... patre*, 9.705), and the falsehoods continue undiscovered (*indetecta ... mendacia ... latebant*, 9.711). If we consider the telling carefully for a moment, we can see that the narrator shares Telethusa's views on "Woman" and "Man," or, to put it a different way, that we are being asked to focalize from Telethusa's point of view. If no one knows that the child is not the boy Telethusa claims he is, then no one other than Telethusa (and the nurse) would consider her actions in terms of lies and deception. And indeed, we should note that already in the third line of the story, announcing the narrative's general content and shaping our reception of what is to come, the narrator indicates a choice to embrace this vantage point; we hear of a miracle *Iphide mutata* ("with [an unquestionably grammatically female] Iphis having undergone metamorphosis," 9.668).

The child receives a gender-neutral name, Iphis (9.710), and the mother is happy to skirt daily onomastically-generated deception—*gauisa est nomine mater,/ quod commune foret nec quemquam falleret illo* ("the mother rejoiced in the name because it was unisex and she deceived no one with it," 9.709–10). The subjunctives *foret* and *falleret* indicate that we are getting Telethusa's explanations and draw us once again into the mother's preoccupation with the

[47] Lacan 1998 most intricately works out the question of Woman.

[48] Anderson 1972 on 9.682 nicely notes that Ligdus's definite opinion (*certa sententia*) is carefully juxtaposed with the vain pleadings (*uanis ... precibus*) Telethusa utters in order to soften her husband's decision.

fact that she has cloaked Iphis in a false gender; Iphis *is* a girl. When we hear that Iphis enjoys such androgynous good looks that one cannot determine whether the child is girl or boy we might question the mother's certainty—*cultus erat pueri; facies, quam siue puellae / siue dares puero, fieret formosus uterque* ("the child dressed as a boy; whether you were to imagine the features on a girl or a boy, either one would be nice-looking," 9.712–13). But the statement comes right on the heels of the narrator's assertion that the mother's falsehoods remain undetected (*indetecta ... mendacia*, 9.711), signaling to the reader, once again, that a girl lies beneath the costume.

As Iphis and Ianthe become engaged, the narrator emphasizes the symmetry of their erotic passion—*par aetas, par forma fuit, primasque magistris / accepere artes, elementa aetatis, ab isdem./ hinc amor ambarum tetigit rude pectus et aequum / uulnus utrique dedit, sed erat fiducia dispar* ("Their age and beauty were equivalent. They learned their first lessons, children's fundamentals, from the same teachers. From this, love touched both of their inexperienced hearts and gave both a similar wound; but their confidence was unequal," 9.718–21). Only the hope that engagement will blossom into a marriage distinguishes the two. Ianthe blissfully trusts that she and Iphis will be wed, while Telethusa, and more importantly Iphis, as we shall see in a moment, define Iphis as "Woman," thus rendering marriage, for this story at least, impossible. Otherwise, in all things—age, beauty, education, erotic innocence, parallel grammatical constructions—they are similar, indeed identical—that is to say, both girls.[49] And the narrator reinforces the parity a mere four lines later, explaining *ardetque in uirgine uirgo* ("a maiden yearns for a maiden," 9.725)—the quick repetition underscoring their likeness. Further on Ianthe receives the appellation *altera uirgo* ("the other maiden," 9.764); Iphis lurks as the implied doublet. The narrator echoes Telethusa's perspective, and, equally significantly, Iphis's own.[50]

But can we keep ourselves from hearing the *uir* lurking in *uirgo* (Ahl 1985: 39–40, 153; Wheeler 1997: 197–98)? It is difficult, especially when we ponder the trajectory of the narrative. Content to perform masculinity, Iphis dresses and behaves as a *puer* for thirteen years. And apparently the performance is convincing; her father betroths her to Ianthe, the girl next door. Both fathers and Ianthe herself are fooled. With irrepressible wit, Ovid explains—*quamque*

[49] Pintabone 2002 and Ormand 2005 are primarily concerned with the mutuality, equality and similarity not of the two figures *per se*, but rather of their passion. These lines provide them with substantial material for their argument.

[50] Pintabone 2002 observes the great sympathy that Ovid projects for the various characters in the story, in particular Telethusa and Iphis, who are both portrayed as exceedingly loyal characters of great piety.

uirum putat esse, uirum fore credit Ianthe ("the one Ianthe thinks is a man she believes will become her man," 9.723).[51]

Iphis herself insists, however, perhaps ultimately too much, on "Woman" as the signifier with which she identifies, at every turn circling back to it as that which defines her, that makes her wholly coherent. Although both she and Ianthe yearn for one another, and any impediments to their union remain pointedly absent, how can there be a wedding, Iphis asks rhetorically, when the groom is missing and in his stead stand two brides (*sacra, quibus qui ducat abest, ubi nubimus ambae*, 9.763)? In a lengthy comparison between animal behavior and her own, much discussed by scholars, Iphis stresses that female mammals always choose partners of the opposite sex—*interque animalia cuncta / femina femineo correpta cupidine nulla est* ("in the entire animal kingdom, no female has ever been smitten with desire for another female," 9.733–34) (Makowski 1996: 30–31; Pintabone 2002: 264–65; Ormand 2005: 89–91). The back-to-back *femina femineo* is strongly emphatic: gender distinction is clear, fundamental, exists in nature. For her, "Man" and "Woman" form a bedrock, binary opposition, doubly secure because it exists essentially in nature and also finds expression in social institutions. She must love what a woman should love (*quod femina debes*, 9.748) so that she brings herself in line with what is lawful (*quod fas est*, 9.748) and with what nature demands (*uult natura*, 9. 758). The only other option would be *actually* to become a man. But this remains impossible; even Daedalus cannot conjure up "a boy from a maiden" (*puerum de uirgine*, 9.743).[52]

As Daedalus enters the story, however, he brings with him some unintended (by Iphis, at least) and problematic consequences. After all, Daedalus is the one who, just one Ovidian book earlier, the reader remembers, achieves considerable stature because *naturam ... nouat* ("he makes his nature anew," 8.189) by fitting himself out with feathers and turning into a bird (8.189ff.). His ability to reconfigure nature introduces some uncertainty into Iphis's argument about the essential, immutable aspect of nature on which she predicates her Man/Woman distinction. Moreover, Daedalus performs his remarkable feats of corporeal metamorphosis *doctis / artibus* ("with learned/practiced skills/

[51] Raval 2002 offers an argument about all the cross-dressing episodes in the *Metamorphoses*. She observes a significant difference between male to female cross-dressing, which she terms gender "parody," and female to male cross-dressing, which she identifies as gender "performance." For Raval, Iphis's performance as *puer*, in a Butlerian fashion, becomes "who he is"; appearance metamorphoses into being. My own argument is more Lacanian than historicist, in that I see appearance trumping being, pushing it aside.

[52] We should note that Iphis chooses *puerum* rather than *uirum*. Perhaps Daedalus could have hoped for better luck extracting a *uir* from a *uirgo* (*uirum de uirgine*)?

arts," 9.743–44), implying that changing nature relies on the mere conjurings of an illusionist. And where does that leave essentialism?

Telethusa and Iphis, however, remain adamant. Iphis and Ianthe cannot be joined in matrimony because *natura* insists that both are women, and *res* ("the social circumstances," 9.750) demand that marriage be heterosexual. No solution emerges to the predicament. Iphis may be able to fool others with a slick performance, but the operative word is "fool." She knows what she really is, though she wishes she were no woman (*uellem nulla forem*, 9.735),[53] and she exhorts herself to come to terms with her essential being: *quid sis nata uides, nisi te quoque decipis ipsam* ("see what you were born, unless you plan to deceive yourself also," 9.747). On the day of the wedding Telethusa drags Iphis to Isis's temple to plead for the goddess's aid; *miserere duarum* ("have compassion for two women," 9.780), begs Telethusa. The goddess, who thirteen years before instructed Telethusa to raise her child no matter its sex, seems to recognize her responsibility for the sticky situation in which Iphis and Telethusa now find themselves. When Telethusa and Iphis walk out of the temple, Iphis now discovers that *uires augentur* ("her strength increases," 9.788) until *plusque uigoris adest habuit quam femina* ("there is greater energy than she had as a girl," 9.790). One cannot help but hear, as we did earlier, the etymological connections: Iphis becomes a *uir* through an increase of *uires* and also of *uigor*. Isis transforms Iphis into a man, who can take possession of his bride on their wedding night—*potiturque sua puer Iphis Ianthe* ("and the boy Iphis takes possession of/penetrates his Ianthe," 9.797).[54] This male Iphis marries Ianthe and the pair live heterosexually, happily ever after. Problem magically solved. Or is it?

A doublet of Vertumnus, the cross-dressed Iphis also destabilizes the claims for clear and bounded genders, fixed and knowable. While Iphis remains adamant that she is a girl, no one else considers Iphis anything other than a boy; apart from Telethusa and (presumably) the nurse all accept Iphis's performance of masculinity. If, for so many people, dressing like a *puer* makes Iphis a *puer*—if, quite literally, clothes make the man—does that not imply that the clear division between "Man" and "Woman" might not be so clear

[53] Anderson 1972 ad loc. suggests this as a possible translation. Cf. Bömer 1977 ad loc.

[54] Wheeler 1997 argues that Iphis grows into the true meaning of his name over the course of the narrative, and notes the etymological wordplay in which Ovid engages. Ovid does not need to come out and say explicitly that Iphis has become a man, because the poet does so learnedly, though wordplay; Iphis is a *uir* once he has *uires* and *uigor* and the ability to use *uis* to take possession (*potior*) of Ianthe, 199–201. We should note here that Vertumnus too, as soon as he sheds his disguise as an old woman and is eager to prove his masculinity, *uim ... parat* ("he prepares to use violence," 14.770).

after all, not so anchored if it comes undone based on whether one chooses to put on a *toga* or a *stola*?

Happily ever after in this narrative requires that Isis transform Iphis into the *puer* s/he has always impersonated. But let us take a second look at the metamorphosis, and we shall find the same tension about gender that we have seen in the rest of the narrative:

> sequitur comes Iphis euntem,
> quam solita est, maiore gradu; nec candor in ore
> permanet et uires augentur et acrior ipse est
> uultus et incomptis breuior mensura capillis,
> plusque uigoris adest habuit quam femina.
> ...
> potiturque sua puer Iphis Ianthe. (9.786–90 and 797)
>
> Iphis follows along with her mother as she departs, but now with a longer stride than she took before. And the pallor does not remain in her cheeks. Her strength increases and her very face becomes more severe; her hair, now without adornment, is shorter and now there is greater energy than she had as a girl ... As a boy Iphis takes possession of his Ianthe.

Iphis's transformation features strides getting longer, a face leaner and less pale, hair shorter, strength more pronounced. A comparison with Antoninus Liberalis's version of this story reveals what Ovid has decided, on the surface at least, not to highlight. Strikingly absent from the list of bodily alterations is one particular anatomical transformation, the growth of male genitalia, to which Antoninus pays a great deal of attention (Anderson 1972 on 787–90; Wheeler 1997: 199–200; Raval 2002: 159–64; Ormand 2005: 99–100). One might argue that Ovid speaks in short-hand, too polite to mention private parts of the anatomy, and that he euphemistically points to biological transformation when "as a boy Iphis takes possession of his Ianthe."[55] But bashfulness is not usually an Ovidian affliction, and one can certainly imagine many elegant, playful, coy (in other words, Ovidian) formulations that Ovid might have deployed to draw the reader's attention to Iphis's new biological configuration. We should note, then, that the text does not highlight what might be seen as the most clear-cut and visible marker of sex. In fact, it quite deliberately locates its interest elsewhere. If we take a look at what Ovid does mention, Iphis undergoes alteration in the manner of walking, complexion,

[55] Indeed word order hints at penetration when Ovid's "clever phrasing at the end of the line seems to dramatize the scene of *puer* Iphis at last in the embrace of *sua ... Ianthe*," Anderson 1972 on 9.797.

facial expression, hairstyle and then *uigor* (energy/purpose). Can any of these qualities stand as firm or fixed markers of "Man" when presumably these very same qualities in altered form marked Iphis as "Woman" merely moments before?[56] Should it be, could it be, so easy to slide between the supposedly opposite positions of the binary if the two elements were indeed as separate, bounded and anchored in something "real" as a binary implies? And what does it mean if the transformation can be performed with such ease?

The story hastens to its conclusion after the metamorphosis. Three times in the last eight lines, we hear the word *puer* and three times we hear *femina*; the insistent claim is that Iphis was once "Woman" but is now "Man." In gratitude to Isis, Iphis and Telethusa bring gifts to the goddess. The narrator breaks into the telling to explain why: *nam quae / femina nuper eras, puer es* ("for you who were recently a girl, are now a boy," 9.790–91).[57] The sense of clear, bounded and divided categories emerges again, though this should not surprise us since, as we have already seen, the narrator shares Telethusa's and Iphis's views on the gender binary. Mother and offspring augment their offerings of thanks with an inscription. The verse reads: *DONA · PVER · SOLVIT · QVAE · FEMINA · VOVERAT · IPHIS* ("The boy, Iphis, pays the offerings that the girl, Iphis, had vowed to pay," 9.794). The certainty of the narrator's claims about gender immediately becomes more slippery. While Iphis and Telethusa attempt to memorialize the miraculous transformation, on close inspection what they inscribe in stone is Iphis as both masculine (*puer*) and feminine (*femina*), since the name is in apposition to both, a fact underscored by the effect of holding the name until the last word of the line.[58]

Iphis, morever, performs double duty for Vertumnus. Not only does Vertumnus bolster his arguments about gender through the specter of Iphis from book 9, but he equally makes his point through the Iphis who explicitly stars in the god's narrative exemplum.[59] The more immediate Iphis catches

[56] Or was any alteration even necessary? For surely Iphis as *puer* was already walking with a masculine gait and was already masculine enough in complexion and hairstyle to convince an entire town.

[57] Ormand 2005: 99 notes the inescapable slippage that occurs between "Man" and "Woman," but ultimately seems to step back. Consider the astute statement: "The line between what Iphis was and what he becomes is awfully thin, emphasized here by the fact that *puer es* is almost an anagram of *nuper eras*. But in some sense Iphis *has crossed that line*" (my emphasis).

[58] As Hardie 2002: 250 astutely notes, "The interchangeability of male and female is given permanent expression in Iphis' votive inscription." His discussion of this narrative is very brief, coming in the context of a larger argument about names in Ovid.

[59] Indeed, can Iphis of book 14 be what the post-transformation Iphis of book 9 looks like? Hardie 2002: 250 argues that the gender instability of Iphis in book 9 colors the Iphis

sight of beautiful Anaxarete, and promptly falls in love. This Iphis possesses a thorough knowledge of elegiac poetry, which provides him with a paradigm for expressing his passion. Instantly he takes up his position at his beloved's threshold in suppliant posture (*supplex ad limina uenit*, 14.702) to perform the *paraclausithyron*, an old stand-by in the repertoire of the elegiac lover, and to act out all the behaviors generically mandated of the *exclusus amator*.[60] In a virtuoso performance,[61] he leaves no cliché unexploited, then brings down the curtain by hanging himself in her doorway. Eroding claims for fixed and firmly anchored gender identities, the elegiac lover-poet, whose identity Iphis takes on, himself slides vertiginously, at times taking on traits belonging to the feminine, at others asserting himself as fully and powerfully masculine.[62] Moreover, when Iphis hangs himself, at Anaxarete's front door, he chooses a woman's mode of suicide (Wheeler 1999: 57; Hardie 2002: 250). When Vertumnus, himself performing a *paraclausithyron* at Pomona's garden gate (Myers 1994b: 228), posits a parallel between himself and the spurned Iphis, Vertumnus draws into his own story the gender instability represented in the elegiac figure.

And in the end Vertumnus's argument has a snowball effect as the narrator of book 14 seems to echo the god's point of view. In the final six lines of the story, as Vertumnus, inside Pomona's *pomarium*, sheds his womanly attire, our attention is repeatedly drawn to façade. Although the precise reading of line 765 remains in doubt—whether the god himself was *formae* ... *aptus anili* ("molded into the shape of an old woman") or *formas* ... *aptus in omnes*

of Vertumnus's story, adding a feminine aspect to the spurned lover, through "the doubleness and detachability of th[e] name." He does not, however, take the argument the other way to suggest that the Iphis of book 14 colors the way we read the Iphis of book 9.

[60] He places his soft side (*molle latus*, 14.710) on her hard threshold (*in limine duro*, 14.709), cries, decorates the doorposts with flowers (14.708–9). He attempts to make inroads with Anaxarete's nurse (14.703–4) and besieges Anaxarete herself with love-notes (14.707). When she refuses his suit, Iphis imagines her as a joyous, conquering general (14.718–21), manipulating the love-as-war theme. In the *amator*'s classic "you'll be sorry" assertion, he claims that Anaxarete will appreciate the strength and extent of his love after he dies (14.722–23). For a fuller discussion of the elegiac elements of the tale, see Myers 1994b: 238–39 and Lindheim 1998b: 34–35.

[61] This too recalls the story of Iphis and Ianthe, itself replete with elegiac echoes. Here see Pintabone 2002 on Ianthe (263, 283n23) and on Iphis (264–66); and Ormand 2005: 96–97. Bömer 1977 on 750–52 notes elements of elegy in the narrative.

[62] See, e.g., Wyke 1987, 1989, 1994; Gold 1993; Oliensis 1997; Greene 1998 and 2005; Lindheim 1998a; Sharrock 2002. For a Lacanian argument, see especially Miller 2004: 130–59, "Why Propertius is a Woman."

("adaptable to all shapes"), or whether he was simply speaking words *formae ... apta senili* ("in keeping with his shape/disguise as an old person"), there is agreement in all the variants that emphasis rests on the god's predilection for changing shape. Just as Vertumnus returns to his ostensibly natural shape, the text underscores image and appearances; Vertumnus's "self" turns out to be something that one best describes through simile: *talisque apparuit illi,/ qualis ubi ... nitidissima solis imago* ("he appeared to her, just as when the most brilliant image of the sun ...," 14.767–68).[63] Meanwhile when she finally yields, Pomona *inque figura / capta dei ... est* ("has been captured/captivated by the shape/appearance of the god," 14.770–71). The words *imago* and *figura* with reference to Vertumnus's masculinity send us back to where we started, when the narrative suggested that identity was no more than the possibility of infinite, cross-gendered public re-construction, when Vertumnus sought entry to Pomona's garden "by means of many shapes" (*figuras*), or again by assuming "the likeness of a true reaper" (*imago*).[64] Vertumnus's masculinity emerges on an equal footing with his earlier disguises, no more anchored in anything "real" than any other costume. The essentialness Pomona attempts to ascribe to "Man" (and "Woman") ultimately unravels.

When he explores the possibility of gender's bounded fixity, Ovid joins his voice, in a metaphorical fashion, to the new Augustan political, social and cultural discourses about space and boundaries. Ovid's narrative participates in the "mapping impulse" so pervasive in his time, visible most clearly in Agrippa's world map, the first world map placed on display for the Roman public to examine, a momentous event that occurred some time in the final decades of Augustus's reign. Dutiful Romans, armed with knowledge of the empire's latest conquests—and there were many—could go to the Porticus Vipsania to visualize and trace out the extent of the *orbis terrarum* that belonged to them. And yet, the multitude of conquests that renders the exercise of tracing out the boundaries so exciting, concurrently produces anxiety by threatening that the Romans' knowledge is incomplete, that the boundaries they attempt to fix have already been altered. Both the urge for stable, and thus reassuring, definition, as well as the vertiginous sense that any defini-

[63] Both Myers 1994b: 243–44 and Gentilcore 1995: 118–120 note the strange simile, but they highlight the violence inherent in the comparison. Sol appears in book 4 of the *Metamorphoses*, and this god, when all other attempts at wooing Leucothoe fail, reveals himself to the girl in a blaze of sunlight and terrifies her into complying with his sexual desires (4.228–33).

[64] Gentilcore 1995: 119 notes the use of *imago* and suggests that it points the reader to Vertumnus's penchant for disguise and especially deception. Deception, she reminds us, so often in the *Metamorphoses* leads to violence and rape.

tion ultimately unravels, emerge from a consideration of Agrippa's world map, in fact from any cartographic undertaking. These simultaneous yet antithetical aspects of the "mapping impulse" loom large in the Augustan Age, manifesting themselves in countless incarnations. In Ovid's story of Vertumnus and Pomona, we witness one literary instance of the "mapping impulse," here figured as the powerful yearning to imagine the boundaries of gender as firm and unassailable. And yet, ultimately this desire for fixedness turns out, as all desire does, to be unattainable. The two separate gender categories refuse to remain fixed, but instead begin to blend, one encroaching on, appropriating the territory of the other. Ovid's narrative leaves us with the gradual and disorienting feeling that "Man" and "Woman" are signifiers, without anchor in anything "real." Gender and identity are in fact fluid, and attempts to render them otherwise, to render them fixed, may be necessary for coherence, for comprehensibility, for mastery but ultimately must remain a fiction. The same goes for the over-arching regulatory impulse of Augustan political, social and cultural discourse.

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