

to suggest, however, that the Julio-Claudian use of the calendar as an ideological tool meant necessarily ceding some degree of 'authority' to the reader of the calendar in order to allow the new holidays to truly participate in the calendrical form. Though a guiding imperial hand is often visible in the manipulations of the calendrical structure that encourage these connections, it is important to remember that these connections, the meanings built by the interaction between celebrations, are always only suggested and never prescribed. The Julio-Claudian holidays do not, indeed cannot, freeze meaning in the calendar; they depend on the openness of the calendar's structure and its encouragement of interpretation and exegesis to incorporate them and integrate them into the Roman experience of the year.

Ovid's readings of the Julio-Claudian holidays, the connections he draws between them, and his staging of historical rereadings and reinterpretations of the meanings of these connections, must be read with an eye to the way the new holidays interact with the calendrical structure and the older layers of the calendar. The calendar challenges readers to make connections between days, asks them to make sense of the relationship between coinciding or calendrically close events, invites them to read meaning into its structure. In many senses, then, Ovid has found a public discourse in which Augustan authority can easily be assimilated to poetic authority, and is subject to the same limits in terms of its control over its reception. The poet reads the calendar as if it were a poem, and his own poem is mimetic of that reading, that process of making connections and building meaning. If his readings often coincide with what seem to be Augustus' intentions, we should not be surprised; Ovid was a good reader and Augustus knew how to build a text.

12

Ovid and the Stage

T. P. WISEMAN

Scaena sonat ludique vocant: spectate, Quirites
(Ovid, *Fasti* 4. 187)

I

The fourth book of the *Fasti* contains Ovid's account of the Ludi Megalenses, the games of the Great Mother. The din of her procession is deafening, but he has lots of questions to ask. The Mother deputes to the Muses the job of explanation, and Erato tells him what he needs to know. There are ten questions and ten answers, of which much the longest (102 lines out of the total 194) is the story of how the Phrygian goddess came to Rome. A major part of that story (*Fasti* 4. 297-328) concerns her reception at Ostia and the miracle of the grounded ship.¹

The tale of Claudia Quinta's undeserved reputation, and her vindication by the goddess as she pulled the ship from the sandbank single-handed, was known to Propertius and probably to Livy (though he didn't use it), but evidently not to Cicero or Diodorus.² Erato reveals that it was the plot of a play: *mira, sed et scaena testificata loquar* (326). What sort of play was it? The standard catalogues of Ribbeck and Klotz include it among the *fabulae praetextae*,³ on the other hand, since it must have been particularly relevant to the Ludi Megalenses, it is worth noting that the title 'Megalensia' was used by two of the known authors of *fabulae togatae*.⁴

¹ On which see Wiseman (1979) 94-9 and Bremmer (1987) 105-11.

² Prop. 4. 11. 51-2; Livy 29. 14. 12; Cic. *Har. Resp.* 27, *Caed.* 34; Diod. Sic. 34. 3. 2.

³ Ribbeck (1897) 335; Klotz (1953) 371.

⁴ Nonius 829 L (Afranius); Servius on *Ecl.* 7. 33 (Atta).

According to the grammarians of late antiquity, *praetextae* were tragedies—or at least, serious plays—and *togatae* were comedies.³ However, Seneca describes *togatae* as 'between comedy and tragedy',⁴ and Varro seems to refer to a play on a somewhat similar historical theme (an *actio* for the Nonae Caprotinae festival) as a *togata praetexta*.⁵ Certainly the attractive young noblewoman of Ovid's scenario, with her 'ready tongue for the strict old men',⁶ sounds like a character in a comedy, however pious and patriotic its outcome; and a crowd of men hauling on a rope has comic potential too, as in Aristophanes' *Peace* and Aeschylus' satyr-play *Diktyonkoi*.⁷

A detailed discussion of 'Ovid at the *ludi Megalenses*' came to this conclusion about the Claudia passage:¹⁰

It would seem that dramatic entertainment at Roman festivals provided, as did the medieval mystery plays, a representation of the cult story appropriate to the festal day. ... At all events we may conclude that Ovid deliberately accentuated the flavour of his descriptions of Roman holidays if not by the inclusion of appropriate material from the festal stage at any rate by dramatic colour and stage effects.

For this passage, at least, the conditional in the last sentence is unnecessarily cautious: Ovid evidently is including 'material from the festal stage'. To make sense of it, however, requires a hard look at two interrelated questions. First, what evidence is there for the sort of performances the Romans watched at the *ludi scaenici* in the first century BC? And second, what can we infer from Ovid's texts about the kind of drama he used as a source for his stories?

³ Donatus, *De Com.* 6. 1; Diomedes, *Gramm. Lat.* 1. 482 and 489 Keil; Lydus, *De Mag.* 1. 40.

⁴ Sen. *Ep.* 8. 8: 'Quam multi poetae dicunt quae philosophis aut dicta sunt aut dicenda non adtingunt tragica, nec togatae nostras: habent enim haec quoque aliquid severitatis et sunt inter comoedias ac tragoedias mediae.' Cf. Diomedes, *Gramm. Lat.* 1. 489–90 Keil, classing *praetextatae* as a type of *togatae*. See Brink (1971) 319–20.

⁵ Varro, *LL* 6. 18, on which see Drossart (1974) and Wiseman (1998) 8–11.

⁶ *Pasti* 4. 309–10: 'Cultus et ornatus varie prodinae capillis | obfuit, ad rigidos promptaque lingua series.'

⁷ *Pasti* 4. 297–304, with Pantham (1998) 154: 'these lines sketch a kind of comedy'. Emphasis on *foiis*: 4. 207, 325, 331, 333 (also Prop. 4. 11. 51); cf. Aristoph. *Peace* 458–519, Aesch. fr. 46a. 16–21 Radt.

¹⁰ Littlewood (1981) 382.

II

For most aspects of the social and cultural history of the late Republic, the works of Cicero offer an unparalleled wealth of information. But not for the stage, and there may be a reason for that. The audience at the games was the *populus Romanus*;¹¹ Cicero's relationship with the Roman people was fundamentally changed by the execution of the conspirators on 5 December 63 BC; and the greater part of his oeuvre, including almost all the surviving correspondence, was written after that date.

As a young outsider challenging the entrenched *nobilitas*, Cicero could speak on the people's behalf—as in the prosecution of Verres, the debate on Pompey's eastern command, and the defence of the *popularis* tribune C. Cornelius.¹² He was still able to exploit that popular goodwill in the first weeks of his consulship, when he presented himself as a *consul popularis* in order to defeat Rullus' land bill.¹³ Up to that point, we may be sure that Cicero was greeted with warm applause whenever he took his seat in the theatre at the *ludi scaenici*. But the execution of citizens without trial must have changed all that. Cicero himself evidently presented it as a conscious act of *ἀποτοκρᾶτῖα*,¹⁴ and from then on it seems he was regularly hissed at the games, except when he could shelter behind the popularity of Pompey.¹⁵ Not surprisingly, though he still went to the games when politics required it, Cicero in his late years was not an enthusiastic theatregoer. With that in mind, let us see what the Ciceronian evidence has to offer on the subject of the Roman stage.

In 80 BC (he was 26) Cicero defended Sex. Roscius on a charge of parricide. In the course of a long purple passage on

¹¹ Cic. *Sest.* 106, 116–18, *Har. Resp.* 22–5, *Pl.* 65, *Att.* 2. 19. 3, 14. 3. 2, *Phil.* 1. 36.

¹² e.g. Cic. *Verr.* 34–7, *II Verr.* 5. 174–6; *Leg. Man.* 63–4, 69–71; *Asc.* 71–9 C. The *Pro Cornelio* speeches are reconstructed by Kumaniecki (1970).

¹³ Cic. *Leg. Agr.* 2. 6–10.

¹⁴ Plut. *Cic.* 22. 1, cf. Cic. *Att.* 2. 3. 4 *ἀποτοκρᾶτῖα*. Plutarch's source at this point was probably Cicero's *ἐπεὶ ἱερῶν*, the Greek monograph on his consulship. Felling (1985) 315.

¹⁵ Cic. *Att.* 1. 16. 11, q.v. for Cicero's view of the Roman people at this time (also *Att.* 2. 1. 8, 2. 16. 1).

the heinousness of the crime, he appealed to what the jury had often seen on the stage, Orestes or Alcmæon pursued by Furies for the murder of his mother.¹⁶

Nolite enim putare, quem ad modum in fabulis saepenumero videtis, eos qui aliquid impie scelerateque commiserint agitari et perterrerī Furiarum taedis ardentibus, sua quemque fraus et suus terror maxime vexat...

Do not imagine that those who have committed some impious or criminal act are driven in terror by the blazing torches of the Furies, as you often see in plays. What hounds them is above all their own crime and their own terror.

The phrase 'taedis ardentibus' is used by Cicero on two other occasions where he is making the same point, and otherwise only in a quotation from tragedy.¹⁷

Ennius wrote an *Alcmæon* and a *Eumenides*, and Pacuvius evidently had the Furies on stage lying in wait for Orestes at Delphi.¹⁸ Such plays were no doubt what Polybius had in mind when he drew attention to the Romans' use of tragedy for controlling the populace;¹⁹ fear of punishment by the gods was always a powerful deterrent from wrongdoing, and one medium of exemplary moral education was evidently the tragic stage.²⁰ Cicero's rationalization of it is merely the recognition that educated people will not take the imagery literally.

¹⁶ Cic. *Rosc. Am.* 67, cf. 66 ('videtis quos nobis poetae tradiderunt...') and 46 for *fabula* as 'play' (a comedy by Caecilius).

¹⁷ Cic. *Phil.* 46 ('ut in scena videtis'), *De Leg.* 1. 40 ('sicut in fabulis'), *Acad.* 2. 39 (tragedy); cf. *Har. Resp.* 39 ('in tragoediis') on the Furies and madness. The *topos* dates back at least as far as Aeschines (*Timarch.* 190): μή γάρ οἴκοι... τοὺς ἰσχυροτάτους, καθάρους ἐν τοῖς τραγῳδίας, Πλούτη δαδύναι καὶ καθάρους ὄντας ἡμιδράκους.

¹⁸ Ennius *fr.* 16–31, 144–8 Jocelyn (= 19–32, 132–6 R²), cf. Accius, *Alcmæon*, *fr.* 608–20 Dangel (= 58–70 R²), Pacuvius *Serv. ad Aen.* 4. 473 (*fr.* 111 R²).

¹⁹ Pol. 6. 56. 8: ἐν τῷ κοινῷ γὰρ ἐκτραγῳδικῶν καὶ παρεστημένων τοῦτο τὸ μέτρον [sc. δεσποδιστορίας] παρ' ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἐν τοῖς κατὰ φύσιν νόμοις καὶ ἐν τοῖς κατὰ νόμον νόμοις καὶ ἐν τοῖς κατὰ νόμον νόμοις. Failing a community of philosophers, the people have to be controlled (56. 11): ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς φέβου καὶ τῇ κοινῇ τραγῳδίᾳ καὶ πάλιν αὐτοῖς. See Mazzarino (1966) 2. 61–2 and Zorzet (1980) 64–5.

²⁰ Aristotle, *Met.* 12. 8. 20 (1074b4–5), Diod. Sic. 1. 2. 2 (on ὁ γὰρ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ πειθαρχεῖν), Cic. *Cat.* 4. 7–8, *De Leg.* 2. 15–16; cf. Cic. *De Leg.* 1. 47 on the stage as a source of *opinion*. See Liebeschuetz (1979) 39–54 for the ethical demands of Roman religion, and Rawson (1991) 570–81 for theatrical moralizing ('the theatre... provided much of the mental furniture of the poor', 581).

It was probably some time in the late seventies that Cicero defended the great comic actor Q. Roscius in a private suit brought by a business partner. How absurd to imagine that a man of Roscius' stature would stoop to fraud for a mere fifty thousand sesterces!²¹

Pro deum hominumque fidem! qui HS CCCXXX CCCXXX CCCXXX quaestus facere noluit (nam certe HS CCCXXX CCCXXX CCCXXX merere et potuit et debuit, si potest Dionysia HS CCXX CCXX merere), is per summam fraudem et malitiam et perfidiam HS L appetiit?

I ask you! A man who declined to make a profit of 300,000 sesterces used utter deceit, wickedness and treachery to make 50,000? For he certainly could and should have earned 300,000 if Dionysia can earn 200,000.

Who was Dionysia? The jury evidently knew without being told; they must have seen her often on the stage. Aulus Gellius, quoting a *bon mot* of Q. Hortensius, calls her a *saltatrix*, which must mean a mime actress; and a fragment of Varro's *Menippean Satires*, probably datable to just about the time of the Roscius case, reveals the sort of performance she may have started in:²²

Crede mihi, plures dominos servi comederunt quam canes, quod si Actaeon occupasset et ipse prius suos canes comedisset, non nugae saltatoribus in theatro fieret.

I tell you, more masters have been gobbled up by their slaves than by their dogs. But if Actaeon had got in first and eaten his dogs himself, he wouldn't be rubbish for dancers in the theatre.

Presumably the *saltatores* (masculine) played the dogs who tore Actaeon to pieces; naked Diana and her nymphs would be roles for *saltatriculae*.

In his defence of Q. Gallius in 64 BC,²³ Cicero reminded the jury of what he and they were seeing at the games—the huge success enjoyed by one 'dominant' playwright with his 'Banquets of Poets and Philosophers', presenting Euripides

²¹ Cic. *Rosc. Com.* 23 (Roscius was a rich man, and did not accept a fee for his performances).

²² Varro, *Men.* 513 Astbury (Non. 563L); cf. Lucian, *De Salt.* 41 for Actaeon as a subject for tragic mime. Hortensius: Gell. 1. 5. 3 (against L. Torquatus in 62 BC).

²³ For the date, see Ramsey (1980).

arguing with Menander, Epicurus with Socrates.²⁴ It is not at all clear what dramatic genre was involved. On the one hand, the subject matter might suit the more ethically improving end of the mime-writers' repertoire, known to us mainly from the collection of *sententiae* attributed to Publilius Syrus.²⁵ On the other hand, the banquets of philosophers had been satirized in Lycophron's third-century satyr-play *Menedemos*, and both Vitruvius and Horace clearly imply that satyr-play was a familiar part of the Roman theatrical experience in the first century BC; indeed, Q. Cicero evidently produced Sophocles' satyr-play *The Banqueters* to amuse Caesar's officers in Gaul.²⁶

Coming now to Cicero's career after the consulship, we find him reporting political allusions at the Ludi Apollinares of 59 and 58 BC (the latter at second hand, since he was in exile at the time); the plays concerned are tragedies, a *praetexta*, and a comic *tagata*.²⁷ In the *Pro Caelio* of April 56, delivered at the very time of the Ludi Megalenses, he quotes from tragedy and comedy, and alludes to tragedy, *praetexta*, and mime.²⁸ At Pompey's lavish games in 55, he found the mimes soporific and the tragedies disappointing; also on the programme, though he gives no details, were 'Greek and Oscan shows'.²⁹

²⁴ Fr. 1 Puccioni = Jerome, *Ep. ad Nepotianum* 52. 8: 'unus quidam poeta dominatur, homo per litteratus, cuius sunt illa convivia poetarum ac philosopharum...'. See Giancotti (1967) 119–28 and Wiseman (1994) 80, both of whom wrongly date the speech to 66 BC.

²⁵ Conveniently available in the Loeb *Minor Latin Poets* (ed. J. W. Duff and A. M. Duff, 1934) 3–111; cf. Rawson (1991) 579 f. Giancotti (see previous note) assumes that the play Cicero refers to was a mime, and tentatively suggests D. Laberius as the author.

²⁶ Athenaeus 2. 55d, 10. 419e–420c (Lycophron); Vit. *Arch.* 5, 6, 9, 7, 5, 2; Hor. *Art. Poetica* 220–50; Cic. *Ad Q. f.* 2. 16. 3 (July 54 BC), 'Eubelotusque Sodo-Adone, quamquam a te actum fabellam video esse festive, nullo modo probavi' (for the vulgar content of the play, cf. Athenaeus 1. 17d). See Wiseman (1988) = (1994) 68–85.

²⁷ Cic. *Att.* 2. 19, 3 (unknown tragedy); *Sent.* 148 (Africanus' *Simulans*, 120–2 (Accius' *Eurydice*), 123 (Accius' *Brutus*).

²⁸ Cic. *Cael.* 1 ('diebus festis ludisque publicis'), 18 (Ennius' *Mada exul*), 36 (unknown comedy), 37 (comedy by Caecilius), 38 (Terence's *Adelphi*), 64–5 (*fabulas*, mime), 67 (tragic *Equus Troianus*): see Hollis (1998). The *protopoetia* of Ap. Claudius Caelius at *Cael.* 34 is presented as a stage scenario ('ita gravem personam induci', 35), necessarily a *praetexta*.

²⁹ Cic. *Fam.* 7. 2. 1–3, for Greek shows, cf. *Att.* 16. 5. 1, *Plat. Mar.* 2. 1 and *ILLRP* 803. 13 = *CIL* 1². 1214. 13.

In 54 BC, at a time when his political volte-face may have brought him temporarily back into popular favour, he was at Apollo's games again, evidently in support of the praetor responsible for them.³⁰

Redii Romam Fonteius causa a.d. vii Id. Quint. veni spectatum, primum magno et aequabili plausu—sed hoc ne curaris, ego ineptus qui scripserim. deinde Antiphonti operam. is erat ante manu missus quam productus. ne diutius pendeas, palmam tulit. sed nihil tam pusillum, nihil tam sine voce, nihil tam... verum haec tu tecum habeto. in Andromacha tamen maior fuit quam Astyanax, in ceteris parem habuit neminem. quaeris nunc de Arbuscula. valde placuit. ludi magnifici et grati; venatio in aliud tempus dilata.

I returned to Rome for Fonteius' benefit on 9 July, and went to the theatre. To begin with, the applause was loud and steady as I entered—but never mind that, I am a fool to mention it. To proceed, I saw Antipho, who had been given his freedom before they put him on the stage. Not to keep you too long in suspense, he won the prize; but never have I seen such a weedy little object, not a scrap of voice, not a—but don't say I said so! As Andromache at any rate he stood head and shoulders above Astyanax. In the other roles he didn't have his equal. Now you'll want to know about Arbuscula. First-rate. The games were fine and much appreciated. The hunt was put off to another time.

Antipho was evidently a tragic actor. Arbuscula must have been a *mima*, presumably also a novice and an ex-slave. Twenty years later Horace refers to her as saying 'It's enough if the knights applaud me' when the rest of the audience booed her off the stage; in 54 she may have been like the young freedwoman Epicharis, starring in 'the games of the nobles' at 14.³¹

A letter to Trebatius the following year reveals another aspect of the mimic stage—topical satire, of which Trebatius may be a victim if he stays in Gaul too long without getting rich.³² The mimes used to come first at the games, in the morning programme; a letter to Paetus in 46 implies that a mime

³⁰ Cic. *Att.* 4. 15. 6 (Shackleton Bailey's translation); cf. 4. 5. 1 and *Fam.* 1. 9. 4–18 on the 'palinode'.

³¹ Hor. *Sat.* 1. 10. 76–7; *ILLRP* 803 = *CIL* 1². 1214, with Wiseman (1985) 30–5.

³² Cic. *Fam.* 7. 11. 2: 'si diutius frustra averteris, non modo Laberium sed etiam sodalem nostrum Valerium pertimesco; mira enim persona induci potest Britannici iuris consulti'. For Valerius Catullus the mimographer, see n. 41 below.

now follows a tragedy, in the slot previously occupied by a *fabula Atellana*.³³ Whenever they came, Cicero found them as tedious as Caesar's games that autumn as he had done at Pompey's nine years earlier.³⁴ What excited him were the serious genres of tragedy and *praetexta* that could be taken as commenting on the high issues of contemporary politics, as at the Ludi Apollinares in July 44 BC.³⁵ However, even the mimes' ad-libbing had been worth hearing at that year's Ludi Megalenses, immediately following the Ides of March.³⁶

The ubiquity of mime, in its many forms, is the main thing that emerges from the Ciceronian evidence. Small wonder that in Lucretius the man who has been watching the games all day sees dancers in his dreams, and not the masks of comedy or tragedy.³⁷ Despite recent doubts on the subject, it is more likely than not that this popular and versatile dramatic form influenced, and even overlapped with, the literary genres of 'high culture'.³⁸

The star *mima* of the forties BC, mistress of Antony and Cornelius Gallus,³⁹ sang (and danced?) in a performance of Virgil's sixth *Eclogue*. So at least Servius tells us; Donatus too believed that the *Eclogues* were performed on the stage, and it is not easy to see why these late sources should have invented the idea.⁴⁰ It has been argued that Catullus the poet, Catullus the mime-writer, and Catullus the theorist of mime were one and the same person—a startling notion, but not at all inconsistent with what we can infer about the literary culture

³³ Cic. *Fam.* 9. 16. 7 (contrast 7. 2. 1).

³⁴ Cic. *Fam.* 12. 18. 2 on 'Laberius et Publilius poemata' (cf. 7. 2. 1); *Rob. Post.* 35 for a dismissive comment about mimes in 54 BC.

³⁵ Cic. *Phil.* 1. 36, *Att.* 16. 2. 3 (Accius' *Terentius*; cf. *Att.* 16. 5. 1 (Brutus had expected Accius' *Brutus*)).

³⁶ Cic. *Att.* 14. 2. 2 (9 Apr. 44): 'tu si quid *propositum* habes rescribere, sin minus, populi *invenientes* et mimorum dicta perscribito'.

³⁷ *Lact.* 4. 973–83, cf. 788–93; the mask is exploited in a different context (4. 296–9).

³⁸ See McKeown (1979) and Fantham (1989); the latter calls mime 'the missing link in Roman literary history'. Contra Rawson (1993), who insists on 'the vulgarity of the Roman mime', but with so many proper reservations that the essentials of the McKeown–Fantham view remain valid. Evidently mime could be both vulgar and sophisticated, morally contentious and obscene.

³⁹ Volturnia Cytheris: Cic. *Fam.* 9. 26. 2, *Att.* 10. 10. 5, 10. 16. 5, *Phil.* 2. 20, 2. 58, 2. 62, 2. 69, 2. 77, *Plut. Ant.* 9. 4–5, Pliny, *NH* 8. 55 (Antony), Serv. *ad Eccl.* 10. 1, *De Vir.* III. 82. 2 (Gallus).

⁴⁰ Serv. *ad Eccl.* 6. 11, Donatus, *Vita Verg.* 26 OCT; see Van Sickle (1986) 17–21.

of the mid-first century BC.⁴¹ The same applies to the Augustan age, and particularly to the elegiac poets, since 'contemporary mime is precisely the sort of literary production which we should expect to find exploited in elegy'.⁴² With that in mind, we may turn to Ovid, whose own works, he tells us, were often 'danced' on the stage.⁴³

III

For the following fifteen episodes in the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, various scholars in the past thirty years or so have suggested direct influence from the Roman theatre:

1. Pentheus and Acoites (*Met.* 3. 562–83, 692–700): from Pacuvius' tragedy *Pentheus*?⁴⁴
2. The Calydonian boar-hunt (*Met.* 8. 273–413): from a mime by Laberius?⁴⁵
3. Circe, Picus, and Canens (*Met.* 14. 320–434): from a satyr-play?⁴⁶
4. Pomona and Vertumnus (*Met.* 14. 622–94, 765–71): from a satyr-play?⁴⁷
5. Priapus and Lotis (*Fasti* 1. 391–440): from a mime?⁴⁸
6. Faunus, Hercules, and Omphale (*Fasti* 2. 303–56): from a satyr-play?⁴⁹
7. Jupiter, Lara, and Mercury (*Fasti* 2. 583–616): from a mime?⁵⁰

⁴¹ Wiseman (1985) 183–98, 258–9, and (1994) 92–4. For the theorist, see Schol. Bern. on Lucan 1. 544: 'in libro Catulli qui inscribitur *περί μίμωδων*' (Müller's reading for 'quis cribitur per mimologiarum').

⁴² McKeown (1979) 71; among the mime-influenced passages he goes on to discuss are *Hon. Sat.* 1. 2. 127–34, *Prop.* 2. 29, 4. 7, 4. 8, and 4. 9.

⁴³ *Tristia* 2. 519–20: 'et mea sunt populo saltata poemata saepe'.

⁴⁴ Otis (1966) 371–2; Pacuvius ap. Serv. *ad Aen.* 4. 469.

⁴⁵ Horsfall (1979): Laberius fr. 176 Bonaria = 148 R².

⁴⁶ Wiseman (1994) 83; cf. Steffen (1952) 134 on Aeschylus' satyr-play *Circe* (*fr.* 113x–115 Radt). See further p. 287–8 below.

⁴⁷ Brief reference at Wiseman (1994) 82, 84.

⁴⁸ McKeown (1979) 76; cf. also Littlewood (1980) 317 and Wiseman (1998) 23–4.

⁴⁹ Satyr-play: Littlewood (1975) 1063–7, Steffen (1952) 230–4, 241–2 on *Omphale* satyr-plays by Ion and Achaëos. 'Popular drama': Fantham (1983) 196–8, 200–1.

⁵⁰ Wiseman (1998) 24.

8. Ariadne and Liber (*Fasti* 3. 459–516): from a mime?⁵¹
9. Anna, Aeneas, and Lavinia (*Fasti* 3. 543–656): from a mime?⁵²
10. Anna Perenna and Mars (*Fasti* 3. 675–96): from a mime by Laberius?⁵³
11. Silenus and the bees (*Fasti* 3. 738–60): from 'burlesque drama'?⁵⁴
12. Priapus and Vesta (*Fasti* 6. 319–48): from a mime or satyr-play?⁵⁵
13. Ino, Hercules, and Carmentis (*Fasti* 6. 501–50): from a mime or satyr-play?⁵⁶
14. Fortuna and Servius (*Fasti* 6. 573–80): from a mime?⁵⁷
15. Servius, Tarquin, and Tullia (*Fasti* 6. 585–624): from a *praetexta*?⁵⁸

There is more to be said about one or two of these, and further examples may be added to the list. But first, it may be helpful to expose certain prejudices that have hampered inquiry hitherto.

First, the idea that 'mythological burlesque ... seems not to have been a common feature in mime'.⁵⁹ That goes against the explicit evidence of Varro, who refers to mimes about Liber and the Nymphs, and of Augustine on Priapus, the protagonist of nos. 5 and 12 in the list above.⁶⁰

numquid Priapo mimi, non etiam sacerdotes enormia pudenda fecerunt? an aliter stat adorandus in locis sacris, quam procedit ridiculus in theatris?

⁵¹ Barchiesi (1994) 230 = (1997) 243: 'una scena di teatro leggero'. The putative drama must post-date Catullus 64.

⁵² Giannotti (1967) 63–5; cf. also McKeown (1979) 75–6 and Barchiesi (1994) 232 = (1997) 245. The putative drama must post-date Virgil, *Aen.* 4.

⁵³ Giannotti (1967) 61–3; Laberius fr. 10 Bonaria = 2 R³, cf. also McKeown (1979) 76, Littlewood (1980) 316–17, Wiseman (1998) 72–4.

⁵⁴ Brief reference at Littlewood (1980) 317. See further p. 290–1 below.

⁵⁵ Mime: McKeown (1979) 76; cf. Littlewood (1980) 347. Satyr-play: Wiseman (1994) 82.

⁵⁶ Wiseman (1998) 48–51.

⁵⁷ Barchiesi (1994) 217 = (1997) 229; Wiseman (1998) 27–30.

⁵⁸ Wiseman (1998) 30–4; *Fasti* 6. 612, 'mima quidem, sed tamen acta'.

⁵⁹ McKeown (1979) 75; contra Horsfall (1979) 331, 'both mimes and Atellan farces on mythological themes are attested'.

⁶⁰ Varro, *Ant. Dis.* fr. 3 Cardauns; August. *CD* 6. 7 (CSEL 40. 284), trans. H. Bettenson (Penguin Classics, 1967).

It is not only the mimes who give Priapus an enormous phallus; the priests do the same. He stands there in his sacred places to claim men's adoration in just the same guise as he comes on the stage to provoke laughter.

The context is Augustine's challenge to Varro's distinction between the gods of the poets and the gods of the city, *theologia fabularis* and *theologia civilis*.⁶¹ Since the whole lengthy passage is devoted to Varro's argument, it is likely that Priapus too featured in the mimes of Varro's time, and not just Augustine's.⁶²

Second, it is said that 'satyr play [was] a genre which despite Horace's encouragement had probably lapsed for good in Augustan Rome'.⁶³ Why should we suppose so? Horace, like Vitruvius, provides the evidence that in one form or another it *was* still a living genre, as it probably had been since at least the fourth century BC.⁶⁴

Coupled with this is a third unfounded prejudice, that 'the theory of *decorum*' prevented any common ground existing between the world of the satyrs and that of contemporary Rome: 'no common language or socially acceptable container can exist for a mixture of themes and styles which amounts to a breakdown of the conventional hierarchies'.⁶⁵ But if that were the case one would hardly expect dignified senatorial families to claim descent (as they did) from Pan, Silenus, and Marsyas,⁶⁶ or Suetonius to include in his narrative of Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon (as he does) a supernatural figure piping to shepherds like Pan.⁶⁷

What we do not know is the extent to which satyr-play and mime could be combined on the Roman stage. Mutual

⁶¹ August. *CD* 6.5 = Varro, *Ant. Dis.* fr. 7–10 Cardauns.

⁶² *CD* 6. 2–10 *passim* (Varro, *Ant. Dis.* fr. 2a–12, 47, 62 Cardauns). Agabed (fr. 39d) included Priapus in his Varro fragment; Cardauns (fr. 35) is more cautious.

⁶³ Fantam (1983) 187; cf. Barchiesi (1994) 231–2 = (1997) 244, 'un genere letterario di cui sappiamo poco, e, soprattutto, non possiamo richiamare con certezza la presenza a Roma: il dramma satiresco'. (The phrase 'genere letterario' begs a big question.)

⁶⁴ Horace and Vitruvius: n. 26 above, 4th cent. BC; for satyrs and the Bacchic *thiasos* on bronze *cistsae*, sometimes apparently in the context of performance, see Wiseman (2000) 265–89.

⁶⁵ Barchiesi (1994) 234 = (1997) 247.

⁶⁶ See the coin-types of the Vibii Penseae (90 and 48 BC), the Iunii Silani (91 BC), and the Marcii (82 BC): Crawford (1974) 336–7, 346, 377, 464–5, 467.

⁶⁷ Suet. *Jul.* 32; Wiseman (1998) 60–2.

influence of the two genres can be detected as early as the fourth century BC in Athens,⁶⁶ and is likely to have increased in the innovative world of Hellenistic theatre. At Rome, the jesters in the processions at funerals, triumphs, and festivals could be described as either mimes or *satyristae*; the satyr-dance called *sikinnis* was one of the elements of mime as performed by Bathyllus and Pylades; and Horace's purist polemic in the *Ars Poetica* clearly implies that in his time the ancient rustic form of satyr-play had given way to a more sophisticated urban type, with obscene dialogue like that attributed to mime.⁶⁷ The interdependence of the genres is illustrated two generations after Ovid by Petronius' *Satyricon*, a novel full of references and allusions to mime, with a plot that depends on the anger of Priapus.⁶⁸

Satyr-play naturally had a chorus of satyrs; mime, or one type of it at least, had a chorus of dancing girls⁶⁹—and once we are free of the notion that *mimae* never played mythological burlesque, we can cast them as nymphs.⁷⁰ Nymphs and satyrs had danced and made love together since the beginning of Greek iconography, and their interplay of sexual desire was still celebrated in the art of Rome.⁷¹ It would be very surprising if they were kept strictly separate in Roman popular drama. In the Ovidian episodes listed above (nos. 3, 4, 5, and 12), we find them both symmetrically separate—naiads and dryads in love with Picus: satyrs, Pans, Silenus, and Priapus in love with Pomona—and also together, pursued and pursuing in the two stories of the 'feast of the gods'.⁷² The natural inference is that

⁶⁶ See Simon (1982) 19–20 and pl. 8, and Beazley (1963) 1519, no. 13: Dionysus being entertained by, respectively, a satyr called Mimos and a *mima* dressed as a satyr.

⁶⁷ Dion. Hal. 7. 72. 10–12, Suet. *Resp.* 19. 2; Arctostichus of Alexandria ap. Athenaeus 1. 20e, Hor. *AP* 234–50, esp. 247 'imunda crepent ignominiosaque dicta' (cf. Ovid, *Tr.* 2. 497 on 'mimos obscena locantes').

⁶⁸ Full details and bibliography in Panayotakis (1995).

⁶⁹ Cf. Ovid, *Fasti* 5. 349–52 on the *mimae* at the Ludi Florales. See Wiseman (1998) 70–1.

⁷⁰ See p. 279 above on the Actaeon scenario attested by Varro.

⁷¹ See Hedreen (1994) on the 6th cent. BC, and Dierichs (1997) 41–55 (who wrongly calls all the female partners 'maenads').

⁷² Ovid, *Met.* 14. 326–32, 637–41, *Fasti* 1. 405–14, 6. 323–4, 333–5. Just nymphs in *Fasti* 2. 589–98, just satyrs at 3. 737–58 (nos. 7 and 11). Cf. also *Fasti* 2. 307 (no. 6, Faunus' farewell to the mountain nymphs), 3. 467 (no. 8, Bacchus' girl captives) and 6. 499–500 (no. 13, sea nymphs bringing Iun and Melicertes): the dancers perform first, then leave the stage as the play proper begins?

the same *corps de ballet* of male and female dancers could put on different scenarios in different styles, as the producers of each set of games required.

IV

It is clear enough from the late-Republican evidence that performers like Dionysia, Arbuscula, and Cytheris were not just chorus girls but stars in their own right,⁷³ no doubt with enough pulling power to have shows created specifically as vehicles for their particular talents. If that was the case, we may have an example in Ovid's treatment of Circe in *Metamorphoses* 14 (no. 3 above). The nymphs and Nereids are there, but in a subordinate capacity as Circe's maids;⁷⁴ no one is allowed to upstage the 'elemental sexuality' of the sorceress.⁷⁵

Her first scene is with Glaucus, himself the subject of an Aeschylean satyr-play.⁷⁶ He wants Scylla, a girl who plays with the Nereids,⁷⁷ but Circe wants him. Spurned, she poisons Scylla's bathing pool.⁷⁸ Now here comes handsome Picus, king of Latium, galloping after wild boar. All the nymphs pined for him, but he loved just one, and married her—Canens, the singer, whose song perhaps the audience have already heard.⁷⁹ Circe lures him with her magic and begs for his love. Spurned again, she turns him into a woodpecker. Enter his companions, who threaten her with their spears; more sorcery, and they are turned into monstrous beasts.⁸⁰ 'This magic and its results', writes a modern critic,⁸¹ 'project the disordered, irrational state of Circe's whole being and convey her passion's blind, willful megalomania.' What a part for an actress! No doubt she

⁷³ See above, nn. 22, 31, 39.

⁷⁴ *Met.* 14. 264–7, cf. 311 (exploited by Ovid to make the Picus episode a story within a story).

⁷⁵ Segal (1968) 442, *Met.* 14. 25–7, cf. Virg. *Aen.* 7. 189 'captus cupidine'. For sorcery as a mime subject, see Theocrit. *Id.* 2 (taken from a Sophron mime, according to the scholiast), and Page (1941) 328–31.

⁷⁶ Steffen (1952) 119–23: Aesch. *fr.* 25c–35 Radt.

⁷⁷ *Met.* 13. 735–7, 898–903.

⁷⁸ *Met.* 14. 8–74. Scylla's pool is like Thetis' (p. 288 below): 14. 51–4, 11. 229–37.

⁷⁹ *Met.* 14. 341, 'feminea modulatur carmina voce'.

⁸⁰ *Met.* 14. 320–415. For variants of the Picus–Circe story, see Mouton (1988).

⁸¹ Segal (1968) 438; *Met.* 14. 320–415.

watches from above in triumphant malice as the dancers mime the search for their missing king, and the scene ends with the singing nymph's despairing lament.⁸⁴

One of the reasons for inferring a dramatic origin for this Ovidian story is the lavish use of dialogue.⁸⁵ The same applies to the Lara, Ino, and Tullia episodes in the *Fasti* (nos. 7, 13, and 15 above), whereas the lecherous pursuits of Priapus and Faunus (nos. 5, 6, and 12) are performed without words,⁸⁶ in a tiptoeing silence before the sudden uproar of the dénouement. A combination of both styles is suggested by an episode that I think has not yet been considered in this context, that of Peleus and Thetis.⁸⁷ Here too we have an erotic quest, but with a very different outcome.

First, a dialogue between the Nereid Thetis and the prophetic sea god Proteus, another figure from Aeschylean satyr-play.⁸⁸ He tells her to conceive: her son will be mightier than his father, which is why Jupiter has stopped pursuing her and granted permission to do so to the hero Peleus. The next scene is the sea-cave where the naked nymph comes to sleep. Peleus finds her, pleads with her to accept his love, and seizes her when she refuses. But Thetis is a shape-shifter, and when she turns herself into a tigress even Peleus is discouraged (like Circe's transformations, this scene is a choreographer's challenge and opportunity). Dialogue again, as Proteus tells Peleus to bring bondage equipment next time. And so he does.⁸⁹

Pronus erat Titan inclinatioque tenebat
Hesperium temone fretum, cum pulchra relicto
Nereis ingreditur consueta cubilla ponto.
vix bene virgineos Peleus invaserat artus;
illa novat formas, donec sua membra teneri
sensit et in partes diversas brachia tendi.
tum demum ingemuit, 'Neque' ait 'sine numine vincis'

⁸⁴ *Met.* 14. 416–34. For a search in the final scene, but with a happier outcome, cf. *Fasti* 3. 649–56 (no. 9 in the list above).

⁸⁵ *Met.* 14. 12–39, 335–7, 372–85, 397–402. Another reason is Shakespeare's borrowing of the name Titania (14. 438) and the transformation of man into beast ('Bottom, thou art translated!').

⁸⁶ Priapus woos Lotis with 'nods and signs', and she rejects him with a glance (*Fasti* 1. 417–20).

⁸⁷ *Met.* 11. 221–65.

⁸⁸ Steffen (1952) 137–9; Aesch. *fr.* 240–15 Radt.

⁸⁹ *Met.* 11. 257–65. For dancers performing metamorphosis, see Lucian, *De Salt.* 57.

exhibita estque Thetis, confessam amplectitur heros
et potitur votis ingentique implet Achille.

The sun was sinking, touching the western strait in his descending chariot, when the beautiful Nereid left the sea and mounted her accustomed couch. Unfairly, Peleus had taken control of her virgin limbs; she changed her shape, until she realized that her legs were being held and her arms stretched out on either side. Then at last she cried 'You only win with divine help'—and Thetis was displayed. She admitted defeat; the hero embraced her, took possession of what he had prayed for, and filled her with huge Achilles.

Two details may allude to stage performance. First, the grotto itself, Thetis' private bedroom: 'hard to tell whether nature or art had made it—but no, it was artificial'.⁹⁰ And then the dénouement, with the nymph on display to the audience as well as to Peleus, in the position of total exposure used to portray Andromeda and Hesione.⁹¹ She gives in, so Peleus can release her (as Perseus and Hercules do in the other stories), no doubt for a closing *pas de deux*.⁹²

As early as the fourth century BC, to judge by the visual evidence, mythological performances in which *mimae* appeared naked were familiar in Latium; the literary sources on the Ludi Florales attest similar spectacles from the third century BC to the first.⁹³ The discovery of Ariadne could be an example. L. Pomponius wrote a satyr-play *Ariadne*,⁹⁴ and Catullus' dramatically 'disobedient ekphrasis' in poem 64 has the distraught heroine lose her clothes before delivering her great aria of passion and despair; meanwhile the god

⁹⁰ *Met.* 11. 235–6, 'natura factus an arte ambiguum, magis arte tamen'.

⁹¹ Not, I think, 'spreadeagled on the ground', as suggested by Griffin (1997) 140. Andromeda: Schauenberg (1981) 787–90; for illustrations see particularly 628 no. 20 (Campanian vase, 4th cent. BC), 640 no. 146a (temple relief at Falerii, 2nd cent. BC), 641 no. 152 (grave relief of performance at Roman games, 2nd cent. AD). Hesione: Oakley (1997) 628–9, illustrations at 386–9 nos. 18–41.

⁹² Hardly an imitation of the sex act itself, though in some contexts that may have been acceptable on the mimic stage: Ovid, *Tr.* 2. 515, 'imitantes turpia mimos'; Val. Max. 2. 6. 7, 'quorum argumenta maiore ex parte stuprorum continent actus'.

⁹³ Wiseman (2000) 274–86. Florales: Val. Max. 2. 10. 8 ('priscus mos iocorum'). Sen. *Ep.* 97. 8, cf. Ovid, *Fasti* 4. 946 and 5. 331–56, Martial 1 *pref.* and 1. 35. 8–9, Tertullian, *De Spect.* 17, Arnobius, *Adv. Nat.* 3. 23 and 7. 33, Lact. *Inst.* 1. 20. 6–10, August. *CD* 2. 27, Hist. Aug. *Hell.* 6. 5, Ausonius 7. 24. 25f.

⁹⁴ Porph. on Hor. *Art.* P. 221; Wiseman (1994) 70.

and his satyrs are looking for her, and he is burning with desire.³⁵

Ovid's sequel to Catullus' Ariadne (no. 8 above) is much more decorous, ending with a confirmation of conjugal love. It is an *aitia* not only for the constellation of Ariadne's crown but also for Ariadne as Libera, the mysterious third occupant of the Roman temple of Ceres, Liber, and Libera, allegedly founded after the battle of Lake Regillus.³⁶ Annual games were part of the cult, the Liberalia on 17 March and the Cerialia on 19 April. Ovid's *aitia* for the Liberalia (no. 11 above) is also—like the Ariadne narrative—surprisingly uncharacteristic of the licentious wine-god and his satyrs.

It begins with a long and deliberately anticlimactic priamel:³⁷

Tertia post Idus lux est celeberrima Baccho;
Bacche, fave vati, dum tua festa cano.
nec referam Semelem, ad quam nisi fulmina secum
Iuppiter adferret, partus inermis eras;
nec, puer ut posses maturo tempore nasci,
expletum patrio corpore matris opus;
Sithonas et Scythicos longum narrare triumphos
et domitas gentes, turifer Inde, tuas;
tu quoque Thebanae mala praeda tacebere matris,
inque tuum furis acte, Lyeurge, genus;
ecce libet subito pisces Tyrrhenaque monstra
dicere, sed non est carminis huius opus.
carminis huius opus causas exponere quare
vitisator populos ad sua liba vocet.

The third dawn after the Ides is famed for Bacchus: Bacchus, favour a poet while I sing of your festival. But I shall not tell of Semele, to whom Jupiter came—if he had left his thunderbolts behind you would have been born unarmed. Nor shall I tell how a mother's function was fulfilled in your father's body, so that you could be born a boy at the proper time. It would take too long to narrate your Sithonian and Scythian triumphs and the conquest of

³⁵ Cat. 64. 60–70, 251–3 ('te quaerens, Ariadna, inique incensus amore', 253); note the music-and-dance scene at 64. 254–65. See Laird (1993), esp. 20 ('sound, movement and temporality') and 29 ('succession of time, movement, sound, and especially speech') on the qualities that make the ekphrasis 'disobedient': he relates them to rhetoric, but they seem even more relevant to dramatic performance.

³⁶ Ovid, *Fasti* 3. 459–516, esp. 469 (*coniuux*), 498 (*coniugis*), 512 (*Libera*). Temple: Dion. Hal. 6. 10. 1, 6. 17. 2–4, 6. 94. 3, on which see Wiseman (1998) 35–6.

³⁷ 3. 713–26: *partus* for *parvus* at 716 is Heinus' emendation. For *diffidat* at 726 some MSS and editors read *vultu anus* (cf. 765), an unnecessary simplification.

the peoples of incense-bearing India. You too [Pentheus], wrongful prey of your Theban mother, will not be spoken of, nor you, Lyeurgus, driven by the Furies against your own kin. See, I would like to tell of sudden fish and Tyrrhenian miracles, but that is not the purpose of this song. The purpose of this song is to explain why the Vine-planter calls the peoples to his own honey-cakes.

The Vine-planter is Liber, his own cakes are *liba*—and the song is of what happened when the god discovered honey.

The stories Ovid is not going to tell here—though he tells them in the *Metamorphoses*—were about the god's miraculous origin and miraculous powers, well known in Rome as subjects for tragedy. (Pacuvius wrote a *Pentheus*, Naevius a *Lyeurgus*, Accius a *Tropaeum Liberi* which presumably dealt with the god's triumphant progress.) The story he does tell here could hardly be further from tragedy, and it isn't really satyr-play either, though the satyrs feature in it.³⁸

Ibat harenoso satyris comitatus ab Hebro
(non habet ingratos fabula nostra iocos),
iamque erat ad Rhodopen Pangaeaeque florida ventum...

He was on his way from sandy Hebrus, attended by the satyrs (my story contains no unwelcome frolics), and already they had come to Rhodope and flowery Pangaeus...

These are satyrs for a children's party. They enjoy their honey, and they laugh when old Silenus gets stung on his bald head, but their usual phallic antics—hinted at in 'iocos'³⁹—are explicitly ruled out. Ovid at the Liberalia leaves out sex, plays down the god's awesome power, and draws attention to the fact that he is doing so.

A reason why may be hinted at a few lines further on, in one of the explanations for the granting of the *toga virilis* at the Liberalia. In the old times when the Romans were horny-handed farmers, when senators worked their fathers' fields and the consul took up the *fascis* straight from the plough, the population

³⁸ 3. 737–9.

³⁹ Barchiesi (1997) 133, 240: 'Ovid uses the word *ioci* and its cognates to refer to a whole comic and sexual sphere in the *Fasti*... The use of terms like *ioci*, *iocosa*, *iocunda*, and also *fabula* seems to be reserved for burlesque tales, almost always of a sexual nature.'

lived in the country and only came to town for the games; so perhaps that was why the day was chosen for the ceremony, to get a crowd together to congratulate the new adult.¹⁰⁰ A parenthesis interrupts the argument:¹⁰¹

Sed dis, non studiis ille dabatur honor;
luce sua ludos uvae commentor habebat,
quos cum taedifera nunc habet ille dea.

But that honour [games] used to be given to the gods, not to popular enthusiasm; the discoverer of the grape used to have games on his own day, but now he shares them with the torch-carrying goddess [Ceres].

The games of the Liberalia are attested for the time of Naevius, and it is likely that their cancellation had something to do with the Roman government's violent suppression of the 'Bacchanalia' in 186 BC.¹⁰² That event was long remembered; it is cited in Cicero's treatise on the laws as a salutary example of traditional moral standards.¹⁰³ Augustus is unlikely to have disagreed, especially in the light of Antony's masquerade as Liber-Dionysus.¹⁰⁴

The ancient temple of Ceres, Liber, and Libera was burned down in 31 BC; astonishingly, it was not included in the temple restoration programme of 28, but rededicated only in AD 17. Augustus evidently did without it for most of his Principate. That must surely have been a deliberate gesture to demote Liber: since Ceres had also a joint cult with Tellus at the Carinae, the goddess of the harvest could now be honoured without any unfortunate association with Antony's patron god.¹⁰⁵ In that context, it seems permissible to wonder whether

Ovid's account of the Liberalia reflects the god's reduced prestige.

Since the derivation of Liber from *liberi* is found already in Cicero,¹⁰⁶ it may not be absurd to suggest that the Liberalia festival was actually reorganized as a show suitable for children. Whatever the explanation, Ovid seems to be illustrating a deliberately emasculated version of the Roman games in honour of the god. The phallic comedies he does bring on (nos. 5, 6, and 12 above) are all safely set in a Greek landscape.¹⁰⁷

V

Discussion of Liber has brought us back to our starting point, Ovid's use of stage material about the gods and goddesses who were honoured at the *ludi scaenici* themselves.¹⁰⁸ My last example concerns the goddess Flora, whose Ludi Florales (28 April–2 May) were famous for just the sort of erotic entertainment that Ovid's narratives have allowed us to infer.¹⁰⁹

Flora was closely associated with Liber (his mother, in one story), and her temple was next to his at the Circus Maximus; it must have been burned down at the same time, and like his was only rededicated in AD 17.¹¹⁰ Her games had been controversial from the start, so here too we may guess that Augustus chose to distance himself from so uninhibited a festival.¹¹¹ Ovid, however, gives himself a long and affectionate interview with Flora,

on 13 Dec. (*Iuv. R.* 13. 2. 537 L), *Hor. Carm. Saec.* 29–30, see Palombi [1997] 154–8 on frs. 577 and 672 of the Severan *Forma Urbis*, showing twin temples 'in Tellure'. The goddess of plenty on the Ara Pacis is indistinguishably Ceres or Tellus: see most recently Spaeth (1996) 125–51, esp. 133–5.

¹⁰⁰ Cic. *ND* 2. 62, 'quod ex nobis natos liberos appellamus'.

¹⁰¹ *Fasti* 1. 393 (*Gracila*), 2. 313 (*Lydia*), 6. 327 (*Ida*).

¹⁰² *Fasti* 4. 326, with Littlewood (1981) 382.

¹⁰³ See Wiseman (1999), and n. 93 above.

¹⁰⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 2. 49. 1, 'eodem in loco' (n. 105 above); Ampelius 9. 11, 'secundus Liber ex Merone et Flora'; Ovid, *Fasti* 5. 335–46 for Flora and Bacchus, in the context of her games.

¹⁰⁵ Games not recognized by the Senate till 173 BC (Ovid, *Fasti* 5. 295–330); Augustus' Palatine Vesta installed on the Floralia (ibid. 4. 943–54), on which see Barchiesi (1994) 122 = (1997) 133.

¹⁰⁰ *Fasti* 3. 779–88.

¹⁰¹ 3. 784–6. For *studia* used of actors' rowdy fans, cf. Tac. *Ann.* 1. 16. 3, *Dial.* 29. 3; for the phenomenon in general, see Val. Max. 2. 4. 1. Tac. *Ann.* 1. 77. 4. 14. 3, 11. 13. 24. 1, Suet. *Tib.* 37. 2, *Nero* 20. 3, Pliny. *Ep.* 7. 24. 7.

¹⁰² Naevius fr. 113 R²; Wiseman (1998) 85–43.

¹⁰³ Cic. *De Leg.* 2. 37, *severitas maiorum in defensione mulierum fama*, cf. Varro, *Ant. Dis* fr. 45 Carvianus. Livy's great set-piece narrative at 39. 8–19 must have been very familiar to Ovid and his readers.

¹⁰⁴ Sen. *Saev.* 1. 6, Dio 48. 39. 2, Plut. *Ant.* 24. 2–3, 26. 3. 60. 3, 75. 3–4; Wiseman (2000) 292–5.

¹⁰⁵ Dio 50. 10. 3–4 (31 BC), Aug. *RG* 20. 4 (28 BC), Tac. *Ann.* 2. 49. 1 (AD 17); perhaps Augustus' hand was eventually forced by the great famine of AD 4–7 (Dio 55. 22. 3, 26. 1–3, 27. 1. 31. 3–4, 33. 4). Ceres and Tellus: Arnobius, *Adv. Nat.* 7. 32, *Fasti Praenestini*.

enjoying her physical presence and emphasizing the Liber-like liberty of her games.¹¹²

He begins by asking her to tell him in person who she is, 'for the opinion of men is fallacious'. That may refer to the story known from Christian sources, that Flora was a successful prostitute who bequeathed her riches to the Roman People, out of which games were set up in her honour.¹¹³ But she knows better:¹¹⁴

Sic ego, sic nostris respondit diva rogatis
(dam loquitur vernas efflat ab ore rosas):
'Chloris eram quae Flora vocor: corrupta Latino
nominis est nostri littera Graeca sono.
Chloris eram, nympha campi felicitis, ubi audis
rem fortunatis ante fuisse viris.
quae fuerit mihi forma grave est narrare modestae ...'

That was what I asked. This is what the goddess replied to my question (and while she spoke, she breathed spring roses): 'I who am called Flora used to be Chloris; a Greek letter in my name has been corrupted in Latin speech. I used to be Chloris, a nymph of the happy field where once upon a time, as you have heard, fortunate men had business. It's hard to tell you modestly what my figure was like ...'

The nature of the 'business' is one of Flora's tactful reticences. But who were the fortunate men who enjoyed it?

In Homer, the Elysian Field is a country club with a tight membership policy; Menelaus only gets in as a son-in-law of Zeus. In Hesiod, you qualify if you fought in the epic wars at Thebes or Troy. By Pindar's time the criterion is a moral one: 'whoever have thrice dared to keep their soul utterly free from deeds of wrong'.¹¹⁵ Just as evildoers are threatened with the punishments of Tartarus, so this is the reward for a life of virtue.

¹¹² *Fasti* 4. 946 ('sacrum loci morem liberioris habet'), 5. 331-2 ('quare lascivia maior | his foret in ludis liberiorque locus'), 5. 195, 199, 275, 376 (physical presence). Note that the narrator, uniquely in the *Fasti*, is named as Naso the poet (5. 377).

¹¹³ *Fasti* 5. 191 ('ipsa docet, quae sis: hominum sententia fallax'); Lactantius, *Iust.* 1. 20. 5-10; Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 25. 8; Cyprian, *De sanitate Idolum* 4. For a well-known prostitute called Flora in the 1st cent. BC, see Plut. *Pomp.* 2. 2-4; Varro, *Men.* fr. 136 Ashbury; Philodemus 12 Goss-Page (*AP* 5. 132).

¹¹⁴ *Fasti* 5. 193-9; for *rem* at 198, see Adams (1982) 203.

¹¹⁵ Hom. *Od.* 4. 561-9; Hes. *WD* 166-73; Pind. *Ol.* 2. 68-77.

Tartarus was a real threat for pious Romans; it is presupposed by Lucretius' great poem, and references to it are found even in senatorial speeches.¹¹⁶ As we saw with reference to the Ciceronian evidence about drama, tragedy put the threat on the stage in the form of the Furies, to enforce moral behaviour in the way Polybius had described.¹¹⁷ One might infer as a corollary that the rewards of virtue could be advertised on the comic stage.

The paradise of Hesiod and Pindar was the Isles of the Blessed, but the facilities there were the same as in Elysium—the river of Oceanus at the ends of the earth, and the mild breath of Zephyrus, god of the west wind. Pindar adds flowers and garlands; in Hesiod it is 'sweet-smelling fruit'.¹¹⁸ In the *Aeneid*, the abode of the blessed is a combination of grassy turf and shady woods, including a grove scented with laurel.¹¹⁹ All these items appear in Flora's story. Chloris the nymph was ravished by Zephyrus, who gave her a garden and made her the goddess of flowers; she was visited by Juno, on her way to Oceanus to complain about Jupiter, and she gave her a herb to make her pregnant. Outside Ovid, Martial refers to Flora fleeing into her laurel-grove to escape the attentions of Priapus.¹²⁰

At some time after Hesiod (whose text was interpolated to make it fit), Kronos came to be thought of as the king of the blessed ones.¹²¹ The Latins called Kronos Saturnus, and attributed to him the naming of their own land; for it was there that he hid (*latebat*) when banished by Jupiter. He was welcomed by primeval Janus, and his reign was the golden age.¹²² The *Saturnia regna* were either *here* but impossibly long ago or *now* but impossibly far away, ideas symbolized respectively by

¹¹⁶ Lucr. 1. 62-110, 3. 37-56, etc.; Cic. *Cat.* 4. 7-8; Sall. *Cat.* 54. 20; *Hist.* 2. 47. 3 M.

¹¹⁷ See above, nn. 16-20.

¹¹⁸ Oceanus: Hom. *Od.* 4. 568; Hes. *WD* 170; Pind. *Ol.* 2. 71. *veipara yalpis*: Hom. *Od.* 4. 568; Hes. *WD* 168; Zephyrus: Hom. *Od.* 4. 567, cf. Pind. *Ol.* 2. 72 *zephyrus, nepheleia*. Flowers and fruit: Hes. *WD* 171; Pind. *Ol.* 2. 72, 74.

¹¹⁹ Virg. *Aen.* 6. 638, 642, 656, 674 (*gram*); 639, 658, 673 (*groves*).

¹²⁰ Ovid, *Fasti* 5. 200-12, 229-60 (for Flora and Zephyrus, cf. also Lucr. 5. 738-40); Mart. 10. 92. 10.

¹²¹ West (1978) 195, on Hes. *WD* 173a.

¹²² Virg. *Aen.* 8. 314-27; Festus 430 L; Justin 43. 1. 3-5; Janus: Ovid, *Fasti* 1. 232-53; *Origo gentis R.* 3. 1-7; Macrobi. *Sat.* 1. 7. 19-24. See Versnel (1993) 89-135 ('Kronos and the Kronia'), 136-227 ('Saturnus and the Saturnalia').

'the castle of Saturnus' at the foot of the Capitol, supposed origin of the treasury of the Roman People, and by 'the tower of Kronos', a feature of Pindar's Isles of the Blessed.¹²³ Here and now was only possible at the god's own festival, the Saturnalia.

The Roman cults of Saturnus and Flora had much in common. Both were ancient,¹²⁴ both were extended with new features in the third century BC, and in both cases the innovation involved popular *licentia*, freedom from the normal constraints of society. In 241 or 238 the plebeian aediles built 'rustic Flora' a new temple next to Liber's, with luxurious Corinthian columns, and honoured her with permissive games which the Senate refused to make annual until forced to do so by the goddess's anger.¹²⁵ In 217, with Hannibal already in Italy and social cohesion an urgent necessity, the Senate not only allowed but instructed the populace to celebrate Saturnus' festival every year with drunken revelry and gambling, wearing symbolic caps of liberty (*pillei*).¹²⁶

Ovid tactfully refrains from asking Flora herself about her games:¹²⁷

Quaerere conabar quare lascivia maior,
his foret in ludis liberiorque iocus,
sed mihi succurrit numen non esse severum
aptaque deliciis munera ferre deam.
tempora suilibus cinguntur pota coronis
et latet injecta splendida mensa rosa.

saena levis decet hanc: non est, mihi credite, non est
illis coturnatas inter habenda deas.
turba quidem cur hos celebret meretricia ludos
non ex difficili causa petita subest:
non est de tetricis, non est de magna professis,
volt sua plebeio sacra patere choro.

¹²³ *Saturni castrum*: Festus 430 L, Varro, *LL* 5. 42, *Origo gentis* R. 3. 6 (*astorium*) *Kiprovos rōpas*: Pind. *Ol.* 2. 70.

¹²⁴ Flora had her own flamen (*Enn. Ann.* 2. 117 Sk., *ILS* 5007); the Saturnalia were part of the archaic calendar (*Fasti Antiqui*, 17 Dec.).

¹²⁵ Velleius 1. 14. 8, Pliny, *NH* 18. 286 (clute); Tac. *Ann.* 2. 49. 1 (site), *Vitr. Arch.* 1. 2. 5 (columns); Ovid, *Fasti* 5. 279–94 (aediles), 297–330 (Senate). 'Rustica Flora': Mart. 5. 22. 4 (her old temple at the foot of the Quirinal).

¹²⁶ Livy 22. 1. 19–20; Sen. *Ep.* 18. 3–4; Mart. 11. 6. 14. 1; full details in Versnel (1993) 146–50.

¹²⁷ Ovid, *Fasti* 5. 331–6, 347–54. This part of the argument first appeared in *JACT Review* 24 (Autumn 1998) 6–8.

et monet aetatis specie dum floreat uti;
contemni spinam cum cecidere rosae.

I was trying to inquire why these games have more sexiness and freer fun; but it occurred to me that the goddess's nature is not strict, and the gifts she brings are appropriate to pleasure. Drunken brows are wreathed with stitched garlands, and thrown roses cover the polished table. [There follow ten lines on what Flora and Liber have in common, including a cross-reference to Ariadne's crown.] A lightweight stage is proper for her: she isn't, believe me she isn't, to be counted among the goddesses in tragic boots. As for why a troupe of prostitutes performs these games, the reason isn't hard to find. She is not one of the frowners, not one of those who make big claims. She wants her festival open to a plebeian chorus, and she warns us to use the beauty of youth while it's in flower: the thorn is despised once the roses have fallen.

Note the *deae coturnatae* at line 348. Since goddesses wearing *coturni* are goddesses on the tragic stage, we may infer that Flora is on the stage too, but in the 'barefoot' genre of mime.¹²⁸ Ovid's emphatic 'believe me...', with his earlier admission that he couldn't keep his eyes off her,¹²⁹ has a particular impact if we imagine the theatre. The goddesses of tragedy are static, masked, and played by male actors; the goddesses of mime are showgirls who sing and dance.¹³⁰

So I suggest that here too Ovid was alluding to a stage scenario familiar to his readers. It was a performance for the torchlit nights of the Ludi Florales; the scene was the Elysian Field, and the girls played the nymphs whose availability was one of the rewards of the righteous; after the show, they would be available in real life.¹³¹ Chloris was the leading lady's role ('partes tuas', as Ovid says to Flora at 5. 184), in what was probably an episodic plot like that suggested above for Circe.¹³²

¹²⁸ Mimes were *excalceati* (Sen. *Ep.* 8. 8) or *planipedes* (Juv. 8. 191, Diomedes, *Gramm. Lat.* 1. 490 Keil, etc.).

¹²⁹ Ovid, *Fasti* 5. 275–6: 'talia dicentem tacitus mirabar; at illa | "tus tibi discendi, si qua requiris" ait'.

¹³⁰ Tragedy: Plaut. *Amph.* 41–3 (Virtus, Victoria, Bellona). Mime: August *CD* 7. 26 = CSEL 40. 340, Arnobius 4. 35 (Venus, Cybele); and cf. nn. 60–2 and 74 above.

¹³¹ Ovid, *Fasti* 5. 361–8 ('delicias nocturnas licentia nostris | convenit', 367–8), cf. Dio 58. 19. 1–2; for mimes as *mentrices* (*Fasti* 5. 349), cf. Sen. *Ep.* 97. 8, Lact. *Inst.* 1. 20. 10, Arnobius 7. 33; for 'after the show', cf. Plaut. *Casina* 1016–18, *Truc.* 965–6, and Cic. *De Fin.* 2. 23 ('ludos et quas sequuntur') with Wiseman (1985) 44–5.

¹³² See nn. 76–84 above.

Enter Priapus, whose attentions she avoids; enter Juno, whose pregnancy problem she solves (hoping Jupiter doesn't find out); enter Zephyrus, who successfully pursues her; and the play ends, as it should, with an *actio* for the cult of the goddess in whose honour the games are held.¹³³

Ovid calls Flora's girls a 'chorus plebeius', and in telling the story of how the plebeian aediles set up her games, he emphasizes their significant name by pointedly repeating the words *populus*, *publicus*, and *Publicius*.¹³⁴ Flora was a goddess of the people; it was the *populus* who in 55 BC were inhibited by Cato's presence from enjoying the 'ancient custom' of her games.¹³⁵ That the popular idea of Elysium was a garden of fleshly delights may be illustrated from Ovid's own text, in the passage on the Anna Perenna festival: those who have spent the day drinking and making love in her riverside meadow and grove are hailed on their return as 'the blessed ones'.¹³⁶ The purpose of such festivals was to make the mythical real, for a day.

But there was no escape from the social hierarchy. Even the gods were subject to it, as Ovid explains in his item on the birth of Maestas; so too in the *Metamorphoses*, Jupiter's neighbourhood is carefully defined as 'the Palatium of the sky', away from the dwellings of the plebeian gods.¹³⁷ Nymphs, who dwell on earth, are among the humblest of the immortals, but by pleasing the greater gods in their amorous moods they may earn promotion to goddess status—as a slave girl may become a *libertina*.¹³⁸ Flora was just like the *mima* who played her. And the grand and humbler gods were just like the audience in the theatre, from the senators in the *orchestra* to the ordinary

citizens in the *cavea*, chewing their roasted nuts.¹³⁹ The illusion of the theatre merged the two worlds.

Ovid, I suggest, exploited that illusion in the *Fasti*. He could take advantage of what all his readers had vividly in their minds, the doings of gods and men made visible on the stage in the festivals of the Roman people.

VI

'Peleus and Thetis' and 'Flora (The Musical)' are offered as further items for the list on pp. 283–4. Naturally, all these suggestions about Ovid's 'sources' (or 'influences', or 'intertexts') are hypothetical, and hypotheses are judged by how well or badly they explain the phenomena.

What needs explanation is not Ovid but the stage. The history of Roman drama cannot be understood just from the texts of Plautus, Terence, and Seneca. The dramatic festivals were so central a part of the community life of Rome that allusions to what went on at them can be found throughout the vast range of our literary sources; but such allusions are rarely explicit, since the authors had no need to explain what their readers knew already. Our problem is to imagine what they took for granted.

One such passage is Erato's declaration at *Fasti* 4. 326: 'I shall tell you marvels, but marvels attested also by the stage.' That at least is direct evidence for Ovid's use of theatrical material; and it encourages inference from other Ovidian episodes as possible testimony for the history of Roman show business.

¹³³ Mart. 10. 92. 10 (Priapus), Ovid, *Fasti* 5. 229–60 (Juno, 230 for Jupiter), 201–11 (Zephyrus).

¹³⁴ *Fasti* 5. 352, 283–94. At the time, the aediles probably spelled their name 'Populiculus' (cf. *ILRP* 35 = *CLL* 1² 28).

¹³⁵ Sen. *Ep.* 97. 8, Val. Max. 2. 10. 8 ('quem [Catonem] abeuntem ingenti plausu populus prosecutus priscum morem iocorum in scaenam revocavit'), cf. Martial 1 pref.

¹³⁶ Ovid, *Fasti* 3. 523–40; Wiseman (1998) 64–74.

¹³⁷ *Fasti* 5. 19–32, *Met.* 1. 173–4. For 'illa turba quasi plebeiorum deorum', see August. *CD* 4. 11. 6. 1, 7. 1, 7. 2 (*CSEL* 40. 178, 270, 302, 305), certainly from Varro.

¹³⁸ On earth: Ovid, *Met.* 1. 192–5 (under the protection of Jupiter-Augustus). Promotion: e.g. Juturna (Virg. *Aen.* 12. 138–41), Pomona (Ovid, *Met.* 14. 635–42, 765–71), Carna (Ovid, *Fasti* 6. 101–28).

¹³⁹ Lucr. 4. 78–9, Hor. *Art.* P. 249.

Ovid's *Fasti*

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