Empedoclean Elegy: Love, Strife and the Four Elements in Ovid's Amores, Ars Amatoria and Fasti

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Abstract
In this dissertation, I examine Ovid's use in the Amores, Ars Amatoria and Fasti of the concepts of love, strife and the four elements, which were closely identified with the philosopher-poet Empedocles in antiquity. My dissertation has two parts: in the first I demonstrate that in the Amores and Ars Amatoria Ovid connects themes fundamental to his elegiac poetics, such as the interaction of love and war, to the Empedoclean principles of love and strife. This is a means for Ovid of relating his elegy to the epic tradition, in which Empedocles was an important figure. At the same time I argue that Ovid suggests that there are certain features of the form and content of elegy that render it uniquely "Empedoclean," such as the "cyclical" alternation of the hexameter and pentameter verses of the elegiac couplet, which are identified with war and love respectively in Ovidian poetics. This conception of elegy's form serves as the foundation of Ovid's use of the interaction between elegy and epic, amor and arma as the building-blocks of much of his poetry. Ovid's creative use of Empedoclean themes is most extensive in the Fasti, which is the elegiac poem of Ovid's whose relation to epic is the most intense. In the programmatic Janus episode in book 1 of the Fasti Ovid has the god Janus describe an Empedoclean cosmogony that encourages us to interpret subsequent features of the poem against the background of an Empedoclean cosmos: in this light, the centrality in the poem of Mars and Venus (i.e. the months of March and April) and its interest in the concepts of concordia and discordia acquire a new significance. I demonstrate, furthermore, that Ovid's use of Empedocles illuminates not only our understanding of the poetics of the Fasti, but also its politics. Ovid uses Empedoclean physics as part of his representation in the Fasti of cyclical or non-teleological time and the pattern of ceaseless change. These representations of time and history complicate the poem's treatment of key Augustan tropes such as the pax Augusta, the Golden Age and the urbs aeterna.

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EMPEDOCLEAN ELEGY: LOVE, STRIFE AND THE FOUR ELEMENTS IN OVID’S AMORES, ARS

AMATORIA AND FASTI

Charles T. Ham

A DISSERTATION

in

Classical Studies

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ABSTRACT

EMPEDOCLEAN ELEGY: LOVE, STRIFE AND THE FOUR ELEMENTS IN OVID’S

AMORES, ARS AMATORIA AND FASTI

Charles T. Ham

Joseph Farrell

In this dissertation, I examine Ovid’s use in the *Amores*, *Ars Amatoria* and *Fasti* of the concepts of love, strife and the four elements, which were closely identified with the philosopher-poet Empedocles in antiquity. My dissertation has two parts: in the first I demonstrate that in the *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria* Ovid connects themes fundamental to his elegiac poetics, such as the interaction of love and war, to the Empedoclean principles of love and strife. This is a means for Ovid of relating his elegy to the epic tradition, in which Empedocles was an important figure. At the same time I argue that Ovid suggests that there are certain features of the form and content of elegy that render it uniquely “Empedoclean,” such as the “cyclical” alternation of the hexameter and pentameter verses of the elegiac couplet, which are identified with war and love respectively in Ovidian poetics. This conception of elegy’s form serves as the foundation of Ovid’s use of the interaction between elegy and epic, *amor* and *arma* as the building-blocks of much of his poetry. Ovid’s creative use of Empedoclean themes is most extensive in the *Fasti*, which is the elegiac poem of Ovid’s whose relation to epic is the most intense. In the programmatic Janus episode in book 1 of the *Fasti* Ovid has the god Janus describe an Empedoclean cosmogony that encourages us to interpret subsequent features of the poem against the background of an Empedoclean cosmos: in this light, the centrality in the
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ........................................................................................................ iii

ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................................ iv

INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................................. 1

CHAPTER 1 The Elements in Poetic and Political Discourse .............................................. 29
   Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 29
   1.1 Terminology ............................................................................................................. 30
   1.2 Looking for the Elements ...................................................................................... 36
   1.3 Elements of Poetry ................................................................................................. 44
   Conclusion ...................................................................................................................... 78

CHAPTER 2 Love and Strife in the *Amores* and their Sources ........................................ 81
   Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 81
   2.1 Literary Background: Empedocles in the Epic Tradition ...................................... 81
   2.2 Love and Strife in Elegy ......................................................................................... 107
       2.2.1 Love, Strife and militia amoris in the *Amores* ............................................. 107
       2.2.2 Love and Strife in Tibullus and Propertius as predecessors to the *Amores* ...... 113
       2.2.3 Mars, Venus and the Center of *Amores* 1 ..................................................... 121
   Conclusion ...................................................................................................................... 148

CHAPTER 3 The *Ars Amatoria* and the Tradition of Didactic Natural Philosophy .......... 150
   Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 150
   3.1 Cosmic Amor .......................................................................................................... 152
   3.2 Semibovemque virum semivirumque bovem ............................................................ 154
   3.3 Daedalus, Lucretius and Empedocles ..................................................................... 160
   3.4 Ovid’s Elegiac Cosmology (Ars 2.425-92) ............................................................... 177
       3.4.1 Fabula narratur toto notissima caelo ............................................................. 198
       3.4.2 Mars, Venus and Metapoetics ......................................................................... 207
   3.5 Lucretius, Empedocles and the end of the *Ars Amatoria* ...................................... 213
   Conclusion ...................................................................................................................... 218

CHAPTER 4 Empedoclean Physics and Ethics in *Fasti* 1 ................................................... 221
   Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 221
   4.1 Janus, Chaos and the Empedoclean Cosmos ............................................................. 223
   4.2 Felices Animae and the Didactic Tradition ............................................................... 236
   4.3 Aristaeus, Sacrifice and Empedoclean Ethics ........................................................... 251
       4.3.1 Animal Sacrifice and the Golden Age .............................................................. 253
       4.3.2 The Myth of the Ages, the Flood and Empedoclean Physics ......................... 260
       4.3.3 The “Aristaeus” in Ovid and Vergil ................................................................. 271
       4.3.4 *Metamorphoses* 1 and *Fasti* 1, Love and Strife ......................................... 290
   Conclusion ...................................................................................................................... 296

CHAPTER 5 Mars, Venus and the Structure of the *Fasti* .................................................. 298
   Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 298
   5.1 Mars, Venus and the Didactic Tradition ................................................................. 301
   5.2 Mars and Empedoclean Neikos ............................................................................... 307
   5.3 The Disarming of Mars (and the Arming of Vesta?) .............................................. 311
   5.4 Further reflections of Mars and Venus in *Fasti* 3: Romulus, Numa and the ancile ... 322
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>The Union of Mars and Venus and the Birth of Harmonia/Concordia</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>Venus and Empedoclean Philia</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Numa and Strife</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>Concordia (and Discordia) in the Structure of the Fasti</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>Elegiac and Cosmogonic Rhythms</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 6</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Vestalia and the Philosophical Frames of the Fasti and Metamorphoses</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Poet as Vates</td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Fasti 1 and 6, Janus and Juno</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Janus, Vesta and the Natural-Philosophical Frame of the Fasti</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>The Vestalia and the Speech of Pythagoras</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>The Vestalia and Metamorphoses 1 and 2</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CONCLUSION</strong></td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>APPENDIX A: Some Collocations of the Four Elements in Latin Prose</strong></td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>APPENDIX B: Norden, Discordia and the Paluda Virago</strong></td>
<td>453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BIBLIOGRAPHY</strong></td>
<td>457</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

It used to be *de rigueur* for scholars writing on the *Fasti* to begin by noting its relative neglect — or, if not neglect, dismissal — among poems in the Ovidian corpus,¹ but this is no longer the case. For quite some time now, the poem has been the subject of robust interest from scholars of Latin poetry, as well as those interested chiefly in Roman religion and Augustan politics.² Critics now recognize that the poem requires and repays close attention, and it has in fact attracted the attention of some of the best scholars working in the field of Latin poetry in the last quarter-century;³ study of the poem has been encouraged in particular by the publication of several excellent commentaries on individual books.⁴ At the same time, the fact that the poem had been neglected for so long means that this critical re-evaluation of the poem is still very much an ongoing project.

¹ See, for example, Newlands (1995) 1: “...Ovid’s poem on the Roman calendar has been one of the least popular of his works.”
² On Roman religion and the *Fasti* see, for example, the important article of Beard (1987); see also Phillips (1992); Scheid (1992). Feeney (1998) discusses the *Fasti*, as well. Herbert-Brown (1994) is an important historical study of the poem.
³ R.J. Littlewood in many ways inaugurated the critical re-evaluation of the poem (see, for example, Littlewood (1975), (1980), (1981) and (2002)) and has recently published an excellent commentary on book 6 (Littlewood (2006)). Elaine Fantham has also been at the forefront, publishing numerous articles, in addition to her own exemplary commentary on book 4: see Fantham (1983), (1985), (1992a), (1992b), (1995), and (1998). John Miller has done more than any other scholar to illuminate the relationship of the *Fasti* to Hellenistic poetry, especially to the works of Callimachus: see, for example, Miller (1980), (1982), (1983), (1991) and (1992). The *Fasti*, along with the *Metamorphoses*, is the focus of Hinds’ seminal study on Ovidian genre (Hinds (1987)), to which he added a very influential two-part article on genre and its political ramifications in the *Fasti* (Hinds (1992a) and (1992b). Philip Hardie (1991) has examined the Janus episode in an article that has been especially influential on this dissertation; Denis Feeney (1992) has considered the *Fasti* and speech under the principate. Alessandro Barchiesi has published a typically impressive monograph on the poem (Barchiesi (1994), translated into English and published as Barchiesi (1997a)), as well as several important shorter contributions (e.g. Barchiesi (1991) and (1997b)). Niklas Holzberg (1995) has published a text and German translation of the poem, along with introduction and notes. Caro Newlands has written an important book (Newlands (1995), cited above) on the poem as a whole, in addition to several articles and chapters: see Newlands (1991), (1992), (1996), (2000) and (2002). This is obviously not an exhaustive list, but it acknowledges many of the scholars who have laid the foundation for current criticism of the poem.
More or less simultaneous with the critical re-evaluation of the *Fasti* has been the increasing recognition of the popularity and importance of “scientific” or natural-philosophical poetry in the Latin literary tradition. Scholars have added considerably to our understanding of Vergil’s poetry and its relationship to the wider tradition of Greco-Roman poetry by focusing on his use of natural philosophy in the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*; Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* has also garnered considerable attention in this regard, since it is an explicitly “universal” epic and, according to Philip Hardie, the “richest source, apart from Virgil” of the cosmic vision of empire.

While the *Fasti* has not been entirely ignored by this burgeoning sub-field in the criticism of Latin poetry, it has still been much less studied than its hexametric counterpart, the *Metamorphoses*. The work that has been done on Ovid’s use of natural philosophy in the *Fasti* has made some important observations, but it has also raised a number of questions that remain to be explored. Georg Pfligersdorffer’s recognition of Ovid’s extensive use of the Greek philosopher-poet Empedocles in the Janus episode in *Fasti* 1 raises the question of how this Empedoclean presence in a programmatic passage relates to the rest of the poem. Is this imitation of Empedocles early in the poem anomalous or does it establish the importance of Empedoclean themes to the poem as a

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6 Quotation is from Hardie (1986) 379.

7 Most scholars consider the two poems to have been composed more or less simultaneously, on which see Hinds (1987) 10-1. On the peculiarly close relationship between the two poems see, for example, Hinds (1987) 42-3 and Hardie (1991) 52-3.

8 Pfligersdorffer (1973).
whole? In a discussion of the same episode in the Fasti, Philip Hardie, while not exclusively focusing on its cosmological material, has made the important observation that the Fasti, like many other Augustan texts, and above all the Aeneid, posits a sympathy between the political and cosmological order. Once one realizes this, however, it is worth asking, once again, how this identification between cosmos and imperium plays out in other episodes in the poem. More recently, Emma Gee has studied the role in the Fasti of astronomy, a sub-field of natural philosophy, and in particular the relationship of the poem to one of its predecessors in didactic natural philosophy, Aratus’ Phaenomena, and what, in turn, this might tell us about the poem’s view of Augustan ideology. But while Aratus is an important model for the Fasti, the Aratean astronomical material in the poem is by no means its only debt to the tradition of natural philosophical poetry. I begin to fill in some of these gaps in my dissertation. Specifically, I look at Ovid’s reception in the Fasti of the concepts of love, strife and the four elements; the reasoning behind this emphasis will become clear over the course of the introduction. Here, suffice it to say that it indicates the Empedoclean focus of my

9 Myrto Garani is also addressing this question and is in the process of publishing several articles on Empedoclean themes in the Fasti. My own thinking about Empedocles and the Fasti has benefited enormously from seeing a draft of one of these articles (Garani (forthcoming b)) and from hearing a paper of hers at a conference on Empedocles at the Fondation Hardt in October of 2011.
11 Gee (2000). As Gee (ibid.) 1-2 notes, very little work had focused exclusively on astronomy in the poem before her study. Ideler (1825) had set himself the task of “correcting” Ovid’s astronomical errors and Santini (1975) had looked at the poem’s astronomical material in relation to didactic poetry. Gee’s basic thesis, as stated on p. 4, is that the “unified cosmos of Aratus’ Stoic poem is fragmented across Ovid’s Roman calendar,” and in this light the Fasti appears not unlike the “shifting universe of the Metamorphoses.” Moreover, this “fragmentation” also has political point, in as much as it “runs counter to the Julian and Augustan impulse towards unity.” As will become clear, I am sympathetic to this characterization of the Fasti as “fragmented” or “discontinuous,” as well as to the argument that it challenges or at least offers alternatives to Augustan notions of time and history, although I come at it from neither an Aratean nor a Stoic perspective.
12 Other scholarship on natural philosophy in the Fasti: Miller (1997) on Ovid’s use of Lucretius in his own “hymn” to Venus in Fasti 4; Green (2002) on the elements fire and water in Fasti 4.
study, since these concepts were associated above all with the philosopher-poet Empedocles in antiquity. Of course, a gulf of half a millennium exists between Empedocles and Ovid, so Ovid’s “Empedocles” cannot be understood without reference to Empedocles’ reception by important poetic predecessors of Ovid such as Apollonius, Ennius, Lucretius and Vergil. Therefore, this dissertation is also a study of the relationship between the Fasti and the “Empedoclean tradition.” I will argue not only that love, strife and the four elements are important themes in the Fasti, but that these Empedoclean concepts inform the structure of the poem, most obviously in the position of the Empedoclean deities of Mars and Venus in its central two books, but in other ways, as well. In this respect, my dissertation contributes to the idea that the poem can be considered as a carefully designed whole rather than a “fragment” which Ovid was unable to bring to a satisfactory close. Moreover, I argue that consideration of these concepts shed light on what has increasingly been a focus of scholarship on the Fasti, namely its representation of the Augustan political and cultural milieu. This broad overview of the project has assumed a great deal. In the remainder of the introduction I will flesh out some of these assumptions: first, since it is not self-evident, I will explain why one might think that natural philosophy is an important frame of reference for Ovid’s learned, witty aetiological elegy on the Roman calendar; and second, I will

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13 In a moment, I will discuss Hardie’s (1995) important idea of “Empedoclean epic poetry.” See also Nelis (2000) 90-103 and Nelis (2009) on the “Empedoclean tradition.”
14 Miller (2002) 167 notes this mode of reading the poem. Cf. Newlands (1995) 124: “The systematic repetition which we encounter in Book 6 gives a rounded quality to the Fasti that suggests we are to see the extant poem as a complete unit to be studied as a whole, rather than as a fragmentary part of an interrupted temporal sequence.” On the closural gestures in Fasti 6 see also Barchiesi (1997b).
explain why I focus specifically on Empedocles and the Empedoclean tradition in the
*Fasti*.

The *Fasti* and Natural Philosophy

Natural philosophy and elegy may seem like strange bedfellows. Almost all of the work on natural philosophy in Greco-Roman poetry has focused on the epic tradition. Ancient rhetorical theory considered natural philosophy or cosmology one of the most elevated subjects available to poets and therefore at home in the loftiest genre of epic.\(^{15}\) The earliest and arguably most influential poems in the Greco-Roman literary tradition are epics: Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Hesiod’s *Theogony* and *Works and Days*. While the Homeric poems ostensibly feature no natural-philosophical subject matter, they were nevertheless interpreted early on as containing physical allegories that anticipated later philosophical theories.\(^{16}\) It required much less of an interpretive leap to see Hesiod as a forerunner of later *physiologoi* since the *Theogony* takes Chaos and the beginning of the universe as its starting point;\(^{17}\) the *Works and Days* too could be brought inside this cosmological orbit since it discusses the rising and setting of the celestial bodies. Moreover, some of the earliest Greek philosophers including Parmenides and Empedocles expounded their doctrines in hexameter poems that are a more or less direct response to the Homeric and Hesiodic epic tradition,\(^{18}\) thereby further confirming the association between epic and cosmology.

\(^{15}\) Innes (1979).
\(^{16}\) In general, see Buffière (1956).
\(^{17}\) See Hardie (1986) 7-8.
\(^{18}\) Most (1999); on Hesiod and Empedocles specifically, see Hershbell (1970).
“Scientific” or cosmological poetry seems to have been especially popular in the Hellenistic period, the most influential extant work being Aratus’ astronomical epic *Phaenomena*, suggesting that cosmological poetry was amenable to Alexandrian poetics. However, as Sara Myers has argued, scientific poetry occupied two distinct, albeit not entirely unrelated, traditions for Augustan poets. She says that “It is impossible to know whether the neoterics associated their scientific poetry exclusively with Hellenistic poetry, but the following generation had as models for scientific poetry the two epic traditions represented by Hellenistic didactic and Homeric grand cosmological epic...Thus, for the Augustan poets there existed this dual tradition of cosmological poetry.” Therefore, scientific poetry was not merely a part of the Augustan poets’ Alexandrian inheritance. Indeed, it is clear that Roman poets often considered cosmological themes to be associated with the grandest forms of epic, as can be seen by the appearance of such themes, in addition to martial or nationalistic ones, in *recesationes*, which are conventionally regarded as programmatic announcements of a commitment to smaller scale, highly refined poetry of the kind that Callimachus and other Alexandrian poets composed. The Roman elegiac poets Tibullus and Propertius, for example, either reject didactic natural philosophy as useless to the lover (Tib. 2.4.15-20; Prop. 2.34.25-30, 51-4) or defer its composition until old age (Prop. 3.5.23-46). Ovid, however, more than any of the principal surviving Roman elegists took it upon

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19 On the popularity of scientific poetry in the Hellenistic period see, for example, Myers (1994) 10.
20 Ibid. 11.
21 Ibid. See Ibid., n. 38 for a collection of such passages.
himself to expand the bounds of elegy. An obvious example of this is his choice of *arma* as the first word of the *Amores*, which effectively (and paradoxically) announces that his elegiac poetry is not going to be primarily about love. Of course, *arma* as the first word of the *Amores* also establishes epic as an important frame of reference for Ovid’s erotic elegy; I will argue that this includes not only heroic epic, but also didactic epic poetry, especially that of Empedocles. As an innovative didactic elegy, the *Ars Amatoria* situates itself more obviously than the *Amores* in relation to didactic epics like that of Empedocles’ *Peri Phuseos*, Lucretius’ *DRN* and Vergil’s *Georgics*, even if Ovid’s incorporation of material from these poems is principally comic or parodic. In both the *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria* one is able to see Ovid experimenting with the boundaries of elegy and enriching the genre through incorporation of cosmological themes.

The *Fasti*, however, is by far Ovid’s most ambitious elegiac poem. It is an aetiological, rather than erotic, elegy that looks back to the experimental elegies of Propertius’ fourth book. While in poem 4.1 Propertius (not for the first time) proclaims himself the Roman Callimachus (4.1A.63) and appears to outline a project for a Roman *Aetia* that looks very much like the later *Fasti* (4.1A.69), this project is not fully realized in the fourth book; the astrologer Horus chides Propertius and essentially tells

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23 For a good general discussion see Harrison (2002) 79-94. Harrison’s opening quotation from Hinds (1996) 1086 is relevant: “Within elegy [Ovid] achieved an unparalleled variety of output by exploiting and extending the range of the genre as no poet had done before.”

24 As is well-known, Ovid’s choice of *arma* as the first word of *Am* 1.1 alludes to the famous opening of Vergil’s *Aeneid* (1.1), *arma virumque cano*. See McKeown (1989) ad *Am* 1.1.

25 See Barchiesi (1997a) 59, n. 28 on the lack of didactic poems in elegiacs before Ovid.

26 Steudel (1992) is a comprehensive study of parody in the *Ars Amatoria*. See also Sommariva (1980) specifically on Lucretian parody in the *Ars* and *Remedia*.

27 For the idea of generic “enrichment,” see Harrison (2007).


29 However, it looks less like the *Fasti* if one reads *deosque* instead of *diesque* as Heyworth does at 4.1A.69: *sacra deosque canam et cognomina prisca locorum*. Heyworth (2007) 424 says “A scribe has brought Propertius’ programme closer to Ovid’s *fasti*.”
him that his plan to give up erotic elegy is futile (4.1B.135-46, esp. 141-2). Book 4 largely bears out Horus’ statement, since it features a combination of erotic and nationalistic themes. The Fasti, on the other hand, is a fuller realization of the aetiological project adumbrated by Propertius, and, as one commentator has said, inasmuch as the Fasti features not only Propertius’ sacra but also the constellations, Ovid “is, in effect, playing the role of both ‘Propertius’ and the stargazer ‘Horos’.” The fundamentally aetiological character of Ovid’s elegy in the Fasti is important for understanding its incorporation of cosmogonic or cosmological material, since Myers has demonstrated in her study of the Metamorphoses that the aetiological tradition encompasses both Hesiodic, “scientific” cosmology that seeks to explain the causae of nature and “the erudite and erotic mythical tales popular with the Alexandrians, who themselves acknowledged their debt to the earlier Hesiodic tradition.” Commonly considered the nearest Latin equivalent to Callimachus’ Aetia, the Fasti is obviously interested in the latter kind of aetiology, which Myers refers to as historical or cultural (Callimachean) aetiology; but, as I will argue, the Fasti is also concerned with the “scientific” causae of nature, called by Myers natural historical (Cosmogonic) aetiology, which is more closely associated with the epic than the elegiac tradition.

30 See, e.g., Green (2004) 29-30 with bibliography. In his recent OCT of Propertius, Heyworth divides the 150 verses of 4.1 into two poems, lines 1-70 comprising 4.1A, lines 71-150 4.1B. Horus’ speech to Propertius therefore occupies a separate poem, according to Heyworth. He presents the case for the division in Heyworth (2007) 424-5, although he notes that this obviously does not preclude a dialogue between Propertius’ statement about his aetiological program and Horus’ claim that Propertius will not be able to leave behind the puella and elegy.
31 However, it would be unwise to press this distinction between book 4 of Propertius and the Fasti too hard, since the latter of course includes a great deal of erotic material, as well.
33 Cf. Vergil, G. 2.490, rerum...causae.
34 Myers (1994) 5.
important contributions, however, is to demonstrate how these two types of aetiology are in fact closely related in the *Metamorphoses*; I will argue that this is the case for the *Fasti*, as well, which we can see especially in the way that Ovid encourages the reader to think of Roman history and culture in cosmological terms.\(^{35}\)

The *Fasti* is a self-consciously elevated elegy, but it does not aspire to rival martial epic poetry.\(^{36}\) Although Ovid distances the *Fasti* from heroic epic, he also clearly, if somewhat ambivalently, situates the *Fasti* as a successor to earlier didactic epics in the tradition of Hesiod’s *Works and Days*.\(^{37}\) Ovid opposes not only *arae/sacra* to *arma* as part of the process of defining his poem generically, but also *sidera* to *arma*.\(^{38}\) These “stars,” announced as a subject in the second line of the poem (*lapsaque sub terras ortaque signa canam*), are commonly taken to refer to Hellenistic astronomical poetry and above all Aratus’ *Phaenomena*,\(^{39}\) but, as we will see, the “stars” may also refer to natural philosophical themes more generally. This is suggested first of all by the fact that the second line alludes even more clearly to Lucretius than Aratus,\(^{40}\) but especially by the expansive view of the didactic tradition articulated in Ovid’s elaborate and programmatic

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\(^{35}\) Cf. Hardie (1991) 49: “The Ovidian Janus episode conforms to a pattern that structures a wide range of Augustan texts including the *Aeneid*, namely an encompassing view of history that culminates in the universal extension of the *pax Augusta*, with a strong sense of the sympathy between political and cosmological order.” Cf. also Hardie (1997) 184.

\(^{36}\) Programmatically at 1.13-14: *Caesaris arma canant alii: nos Caesaris aras / et quoscumque sacris addidit ille dies*. From this comes the title of Merli’s (2000) recent book on epic material in the *Fasti*.


\(^{38}\) See Hinds (1992b) 113-4 and *passim*.

\(^{39}\) See Green (2004) 1, n. 2 with bibliography, although he finds “such conceptual jumps unrealistic on a first reading of the opening couplet.”

\(^{40}\) Robinson (2011) 4; see also Green (2004) ad *Fasti* 1.2.
praise of his predecessors in “scientific” poetry at Fasti 1.295-314. Finally, Rome’s second king Numa, the figure who best represents the poem’s promotion of intellectual pursuits over war, has knowledge of astronomy, but also represents a wider tradition of natural philosophy through his connection to Pythagoras and perhaps Empedocles. Therefore, since Ovid strongly characterizes the Fasti as a successor to earlier poems in the tradition of didactic epos, of which cosmology is an important component, it should come as no great surprise that such material appears in the Fasti, in spite of the conventional elegiac antipathy to philosophy. If we accept the idea that there are good reasons for the Fasti to incorporate natural philosophy, it still remains to explain the bolder claim that Ovid makes extensive use of Empedoclean themes in the Fasti.

Empedocles in the Fasti

While Empedocles may seem like an unlikely model for Ovid, it has become increasingly clear that Empedocles is an important part of the Greco-Roman literary tradition in which Ovid was writing. As is the case for the other Presocratics, we possess Empedocles’ work(s) only in fragments, although these are more numerous for him than for any of the others. Unsurprisingly, we have little reliable information about his life: a native of the

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42 Hinds (1992b).  
43 On the tradition anachronistically maintaining that Numa was a pupil of Pythagoras, see Galinsky (1998) 317-21 with bibliography; Segal (2001) 95, n. 63. Garani (forthcoming b) argues that Numa is an Empedoclean figure.  
44 Although much of the work on the Fasti as a didactic poem has been on aspects of its relationship to Callimachus’ Aetia and Aratus’ Phaenomena, scholars recognize that Lucretius’ DRN and Vergil’s Georgics are important models (see, e.g., Newlands (1995) 34). Fantham (1992b) offers an intriguing sample of just how rich is Ovid’s engagement with the Georgics in the Fasti, and Gee (2002) has built upon Fantham’s observations, but this represents the sum of work done on the relationship between the two poems. On the Fasti and Lucretius, Miller (1997), for example, has discussed the Venus of Fasti 4.91-132 in relation to the Lucretian Venus and Farrell (2008) has made important observations about the six-book structure of the DRN as a precedent for certain structural features of the six-book Fasti.  
45 See, for example, Hardie (1995) and Nelis (2000) 90-100.
Sicilian city of Acragas, he lived sometime during the fifth century B.C. and, if one can believe the report of Diogenes Laertius, actively involved himself in the politics of his city. Beyond these basic facts it is hazardous to go: based in large part on suggestions in the fragments concerning magical or shamanistic powers (esp. fr. 15/111), a remarkably colorful and fantastic biographical tradition developed around Empedocles, perhaps the most familiar story being the one that appears at the end of Horace’s *Ars Poetica* (463-6), where the mad philosopher leaps to a fiery death in the crater of Mt. Etna in an attempt to achieve immortality. However, of primary concern to us are the features of his poetry and philosophy transmitted by the fragments and testimonia, and the reception of his ideas in the poetic tradition. Although the fragmentary state of his poem(s) inevitably means that many points remain obscure, the evidence nevertheless enables us to describe the basic features of his philosophy, which I will briefly outline here, leaving individual points of doctrine to be discussed as they arise in the course of the dissertation. Empedocles’ system is defined by six basic entities, the forces of Neikos and Philia or “strife” and “love” and the four elements, earth, water, air and fire.

The two opposed forces alternate in their dominance in the cosmos, Neikos separating the

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48 This includes such basic ones as whether the fragments are from one poem or two, although this is a question largely irrelevant to my argument and one that has been rendered, if not moot, at least less pressing by the increasing acknowledgment that the “physical” and “religious” aspects of Empedocles’ thought can and should be understood as interdependent. See, e.g., recently Inwood (2001) 22: “It is impossible to divide the study of Empedocles, reconstructing his ‘scientific’ thought and his ‘religious’ thought separately. As with Heraclitus, with Parmenides, and (as far as we can tell) with Pythagoras, Empedocles’ thought is a baffling unity.” Osborne (1987) makes a good case for the one-poem hypothesis.
50 I adhere to convention by referring to Empedocles’ principles as Neikos and Philia or, in English, “strife” and “love,” although Empedocles uses several different names, including “Ares” and “Aphrodite.”
four elements and Philia joining them together. Empedocles seems to have posited a cyclic view of cosmic history: in one half of this cycle Neikos becomes increasingly dominant until reaching a temporary terminus in the complete separation of the elements and dissolution of the cosmos; at this point Philia begins to re-assert its dominance, joining the elements together to form mortal compounds, until ultimately reaching its own terminus in the complete fusion of the elements into a perfect sphere, which, like the point of complete Neikos, is an acosmic state, before the other half of the cycle begins again.

While Empedocles’ importance in the history of Western philosophy has long been understood, the appreciation of his significance in the Greco-Roman literary tradition is a more recent development. One important step has been the recognition of allegory as a key critical tool in antiquity, one that had considerable influence on the compositional practice of ancient poets. The allegorical interpretation of the Homeric poems in particular became an important part of the reception of the Iliad and Odyssey. Critics read certain Homeric episodes as physical allegories, two particularly prominent ones claiming that the ecphrasis of the Shield of Achilles in Iliad 18 and the second song of Demodocus in Odyssey 8 featuring Ares and Aphrodite are allegories anticipating the cosmology of Empedocles. In fact, it seems likely that Empedocles himself is interpreting the Homeric myth of Ares and Aphrodite allegorically when he uses these

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52 On the allegorical interpretation of Homer in general see Buffière (1956) and, more recently, Feeney (1991).
53 See, for example, Hardie (1986) 340-6 on the allegorical interpretation of the Shield of Achilles and 61-2 on the second song of Demodocus.
names to refer to his principles of strife and love. Empedocles also had a privileged status as one of the earliest practitioners of natural-philosophical didactic poetry; as we will see, Lucretius in particular canonizes him as more or less the founder of his genre, although considerable Empedoclean imitation can also be found in earlier didactic poets such as Aratus. Another poem published around the same time as the *De rerum natura*, a lost work entitled *Empedoclea* by an otherwise unknown Sallustius, testifies to the considerable interest in Rome during the late Republic in the poetry and philosophy of Empedocles. Therefore, via both the tradition of allegorical interpretations of Homer and the sub-genre of didactic poetry on natural philosophy, Empedocles was a prominent figure in the history of Greco-Roman poetry. Moreover, the discovery and recent publication of the Strasbourg papyrus containing fragments of Empedocles’ *Peri Phuseos* has encouraged a vigorous re-evaluation of Empedocles that has extended to his reception as a poet as well as philosopher.

Fundamentally important for my purposes is Philip Hardie’s argument concerning the “literary history” of Latin epic poetry in the speech of Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses* 15. Commentators on the *Metamorphoses* had long recognized that a number of

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56 Cicero is our only evidence for the existence of the poem, mentioning it in a letter to his brother in the same context as his famous judgment about Lucretius’ *DRN* (Ad Q. fr. 2.9.4): *Lucreti poemata ut scribis ita sunt, multis lumnibus ingenii, multae tamen artis. sed cum veneris, virum te putabo si Sallusti Empedoclea legeris, hominem non putabo*. This Sallust is probably not the historian. As Sedley (1998) 1-2 suggests, the poem was probably a translation or an adaptation of Empedocles; he compares Cicero’s use of the title *Aratea* for his translation of Aratus. Sedley also suggests that Cicero is explicitly comparing the *Empedoclea* to Lucretius’ *DRN*. I use Sedley’s punctuation of the passage.
57 Martin and Primavesi (1999).
58 Hardie (1995), subsequently revised and republished as Hardie (2009a) 136-52. Galinsky (1998) objects to Hardie’s emphasis on Empedocles. Hardie (2009a) 137, n. 6 responds by acknowledging the eclecticism of the speech, but says “…in the absence of substantial counter-arguments, I still maintain that a genealogy
features of Pythagoras’ speech have parallels in the fragments of Empedocles, but this fact remained without a compelling explanation. Hardie, however, offers several reasons why Ovid might have turned to Empedocles as a model for the speech: there is no “central text” assigned to Pythagoras that Ovid would have used as a source for the “Pythagorean” doctrines in the speech; in lieu of this, the poem(s) of Empedocles, who was reputed to have been a disciple of Pythagoras himself, or at least a Pythagorean, would have been an obvious choice; indeed, the Pythagorean doctrines of vegetarianism and metempsychosis can be found in the fragments of Empedocles; according to Hardie, Empedocles would also have been an attractive model for Ovid because of his theory of universal change, which Ovid’s Pythagoras seems to echo closely; relevant too is Empedocles’ striking description of “monsters with limbs joined at random, a bizarre picture that has an affinity with the unpredictability of the Ovidian world of metamorphosis.” Furthermore, Hardie argues that in the speech of Pythagoras Ovid alludes systematically to earlier poets in the Latin hexameter tradition, including Ennius, Lucretius and Vergil. Ovid’s promotion of Empedocles as a model in a speech that is in one sense a survey of the Latin epic tradition emphasizes certain “Empedoclean” features of this tradition — such as the theme of mutability — that, not coincidentally, are central to Ovid’s own epic poem. On this reading, Ovid tendentiously constructs a Latin epic tradition of which the Metamorphoses is the natural culmination.

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of Empedoclean epos is an important part of what the Speech is about.” As will become clear, I accept Hardie’s basic conclusions. My own observations about Ovid’s view of the epic tradition in the Amores, Ars Amatoria, and Fasti can be seen to support Hardie’s emphasis on Empedocles in the speech of Pythagoras.


60 Ibid. 206.
Damien Nelis, building upon Hardie’s work, has argued that Ovid also turns to Empedocles as a model at the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*; in particular Nelis interprets the zoogony after the flood, part of a pattern of cosmic creation and destruction at the beginning of the poem, as a strong example of “Empedoclean *epos*.” Indeed, Nelis says that “Empedocles’ *On Nature* with its cyclic interaction of Love and Strife, cosmic creation and dissolution, constant flux and change, must surely have been a powerful and attractive model for a poet setting out to write fifteen books about metamorphosis in which many of the stories have an erotic context and whose overarching narrative takes the reader, at least on one level, from primordial chaos to Roman cosmos.” Therefore Nelis, like Hardie, identifies certain features of Empedocles’ poetry and philosophy that made it an attractive model for the *Metamorphoses*.

The *Fasti*, whose close relationship to the *Metamorphoses* is well-established, shares a number of the “Empedoclean” features identified by Hardie and Nelis. In having the god Janus/Chaos narrate a cosmogony in book 1 (101-12), Ovid makes it so that the *Fasti*, like the *Metamorphoses*, embraces all historical time in the poem, from the beginning of the universe up to Ovid’s *tempora*, the opening word of the *Fasti*. As we will see, Janus describes a distinctively Empedoclean cosmogony that encourages us to interpret subsequent features of the poem against the background of an Empedoclean cosmos: in this light, the centrality in the poem of Mars and Venus (i.e. of the months

62 Ibid. 265.
63 On the relationship between the proem of the *Metamorphoses* and the beginning of Ovid’s *Fasti* see Wheeler (1999) 24-5 with bibliography.
March and April) takes on a new significance, as does the poem’s preoccupation with the concepts of *concordia* and *discordia*, and its interest in exploring the dynamic relationship between martial, discordant epic and peaceful, concordant elegy, and the many iterations of this fundamental binary, such as the key historical figures of Romulus and Numa.

The Janus episode establishes not only the Empedoclean cosmic principles of love and strife as an important thematic component of Ovid’s poetic universe, but also the four Empedoclean elements, the other foundation of Empedocles’ cosmology. Early in the *Fasti* Ovid establishes the trope of the universe as a work of art and vice versa, part of this being the notion of *elementa* as the basic materials both of an art or science and of the universe. This trope has a long history, but Empedocles offers an especially striking example when he compares the combination of the four elements in nature to the way that painters are able to represent forms in nature by mixing together a finite number of pigments (fr. 27/23). The elements become all the more prominent in a poem such as the *Fasti* that purports to progress through the seasons or *tempora*, each of which had specific qualitative and elemental associations in ancient science. At the same time, the persistent analogy between cosmos and *imperium* also makes the elements part of the poem’s political discourse. We see this most clearly in book 3, where Mars, alluding to

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64 On *concordia* and *discordia* in the *Fasti* see recently Hardie (2007) 564-70, who duly recognizes their Empedoclean frame of reference.

65 Fundamental in this regard are Hinds (1992a) and (1992b).

66 See *OLD* s.v. *elementum* (1) and (4).

67 See *OLD* s.v. *tempus* (3).

68 On the importance of the elements in ancient science, see Ross (1987) 54-74. Ross studies the physical elements as a constitutive component of Vergil’s poetry in the *Georgics*, although he does not relate them specifically to Empedocles. The prominence of the elements in the *Fasti* is yet another component of its extensive engagement with Vergil’s *Georgics*. 
Janus’ narration of cosmogony, refers to Rome’s origins as its *prima elementa*.\(^{69}\)

Moreover, the ability to control the elements becomes a metaphor for successful leadership. This is thematized, for example, at the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*, where the demiurge, in suppressing the chaotic discord of the elements, acts like a Roman magistrate.\(^{70}\) Even more pointedly, Ovid’s comparison of Olympus to the Palatine and Augustus to Jupiter\(^{71}\) colors the supreme god’s subsequent actions in the opening books, including his role in the elemental catastrophes of flood and fire, to which the Rome of the mid-first century B.C. — before Augustus came to power — was especially susceptible and whose management became part of Augustus’ legacy.\(^{72}\) As we will see, Ovid frequently reworks this theme of control over the elements in the *Fasti*, notably in episodes that are rich in political implications, such as Ovid’s treatment of Aristaeus, Proteus and the bugonia in book 1 and the Vesta temple in book 6.

As we saw, the “philosophical frame” of the *Metamorphoses* is also in some sense an “Empedoclean frame,” since Nelis and Hardie have demonstrated that Empedoclean themes are prominent both in the opening section of the *Metamorphoses* and in Pythagoras’ speech in the final book. This frame is mirrored in the *Fasti* by the Empedoclean cosmogony narrated by the god Janus in book 1 (101-12) and the poet’s

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\(^{69}\) *Fasti* 3.179. I discuss this passage briefly in chapter 1 and then in greater detail in chapter 5.

\(^{70}\) *Met.* 1.21, *hanc deus et melior litem natura diremit*. See Gebhardt (2009) 305-6 on Ovid’s use of legal vocabulary here. Note too that the elements of chaos are engaged in a kind of (civil) war (*Met.* 1.9): *non bene iunctarum discordia semina rerum.*

\(^{71}\) *Met.* 1.176, *haud timeam magni dixisse Palatia caeli*; *Met.* 1.204-5, *nec tibi grata minus pietas, Auguste, tuorum est / quam fuit illa Iovi.*

\(^{72}\) Favro (1992) 61. She cites a relevant passage from Suetonius (*Augustus* 28): “Since the city was not adorned as the dignity of the empire demanded, *and was exposed to flood and fire*, he so beautified it that he could justly boast that he had found it built of brick and left it built in marble. He made it safe too for the future, so far as human foresight could provide this (emphasis mine; trans. D. Favro).” At the same time, Favro’s index (ibid. 84) of “events relating to the urban care of Rome during the Augustan age” shows that flood and fire continued to be a problem even during Augustus’ tenure.
philosophizing description of Vesta’s temple as an *imago mundi* in book 6 (265-82).

This is important for several reasons. First, just as the cosmogony in *Metamorphoses* 1 and the speech of Pythagoras speak to one another in interesting ways, so do the Janus and Vesta episodes. For example, both Janus and Vesta can be seen as Empedoclean figures, Janus’ prominent biformity resembling the bizarre hybrids arising at a certain point in Empedocles’ cosmogony, while Vesta herself is a biform elemental deity identified as both Tellus/earth and fire.73 At the same time, the mirroring philosophical frames of the two poems make the Vesta episode parallel to the speech of Pythagoras and, as I will argue, Vesta and her temple appear as embodiments of the Empedoclean doctrine of cosmic change in Pythagoras’ speech.

Therefore, many of the features of the *Metamorphoses* that scholars have identified as “Empedoclean” also appear in the *Fasti* and can be taken as further indication of the remarkably close relationship between the two poems. At the same time, I argue that certain features of the form and content of Ovid’s elegy — not just in the *Fasti*, but more generally — predispose it to an Empedoclean interpretation, as well.74 As we will see, for example, Ovid imagines the elegiac couplet as a kind of hybrid form itself; in the *Ars Amatoria* he connects this to the hybrid Empedoclean monster the

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74 Fabre-Serris (2011) has argued for the adaptation of Empedoclean themes in Roman erotic elegy, originating in the lost poetry of the elegist Cornelius Gallus. According to her, the erotic elegists never use Empedocles directly, but take over certain Empedoclean themes mediated by the allegorical interpretation of the Homeric myth of the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite and by Lucretius’ proemial image of Mars and Venus. While I think that Fabre-Serris is correct to argue that certain elegiac themes can be connected to the Empedoclean tradition, I am not entirely persuaded by her argument that Gallus first made this connection. Moreover, she focuses almost exclusively on Tibullus and Propertius, as well as on certain poems in the *Corpus Tibullianum*. As will become clear, I think the Empedoclean/Lucretian themes that she locates in Tibullus and Propertius are in fact much more prominent in Ovid’s elegy.
Minotaur.75 Ovid also frequently refers to the technical prosodic designation of the elegiac couplet as the *alternus versus* or an “alternating” sequence of hexameter and pentameter lines.76 In the highly self-conscious context of Ovid’s poetry, each of these component parts has conventional generic associations: the hexameter is associated with subjects like war and heroes, the pentameter with peaceful pursuits like love. While one might object to the consideration of the pentameter in isolation — it of course has no absolute existence independent of the hexameter — Llewelyn Morgan in a recent monograph has persuasively demonstrated that the “pentameter, as the characteristic element of the elegiac couplet (insofar as the pentameter is what differentiates the elegiacs from epic metre), can function as the focus of generic definition.”77 A related Ovidian characterization of the elegiac couplet is that the verse “rises” in the hexameter and “subsides” or “falls” in the pentameter.78 In *Amores* 1.9 Ovid provocatively compares this metrical pattern to historical processes such as the rise and fall of cities or the cycle of creation and destruction.79 The fact that Ovid aligns each individual metrical component of the elegiac couplet with certain subject matter — the hexameter with war, the pentameter with love or peace —, as well as the fact that he imagines these as “alternating” or “rising” and “falling,” perhaps even “growing” and “decaying,”80 lends Ovid’s view of the form and content of elegy a strongly “Empedoclean” character. Ovid’s

76 See Hinds (1987) 120 with bibliography.
77 Morgan (2010) 353.
78 Cf. *Am. 1.1.27*: sex mihi surgat opus numeris, in quinque residat.
79 *Am. 1.9.29-30*: Mars dubius nec certa Venus; victique resurgunt, / quosque neges umquam posse iacere, cadunt. See McKeown (1989) ad loc.
80 See Morgan (2010) 352 on the related ideas of the pentameter as representing a “loss of breath,” or “loss of energy” and the sequence of the hexameter and pentameter as “potency succeeded by impotence, sexual assertion in the hexameter and enervation in the pentameter.”
highly developed metrical arguments about the couplet are part of his acknowledged use of the tension and interaction between epic and elegy and their conventional generic associations as the building blocks of much of his poetry; this has a cosmic analogue in Empedocles’ system, where all creative activity results from the interaction of Neikos and Philia.\(^81\)

The “Empedoclean” aspects of Ovidian elegy are most prominent in the *Fasti*. As we know, the *Fasti* has pretensions to epic, but these pretensions at the same time lead to a sharpened self-consciousness of its elegiac form.\(^82\) The opening word of the *Fasti*, *tempora*, announces that “time” will be one of the main subjects of the *Fasti*. This should be taken to include metrical or “elegiac” time, given the attention the poem pays to its metrical form. The structure of the poem in fact enacts the metrical form of its verse on several levels, in features such as “paired” books\(^83\) (like the paired lines of the couplet) and longer “hexameter” months succeeded by shorter “pentameter” months;\(^84\) this elegiac structure of the poem and calendar finds its most perfect embodiment in the paired months of March and April, whose patron deities are Mars and Venus respectively. I will argue, however, that the poem also connects the metrical pattern of “rise” and “fall,” alternating epic hexameter and elegiac pentameter, *arma* and *amor*, Mars and Venus, to other temporal patterns such as the cycle of growth and decay, cosmic creation and destruction, and the Empedoclean alternation of Neikos/Ares and Philia/Aphrodite.

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\(^81\) See, e.g., Inwood (2001) 52, 54.
\(^82\) See, in general, Hinds (1987) 115-34.
\(^83\) On paired months/books in the *Fasti* see, e.g., Hübner (1999).
\(^84\) Robinson (2011) 5.
Before I proceed to a survey of the content of individual chapters, I offer some final, brief observations about poetic form and the physical universe in the Fasti. Alessandro Barchiesi has offered a provocative reading of the first line of the Fasti in relation to the proem of the Metamorphoses: observing that Ovid’s characterization of his epic poem as “continuous” (perpetuum...carmen, 1.4) “encapsulates a whole debate about the nature of that poem and its genre, structure, relationship to models, and poetics,” Barchiesi goes on to suggest that in the first line of the Fasti the adjective digesta, “distributed,” “discontinuous,” might be taken as a “meaningful description of the elegiac poem,” by which Barchiesi primarily means the “peculiar, fragmented, and Callimachean format” of the Fasti. Llewelyn Morgan takes this further and maps these notions of “continuity” and “discontinuity” onto the respective meter of the two poems: “the continuity and discontinuity against which the Metamorphoses and Fasti narratives constantly play...are the larger instantiations of metrical forms which are in one case punctuated by a regular sense-break at the end of every couplet, and in another free to develop unfettered.” This idea that the one poem has a tendency to assert “continuity,” the other “discontinuity” or “fragmentation,” and that this arises in large part from their respective metrical forms is a fascinating one that can perhaps be correlated to other features of the poems.

85 Barchiesi (1997a) ix-x.  
87 For example, one can characterize the book 1 cosmogonies in the following way: in the Fasti, it is “strife,” the principle of separation or fragmentation, that brings about the birth of the universe, whereas in the Metamorphoses it is this same principle of strife that has to be suppressed before the cosmos and Ovid’s perpetuum...carmen can begin.
However, I might build upon Morgan’s observation that *tempora...digesta* can be understood in a metrical sense, i.e. the “discontinuous” *time* or meter of the elegiac couplet, by making a further suggestion: one also sees a remarkable coincidence of *materia* and meter in the poet’s promise in the second line that he will sing of the “rising” and “falling” of the stars in the meter that itself “rises” and “falls”. I offer this as just the first of what will be several tantalizing possibilities for comparing the poem to the universe in the *Fasti*, in this case the “rise” and “fall” of the couplet to the cyclical rising and setting of the celestial bodies and, in a larger sense, the cycle or round of the calendar. Indeed, comparing the elegiac couplet to celestial time can help us to see that the couplet is not simply “discontinuous,” but rather a discrete unit of time that is continually repeated; the pentameter is only a *temporary* stopping point, before the verse begins again. Regardless of whether one accepts this speculation about metrical and natural time in the opening couplet, the cycle may be said to be the dominant temporal pattern in the *Fasti*. This is appropriate enough for a poem taking the cyclical calendar as its basic structure, but it is also another reason for Empedocles’ attraction as a model for Ovid in the *Fasti*, since Empedocles’ cosmology posited an endlessly repeated cycle at whose center are the figures of Neikos/Ares and Philia/Aphrodite.

By choosing to compose a poem on time — the *Fasti* — Ovid can be seen as implicitly challenging Augustus’ own re-fashioning of the calendar and thus of Roman time.88 While there are representations in the *Fasti* of Augustan notions of time and history, according to which all previous time has culminated in the stability and peace of

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the principate, there are alternative representations in the *Fasti*, as well: in particular, the representation of non-teleological time and the pattern of ceaseless change. As we will see, this latter view of time and history, which is frequently characterized in terms of Empedoclean cosmology, complicates the poem’s treatment of such fundamental Augustan tropes as the *pax Augusta*, the Golden Age, and the *urbs aeterna*.

**Summary of Individual Chapters**

This dissertation has six chapters, the first three preparing the ground for my interpretation of the *Fasti* in the second three. In chapter 1 I introduce the four elements as features of poetic and political discourse, beginning with a discussion of how poets refer to the four elements and how they make occurrences of the elements in their poems meaningful. I argue that Ovid programmatically establishes the four (Empedoclean) elements as a feature of his poetic universe in the opening cosmogonies of both the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*; he also constructs an analogy between poem and cosmos that extends to the comparison of the *elementa* of the universe to the poet’s materials. Finally, I show how the elements feature not only in Ovid’s poetic discourse, but also in the political discourse of the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, based on an analogy between the cosmos and Roman *imperium*, between Jupiter and Augustus.

The second chapter focuses on the presence of love and strife in the epic tradition as a means of characterizing this tradition as “Empedoclean *epos*.” Homer himself can be considered an Empedoclean poet inasmuch as later allegorists, perhaps following the lead of Empedocles, interpreted episodes like the myth of Ares and Aphrodite in *Odyssey* 8 as referring to the cosmic principles of Neikos and Philia. Subsequent epic poets including
Apollonius, Ennius, Lucretius and Vergil connect the themes of love and strife in their own poems to Empedoclean cosmology. Love and strife, Ares/Mars and Aphrodite/Venus, especially in the form of the conceit of *militia amoris*, are also standard features of erotic elegy. In the second half of the chapter I consider these themes in the *Amores* and the way that Ovid situates them in relation to the epic tradition. The dual nature of Ares/Mars and Aphrodite/Venus as both cosmic principles and erotic figures offers Ovid an opportunity to connect some of the basic concerns of elegy to the epic tradition, which can be subsequently and tendentiously characterized as “Empedoclean epos” through the importance of Mars and Venus, strife and love. In part, Ovid reduces such grand themes as cosmic love and strife to the realm of human relationships, mere lovers’ quarrels and reconciliations, but at the same time he suggests that certain features of his elegiac poetry accommodate it to an “Empedoclean” interpretation; he uses this primarily to comic effect in the *Amores*, but here he begins to lay the groundwork for his more extensive engagement with such themes in the didactic *Ars Amatoria* and above all in the *Fasti*.

In chapter 3 I focus on Ovid’s *Ars Amatoria*, especially the second book. Here Ovid establishes Empedocles as a frame of reference at the beginning of book 2 by describing the Minotaur as an Empedoclean hybrid, which reflects the “hybrid” elegiac couplet. Ovid’s allusion to Empedocles is characteristic of the “wide-ranging didactic background”89 of the *Ars Amatoria*. In book 2 this includes not only Empedocles, but also Lucretius, the most Empedoclean of all Latin poets, although, as I will argue, Ovid uses Empedocles in a polemic against Lucretius that stems from the latter’s criticism of Venus

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89 Sharrock (1994b) 130.
and *amor* in book 4 of the *DRN*. In the middle section of the second book Ovid describes a Lucretian-style cosmogony and history of civilization, in which Venus or sex is represented as a civilizing principle that is indebted to Empedocles’ principle of Philia, before the Callimachean Apollo re-directs him from cosmological matters to *ars amatoria*. I argue, however, that Ovid bypasses this admonition by once again archly suggesting that the dual status of the adultery of Mars and Venus as an erotic myth and cosmological allegory enables him to compare comically his eroto-didactic *Ars* to grand cosmological poetry like that of Empedocles and Lucretius.

After demonstrating in the previous chapters that Ovid flirts with cosmological and specifically Empedoclean themes in his earlier elegy, I begin to show just how extensive this engagement with Empedocles is in the *Fasti*. More than in the *Ars Amatoria*, Ovid situates the *Fasti* as a successor in many respects to didactic poems on natural philosophy like Empedocles’ *Peri Phuseos*, Aratus’ *Phaenomena*, Lucretius’ *DRN* and Vergil’s *Georgics*. Moreover, the programmatic Janus episode establishes a distinctively Empedoclean cosmos as the setting for the remainder of the poem. After discussing Ovid’s programmatic gestures in the Janus episode and in the praise of the *felices animae* (1.295-310) I look closely at Ovid’s use of Empedoclean cosmology and ethics in his reworking of the “Aristaeus” myth from Vergil’s *Georgics*. After observing that this myth as presented in the *Georgics* is often read as an allegory of the rebirth of Rome after the civil wars, I argue that the Empedoclean framework of Ovid’s version problematizes the ethics of this “sacrificial” view of Roman history.
Having established Ovid’s extensive engagement with Empedoclean themes in book 1, in chapter 5 I turn my attention to the figures of Mars and Venus and their position in the structure of the *Fasti*. As the patron deities of books 3 and 4 respectively they occupy the center of the poem, which is symbolic of their centrality in the universe of the *Fasti*. This also makes the structure of the *Fasti* in an important sense “Empedoclean,” since Ovid acknowledges the allegorical background of the two deities. I also argue that this Empedoclean alternation of Mars and Venus at the center of the *Fasti* is connected to several other structural and thematic features of not just books 3 and 4, but the poem as a whole. For example, the Empedoclean Mars and Venus are reflected in the figures of Romulus and Numa, whose reigns are connected to cosmic themes through the story of the *ancile*, described by Ovid as an *imago mundi* in the tradition of Homer’s cosmic Shield of Achilles, and also in the wider interplay between the poles of *concordia* and *discordia* running throughout the poem. The temporal alternation of Mars and Venus in books 3 and 4 is also part of a wider enactment of “elegiac rhythms” in the poem, in which longer and shorter months are paired like the longer and shorter verses of the hexameter and pentameter in the elegiac couplet. The paired months of March/Mars and April/Venus are the most obviously “Empedoclean” representation of this rhythm, but I also suggest that the poem enacts a cyclical pattern of creation and destruction or growth and decay by the placement of cosmogonies or cosmogonic themes at the beginnings of the odd-numbered books, 1, 3 and 5, which can be compared to Empedocles’ own cycle of universal creation and destruction. As with the Empedoclean material in book 1, this
Empedoclean and elegiac view of time and history offers an alternative to that which
the poem identifies with Augustus and the principate.

I build upon these observations about the structure of the poem in chapter 6,
where I focus on book 6 of the poem and its participation in a “philosophical frame” in
the Fasti that matches the similar framing device in the Metamorphoses. This frame is
created by Ovid’s philosophizing description of the temple of Vesta as an imago mundi,
which makes it a philosophical counterpart in book 6 to the Empedoclean monument of
the Janus Geminus in book 1. The matching frames of the Fasti and Metamorphoses also
suggest that the Vesta episode in the final book of the Fasti is in some sense parallel to
the speech of Pythagoras in the final book of the Metamorphoses. I argue that there is in
fact an extensive dialogue between the two episodes which revolves around the
Empedoclean idea of universal change articulated in Pythagoras’ speech. While the
goddess Vesta and her temple, which were ideologically connected to the stability and
permanence of Roman imperium, especially under Augustus, appear at first to be
exceptions to Pythagoras’ Empedoclean notion of change, I argue instead that Vesta and
her temple are reflections of physical and especially elemental instability and flux. This
can be seen especially through a hitherto unrecognized intertextual dialogue between the
Vesta episode and the opening books of the Metamorphoses, where the Roman world,
symbolized by Vesta and her temple, appear subject to a similar pattern of creation and
destruction as the world of the Metamorphoses. Therefore, the Vesta episode raises the
question of whether the early instability of the Roman universe cedes to the lasting
concordia established by Augustus, or whether it is impossible even for Rome to escape
the cycle of creation and destruction represented at the beginning of the
*Metamorphoses* and then again, memorably, at the end of Pythagoras’ speech in his
description of the rise and fall of cities and empires.

Once again, Ovid and Empedocles may seem an odd couple, although one could
speculate that this very oddness helped to attract Ovid to Empedocles in the first place,
considering the pleasure the former took in defying the expectations of his readers.\(^90\)
However, we will see that there is considerably more in Empedocles to spark Ovid’s
imagination than the delightful incongruity between the *persona* of the “portentous pre-
Socratic” and the “playful poet of love.”\(^91\) Empedocles’ physical universe turns out to be
remarkably compatible with Ovid’s poetic universe, a comparison — universe and poem
— that I begin to explore in chapter 1.

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\(^90\) Cf. Wheeler (1999) 8-9 on Ovidian beginnings and expectations.
\(^91\) Quotations are from Hardie (1995) 214, to which I will return in the conclusion to the dissertation.
CHAPTER 1
The Elements in Poetic and Political Discourse

Introduction

The first two chapters of this dissertation introduce the concepts of the four elements (chapter 1) and love and strife (chapter 2). In this first chapter on the four elements I begin by considering the terminology for the elements. I argue that the most basic words or “primary terms” for the elements in Latin are *terra, aqua, aer* and *ignis*, which establishes a baseline for characterizing how a poet such as Ovid represents the elements. I go on to demonstrate that Ovid often uses metonyms in collocations of the four elements. This is in contrast to the general tendency of prose authors to use the most basic terms. This poetic use of metonyms to represent the elements, however, raises the question of how one determines whether a particular collocation of such terms is meaningful. This is the topic of the second section. The significance of the elements in the context of natural philosophy, which we see, for example, in the respective cosmogonies in book 1 of both the *Metamorphoses* and the *Fasti* and in the philosophical passages in the closing books of each poem (the discourse of Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses* 15 and the Vestalia in *Fasti* 6) is self-evident. However, I argue that Ovid’s prominent articulation of the four-element theory at the beginnings (and at the ends) of both the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* encourages us to see these as an important part of the world of the poems and consequently to notice less direct representations of them in subsequent passages in the poems; this may be especially the case in the *Fasti*, since it self-consciously proceeds through the seasons, which in ancient science were
distinguished by the predomination of certain elements and qualities. Still, there are other signals that can help us to determine whether an indirect representation of the elements is significant. Important in this regard is Empedocles, who was the acknowledged founder of the four-element theory. Given Empedocles’ close association with the theory, poets could use other aspects of Empedocles’ doctrine, such as the principles of love and strife, as a means of marking the four elements as significant. In the third section I consider the elements as part of metapoetic discourse: I argue that poets frequently create an analogy between elements and the poet’s materials, focusing on Ovid’s establishment of this analogy in both the Metamorphoses and Fasti. In the final section of the chapter I consider the four elements as a part of the discourse of power in Ovid’s poetry, which arises from the conventional identification of the cosmos with Roman imperium and the orbis with the urbs.

1.1 Terminology

My opening question is a relatively simple one, although, as we will see, the answer to it raises its own set of questions for this study. What were the words in Latin with which a poet could represent the elements? Some observations made by David Sedley on Lucretius’ language offer a useful starting point. Sedley argues that Lucretius generally avoids technical vocabulary and instead prefers to “keep in play a whole set of mutually complementary live metaphors.” In this regard, according to Sedley, Lucretius is subscribing to a convention of his genre, the hexameter poem on physics, of which

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92 In general, see Ross (1987) 54-74.
93 Sedley (1998) 44.
Lucretius regarded Empedocles as more or less the founder. Sedley then observes there is precedent for Lucretius’ avoidance of technical vocabulary in Empedocles: “Empedocles had no technical vocabulary for the six primary entities in his physics — the four elements plus the two powers Love and Strife — but deploys for each a varied set of evocative metaphors and allegorical names: thus the element water is represented not only by the word ‘water’ (ὕδωρ), but also by ‘rain’ (ديمقراς), ‘sea’ (θάλασσα, πόντος), and ‘Nestis’, probably a Sicilian cult name for Persephone, who was especially associated with springs.” Sedley’s remarks imply a simple typology for Empedocles’ (and Lucretius’) vocabulary for the elements, one that consists of the basic or literal words in a language for the elements, like the Greek ὦδωρ or Latin aqua for “water” and, on the other hand, metonyms for the same elements, such as imber for “water.” E.G. Schmidt in an earlier study not of the four elements, but of the related expression “Sky-Sea-Earth” in Lucretius observes a similar practice. The formula can be expressed either by Kenneworte or literal words for the concepts “sky,” “sea” and “earth” (i.e. caelum, mare, and terra) or by Nebenkennworte, which are in effect metonyms (e.g. ventus, fluctus, and campi).

Sedley’s remark about the “basic words” for the elements begs the question of just what these are in Latin. If we could establish this as a baseline, then we would be able to better characterize the range of poetic vocabulary for the elements. There are a

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95 Sedley (1998) 44-5.
96 Schmidt (1975).
97 Hardie (1986) 293-335 examines what he calls “universal expressions” in the Aeneid, which include both the four elements and the tripartite division of the world into Sky-Sea-Earth. He does not explicitly address the question of the vocabulary for the elements, but it is clear from his discussion of specific passages in the poem that he is using a similar method to that of Schmidt and Sedley.
number of tools at our disposal for attempting to establish such a baseline. The first
involves collocations of the four elements in prose writers. I assumed at the start of this
study that prose writers would be more likely to use the most basic words for the
elements. On the basis of the collocations I have collected prose writers use the words
terra, aqua, aer and ignis more frequently than any others for the elements earth, water,
air and fire respectively. The modern lexica support the conclusion that these are the
basic words or what I will call the “primary” terms for the four elements in Latin. The
TLL entry on elementum is especially useful in this regard, since it states that terra, aqua,
aer and ignis are the primary terms for the elements, and notes that that writers often use
metonyms in their place. Oscar Hey writes in the entry that elementum is used either of
the four primary bodies (de quattuor primitivis corporibus) or their qualities (de
qualitatibus eorum), that is, igni vel calido, aqua vel umido, aere vel frigido, terra vel
arido. We should note that Hey, who is concerned to define the four elements clearly and
unambiguously, uses ignis, aqua, aer and terra. Still, he then recognizes that Latin
authors often use metonyms in place of these: pro quibusdam interdum haec habentur,
quae ea maxime repraesentant, ut caelum, sol, luna, sidera, mare, venti, nubes al. As we
saw, one can put an even finer point on this and say that prose writers more often than not
use the primary terms in collocations.

However, this is not the case for poets. Is this because terra, aqua, aer and ignis
are prosaic? Not necessarily. None of the words individually can be called “prosaic,” but
on the basis of my study of collocations of the elements in Ovid’s poetry, it is rare for a

98 A list of the collocations can be found in Appendix A. Out of thirty-two collocations of the four elements
in authors that range from Cicero to the early Christian writers, twenty-four of these use terra, aqua, aer
and ignis exclusively. The rest usually differ from this paradigm by only a single term.
collocation of all four of the primary terms to occur in poetry and in this sense the
collocation can perhaps be considered a “prosaism.”

The four words, *terra, aqua, aer,* and *ignis* occur together just once in Ovid, for example, in the cosmogony that begins the
Metamorphoses (1.52-3), which may be significant in and of itself:

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imminet his aer, qui, quanto est pondere terrae
pondus aquae levius, tanto est onerosior igni.
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Air hangs over the other elements, air, which is as much heavier than fire as the weight of water is lighter than that of earth.

Ovid’s use of the most basic terms for the elements may parallel the demiurge’s task of clearly defining the world, since one of the chief characteristics of chaos had been a lack of definition among the primordial elements and qualities.

As I said, however, this is the exception. All other collocations in Ovid’s poetry contain one or more “secondary” terms. Although occasionally these are synonyms, such as *tellus* for *terra*, the majority are metonyms, such as *fretum* for *aqua* or *sol* for *ignis*. A good example of the wide range of vocabulary that a poet like Ovid can use for the four elements comes from the cosmogony in book 1 of the *Fasti* (105-18):

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lucidus hic aer et quae tria corpora restant,
ignis, aquae, tellus, unus acervus erat.
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Text of the *Metamorphoses* is from the edition of Tarrant (2004).

nunc quoque, confusae quondam nota parva figurae, 
ante quod est in me postque videtur idem. 
accipe quae sit altera formae, 
hanc simul ut noris officiumque meum. 
quicquid ubique vides, caelum, mare, nubila, terras, 
omnia sunt nostra clausa patentque manu.

This bright air and the three other bodies, fire, water, earth were a single heap. When once this mass separated because of the strife of its own elements and dispersed into new homes, flame sought the height, the next place took the air, the earth and sea settled in the middle ground. At that time I, who had been a sphere and a faceless mass assumed once again the countenance and limbs that a god deserves. Now, as a small reminder of my confused shape, my back and front look the same. Hear the other reason for the shape you have asked me about, so that you may understand both it and my office. All that you see everywhere, sky, sea, clouds, lands, opens and closes by my hand.

There are three collocations of the four elements over the course of just a few verses and taken together they elaborate the different aspects of the four-element scheme. In the first collocation three of the four primary terms are used to gloss air, fire, water and earth as corpora (commonly used in Latin to refer to the elements as a group), emphasizing their materiality. However, the next collocation decreases the number of primary terms from three to two and indicates that the four elements are used to define nature not only qualitatively, but spatially as well (cf. altum, propior locus, medio solo). Finally, after an interval of several verses, there is the asyndetic expression caelum, mare, nubila, terras, which one might be inclined to take as an example of the division of the world into Sky-Sea-Earth (amplified by nubila), if there had not already been such an emphasis placed on the four-element scheme. In this collocation the number of primary terms is reduced

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103 See OLD s.v. corpus (13).
104 Nubila stands in for the element “air.” Cf. Ennius, Epicharmus (fr. 7 Vahlens): istic est Iupiter quem dico, quem Graeci vocant / Aerem, qui ventus est et nubes. Also see, once again, Oscary Hey’s TLL entry on elementum: pro quibus interdum et haec habentur, quae ea maxime repraesentat, ut caelum, sol, luna, sidera, mare, venti, nubes al. While the elemental associations of nubes, nubila are unambiguous, this is not
to one, while the elements are signified both by the visible masses of sky, sea, lands and by the meteorological phenomenon of clouds. This last collocation is further distinguished from the first two by being an “indirect” representation of the elements, that is, it is not immediately transparent that Janus (the narrator of the passage) is talking about the four elements, whereas it is clear that he is doing so in the earlier instances. Taken literally, Janus is describing the visible world around him as comprised of the regions of sky or heaven, sea and lands and the phenomenon of clouds. Several factors, however, encourage us to infer that these represent the four elements. The first is the predominance of the four-element scheme in the preceding verses as a means of analyzing the world, which prepares the reader to pick up on less direct examples of this scheme; second is the presence of four terms that are clearly meant to be taken together as a group, each part of which can reasonably be seen as a metonym for a different element; third, the stylized asyndetic expression of the four words points to their status as a significant grouping rather than, say, a tripartite division of the world to which nubila is incidentally attached. This is all to say that even though this is an indirect representation of the elements, it is still easily recognizable as a collocation of the four elements.

That poets often refer to the elements by metonyms may seem unremarkable, but it raises some important methodological issues for any study of the poetic use of the four elements in Latin poetry. The metonymical representation of the elements means that it is possible that a poet is talking about the elements even when he is not doing so overtly,

the case for caelum. In the passage in the Fasti caelum must stand in for fire, since the other three terms unambiguously represent water, air and earth respectively. But on other occasions caelum is used for air. It can be used for both elements since in its most basic sense it encompasses both the upper and lower elements of the sky, that is, the aether and aer. See Furley’s (1989) 172-3 discussion of the ambiguity of caelum in the DRN 1 proem.
and so the question becomes how we determine whether a given collocation of the elements is significant. In other words, how do we determine whether any given collocation, not only of four, but of three, two, or even a single element is significant?

1.2 Looking for the Elements

We have already seen that Ovid prominently introduces the four-element theory at the opening of both his *Metamorphoses* (cf. especially 1.52-3) and *Fasti* (1.105-18) in the context of cosmogonies indebted to Greek natural philosophy. It is also the case, however, that each of these cosmogonies has a philosophical counterpart in the final books of their respective poems. Nearly half of book 15 of the *Metamorphoses* is comprised of a discourse on natural philosophy put into the mouth of the Presocratic philosopher-sage Pythagoras (75-478), in which he expounds the doctrines of vegetarianism and cosmic metamorphosis. Included in the latter is the doctrine that the four elements are the generative bodies (*genitalia corpora*, 239) from which all of nature arises. Moreover, the doctrine of the four elements is the theoretical basis for Pythagoras’ wider doctrine of cosmic metamorphosis, since the elements themselves, the building blocks of the universe, transmute into one another in an endless cycle (237-51):

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inde retro redeunt, idemque retexitur ordo.
ignis enim densum spissatus in aera transit,
hic in aquas, tellus glomerata cogitur unda.”

Nor do even those things which we call elements persist. Pay attention to what changes they go through: I will teach you. The eternal universe contains four generative bodies; of these, two, earth and water, are heavy and sink under their own weight into the lower areas. And two, air and fire which is finer than air, are lacking in weight and, if nothing presses down on them, seek the heights. Although space separates these elements, still all arise out of one another and return into one another: earth dissolves and is rarefied into liquid water, and water, attenuated, turns into wind and air, and the thinnest air loses even its weight in turn and flashes fire; then they return again in reverse order. For fire becomes dense and changes into thick air, and this into water; and earth is formed from the conglomeration of water.

Therefore, the *Metamorphoses* as a whole is framed not only by natural philosophical passages, but specifically by the doctrine of the four elements. In just one of many examples of the way in which the two poems demand to be read almost as a unit, the *Fasti* exhibits a similar philosophical frame.\textsuperscript{105} We have already seen that the doctrine of the four-elements is highlighted in Janus’ cosmogonical narrative in *Fasti* 1. By the same token, Ovid’s treatment of the Vestalia, the longest episode in book 6 (249-468) contains a philosophizing *aition* of the temple’s round shape (265-82), in which it is compared first to the globe of the earth and then to Archimedes’ cosmic sphere. As I will discuss in greater detail in chapter 6, this *aition* directs the reader back to the cosmogony of Janus in book 1 of its own *Fasti*, as well as to the cosmogony in book 1 of the *Metamorphoses* and its philosophical counterpart in book 15, the discourse of Pythagoras. In other words, it points to the philosophical context in which it should be viewed. For our immediate purposes I only note that it is connected to the discourse of Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses*

\textsuperscript{105} Cf. Hinds (1987) 42 on the parallel cosmogonies in book 1 of the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*: “The invitation to compare and contrast the two poems goes right back to the beginning of each.”
15 not only by being the longest episode of the final book of its poem, but also by the
figure of Numa, who built the original temple of Vesta and who, according to the
_Metamorphoses_, was (anachronistically) a disciple of the philosopher Pythagoras.\(^{106}\)
Indeed, as we will see in chapter 6, Ovid suggests that Numa designed the temple
according to Pythagorean principles.\(^{107}\) In light of the prominence of the four-element
theory in the three other major philosophical episodes spanning the two poems, it is no
surprise that the features of the temple of Vesta, an _imago mundi_, are described in terms
of the elements, notably earth and fire (6.265-70):\(^{108}\)

> forma tamen templi, quae nunc manet, ante fuisset
dicitur, et formae causa probanda subest.
Vesta eadem est et _terra_: subest vigil _ignis_ utrique:
significant sedem _terra_ focusque suam.
terra pilae similis, nullo fulcimine nixa,
aere subiecto tam grave pendet onus:

Nevertheless, they say that the form of the temple, which now remains, is what it
was before and there is a sound reason for the form. Vesta is the same as the earth:
a perpetual fire underlies them both. The earth and the hearth denote their own seat.
The earth resting on no support is similar to a ball, so heavy a weight hangs on the
air beneath.

While the temple of Vesta (metonymically referred to by the goddess _Vesta_, 267) is
identified with earth, the goddess herself is the element fire: _nec tu aliud Vestam quam_
_vivam intellege flammam_ (291). Ovid, therefore, makes it clear by both the temple’s and
the goddess’ articulation in terms of the elements, that the four-element theory is central
to his treatment of the goddess’ festival and, as we will see in chapter 6, the rest of the

\(^{106}\) _Met._ 15.479-81.
\(^{107}\) Cf. Plutarch’s _Life of Numa_.
episode bears this out: the temple is a locus for the perpetual conflict and interchange
of the elements similar to that described by Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses* 15.

Passages of natural philosophy, then, frame both the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*.

Yet, one of my working assumptions will be that this philosophical frame encourages us
to see the four elements not as a theory that Ovid imports into his poems only to discard
once it has served some immediate poetic purpose, but rather as a persistent and
significant feature of the “world” of the poems, which, as we will see in the next section,
is programmatically analogized to the world of nature in both the *Metamorphoses* and
*Fasti*. In other words, the philosophical frame encourages us to recognize and interpret
less direct representations of the elements in other passages in the poem. One of the
questions that this raises is whether it is necessary for all four elements to be present, as is
the case in the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* cosmogonies, in order for a passage to contain a
“citation” of the four-element theory. We can consider, for example, the zoogony that
occurs in book 1 of the *Metamorphoses*, in which only three of the four elements occur
and it is clear that the focus is on only two, fire and water (1.430-7):

quippe ubi temperiem sumpsere *umor*que *calor*que,
concipiunt et ab his oriuntur cuncta duobus;
cumque sit *ignis aquae* pugnax, *vapor umidus* omnes
res creat et discors concordia fetibus apta est.
[ром] ergo ubi *diluvio tellus* lutulenta recenti
*solibus aetherii* altoque recanduit aestu,
edidit innumeratas species partimque figuras
rettulit antiquas, partim nova monstra creavit.

For when moisture and heat come together in a mixture, they are productive and
everything has its origin in these two principles; although fire and water are
enemies, a moist vapor creates everything and discordant concord is the right
condition for birth. Therefore when the earth was muddy from the recent deluge, it
became warm from the etherial rays of the sun and the lofty heat, and issued forth
countless species: in part she restored ancient forms, in part she created new monsters.

If this is viewed in the context of the four-element theory, air seems to be absent. We can compare this to the earlier mythological anthropogony of Prometheus, put forth as one of the possible origins of mankind, where, as is true here, earth, water and fire combine (1.80-3):

\[
\text{sive recens tellus seductaque nuper ab alto aethere cognati retinebat semina caeli, quam satus Iapeto mixtam pluvianibus undis finxit in effigiem moderantum cuncta deorum.}
\]

Or the earth just recently separated from the lofty ether retained the seeds of its cognate sky, the earth which the son of Iapetus mixed with rainwater and fashioned into the image of the all-governing gods.

Although at least one scholar has assumed that all four elements are present in this passage, it is clear that aether and caelum are equated and therefore air is once again omitted. The larger issue, however, is that in both passages I think it is rash to dismiss the four-element theory as irrelevant simply because not all four elements are represented. We might compare these collocations to Empedocles fr. 76/73, ως δὲ τότε χθόνα Κόπρις, ἐπεὶ τ’ ἐδίηνεν ἐν ὄμβρῳ, / εἰδεα ποιπνύουσα Θοῶ πυρί δόκε κρατῶναι (“as Kypris at that time, when she had moistened earth in rain, gave it to active fire to strengthen as she created forms”), in which Kypris or Aphrodite, like Prometheus, mixes earth, rain (i.e. water), and fire. Empedocles is obviously a special case, but it is true that he refers to his elements in various passages either individually or in combination.

110 I use Inwood’s (2001, rev. ed.) text of Empedocles throughout. The fragment numbering I adopt is his, as well. Since the Diels-Kranz (DK) edition is still indispensable, Inwood offers first the number of the fragment in his own ordering, then the Diels-Kranz number. Thus Inwood 66/61 is fragment 66 in Inwood’s edition and fragment 61 (of the B fragments) in Diels-Kranz.
with one or two other elements, that is, not always in a collocation of all four, which he
can do because his establishment of the four-element theory early in his poem prepares
the reader to see subsequent occurrences of the elements, whether individually, in groups
of two or three, or all four together, within the framework of the theory. We cannot draw
a precise parallel with the way in which Ovid uses the four-element theory, since he and
other philosophically eclectic poets were not beholden to a single doctrine; still, I think it
is reasonable to say that in cases such as the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, the introduction
of the four-element theory in a prominent position at the beginning of each poem
encourages us to see subsequent less schematic, partial, or indirect representations of the
elements in the context of that theory.

Yet, even absent an explicit cosmological (and specifically elemental) framework
as in the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, there are other signals that can help to determine
whether an indirect representation of the elements is significant. Empedocles is important
in this respect, since he was closely associated with the four-element theory as its
acknowledged founder. Lucretius, for example, in his doxography in book 1 of the *DRN*,
recognizes Empedocles as the foremost philosopher among those who subscribe to the
four-element theory (1.714-6):

> et qui quattuor ex rebus posse omnia rentur
> ex igni terra atque anima procrescere et imbri.
> *quorum Acragantinus cum primis Empedocles est*

And there are those who think that nature comes into being out of four substances,
fire, earth, air and water. Chief among these is Empedocles of Acragas.

Cicero too, at *Luc.* 118, gives important testimony about Empedocles’ privileged status in
respect to the four-element theory. Again in the context of a doxography, Cicero writes
that Empedocles haec pervolgata et nota quattuor (“Empedocles [said] that the four common and well-known elements [are the basic substances]”). This suggests that Empedocles’ identification with the theory transcended to a certain extent its widespread adoption and adaptation in ancient thought (pervolgata et nota). Empedocles’ privileged status as the founder of the theory encouraged poets to use the four elements allusively as a means of “citing” Empedocles, which Lucretius appears to do in the DRN proem, as Furley and Sedley have argued. Nevertheless, because of the widespread application of the theory, the four elements per se are not enough to signal a meaningful allusion to Empedocles; a meaningful collocation of the elements can be identified with greater certainty when it is supplemented by other Empedoclean motifs and in fact it is commonly supplemented by reference to the other basic feature of his philosophy, the principles of love and strife. For example, Furley and others support their identification of an indirect representation of the four Empedoclean elements in the DRN proem by appealing to Lucretius’ famous depiction of Mars and Venus later in the proem, the two gods identified in the allegorical tradition (and, we might add, in Empedocles’ own poem) with Empedoclean strife and love. In fact, the same principle can be adduced in support of fire and water serving as a synecdoche for the four-element theory in the zoogony of the Metamorphoses. There fire and water are glossed as a discordant concord (cumque sit ignis aquae pugnax, vapor umidus omnes / res creat et discors concordia fetibus apta est, 1.431-2), an epigrammatic paradox that Horace may have coined to

111 A verb like dixit has to be supplied from the context. Cf. TLL s.v. elementum (II, B): e doctrina maxime Empedoclis.
allude to Empedocles’ principles of love (concordia) and strife (discordia): quid velit et possit rerum concordia discors, / Empedocles an Stertinum deliret acumen (Epist. 1.12.19-20).

As we will see, the concomitant emphasis given to the (Empedoclean) principles of love and strife is one of the ways by which Ovid marks the the four elements from the beginning of the Fasti as the Empedoclean elements. While the pair love and strife is the most common means, besides the four-element theory, of alluding to Empedocles, it is not the only one. Near the end of Georgics 2, for instance, Vergil alludes to the Empedoclean theory that intellect is blood around the heart in a famous passage in which the poet appears to entertain two “alternative” types of poetry (2.483-4): sin has ne possim naturae accedere partis / frigidus obstiterit circum praecordia sanguis (“but if frigid blood around my heart keeps me from being able to reach these parts of nature”). Compare line 484 to Empedocles fr. 96/105.3: αἷμα γάρ ἀνθρώποις περικάρδιον ἐστι νόημα (“for men’s intelligence is blood around the heart”). A relatively secure adaptation of an Empedoclean theory such as this lends support to the argument that Vergil weaves the four elements into his description of nature in the surrounding context (2.475-89), a technique used by Empedocles himself.¹¹⁴

There are, then, a number of ways in which poets can signal that an indirect representation of the elements is significant, notably by references to other aspects of Empedocles’ philosophy. Of course, determining these “marked” collocations of the elements is not an end in itself, but only the first step in interpreting Ovid’s use of the

¹¹⁴ See, for example, Empedocles fr. 11/115 and 15/111. In addition to the citation of the Empedoclean theory of intellect as blood around heart, Nelis (2004) has recently identified several other Empedoclean motifs at the end of Georgics 2.
elements, which, as I suggest in the final two sections of this chapter, can shed light on the interrelated discourses of poetry and power in the *Fasti*.

1.3 Elements of Poetry

In chapter 37 of *De Demosthenis Dictione* Dionysius of Halicarnassus confronts what he imagines will be objections to his method of categorizing each literary work by one of the *tria genera dicendi*, since, he imagines his critics will say, any one author’s style is complex and features components of each of the three styles. Dionysius concedes the basic truth of this statement: “a style that is pure and completely uncontaminated with others is impossible to find in any author, whether of poetry or prose, and we should not expect any of them to furnish evidence of such a kind.”\(^{115}\) At the same time, however, he goes on to argue that any one author’s work will have predominant stylistic features and it is on this basis that his categorizations should be judged. In order to reinforce this argument, he turns to an analogy from natural philosophy, specifically the four-element theory:\(^{116}\)

\[\text{ὅπου γὰρ οὐδὲ τῶν στοιχείων τῶν πρῶτων, ἀπὸ τῶν παντὰς συνέστη φύσις, ἔνεκεν ἑικτρινιές ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ πάντα μετέχει πάντων, ὁμόμοσται δ’ ἑκατόν αὐτῶν κατὰ τὸ πλεονάζον, τὰ θαυμαστά, εἰ αἰτής λέξεως ἁρμονία τρείς οὕσιδ τὸν ἁριθμὸν οὐκ ἔχουσιν εἰκτρινῆς τῆς φύσιν οὐδ’ ἀνεπίμικτον, ἀλλ’ ἐκ τῶν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ συμβεβηκότων αὐτοίς ὅνμοστος τε ἔχονται καὶ χαρακτῆρος ἰδίου; ὅσθ’, ὅταν παράχωμαι δείγματα ἐκάστης καὶ μαρτυρίᾳ φέρω, λέξεις τίνας παρατίθεσι τῶν χρησιμένων αὐτοῖς ποιητῶν τέ καὶ συγγραφέων, μηδεὶς χυκοφαντεῖτο τὰς ἐπιπλοκὰς καὶ τὰς κατὰ μόρια ποιότητας αὐτῶν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ πλεονάζον ἑκατόν τῶν παραλαμβανομένων σκοπεῖτω, τεκμαρόμενος, εἰ πολλαχῇ τοιοῦτον ἐστὶ τὸ δεικνύμενον, οὐκ εἰ ἀπανταχῇ.

For since none of the original elements of which the natural world is composed (earth, water, air, and fire) is to be found in its pure form, but each substance contains a portion of all four and is named according to that element in it which is

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\(^{115}\) *Dem.* 37 (trans. S. Usher).

dominant, what wonder is it that the three methods of composition have no individual existence independently of one another, but are identified in accordance with their prevalent qualities? Thus, when I give examples and illustrations of each, and append passages from those poets and prose writers who use them, let nobody object that their styles are complex and differ in matters of detail, but let him judge each example by its predominant feature, and decide whether this feature is generally, not whether it is universally present.

In the analogy, the four elements correspond (somewhat incongruously) to the *tria genera dicendi*; Dionysius’ point is that just as none of the elements exist in a pure state in nature but instead all exist in different ratios in natural phenomena, so too does each literary work (= natural phenomenon) contain an admixture of the *tria genera dicendi* (= *stoicheia* or *elementa*). It is an open question whether this analogy is Dionysius’ invention, but, in any case, the analogy is not a surprising one, in light of the popularity of the four-element theory as a theoretical apparatus in ancient thought. Since my chief concern is the poetry of Ovid, I should note that Dionysius not only lived during the Augustan period, but that he lived and taught rhetoric in Rome. This makes it possible that the analogy between the elements and literary style was part of critical discourse in Rome during the Augustan period.

This has to remain speculative, but what I can say more confidently is that much of the literary-critical vocabulary and imagery that Latin poets took over and adapted from the Greek literary tradition (and especially the “Alexandrian” poets and scholars) predisposed itself to a comparison with element theory. Callimachus’ *Hymn to Apollo* is

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117 See Ross (1986) 73-4: “It is the elements and qualities that unite the various areas of inquiry and knowledge, supplying the ‘grand unifying theory’ to ancient science, by supplying the philosophical principle (ὑπόθεσις) that made it possible to explain diverse phenomena in similar ways, thereby relating them.”

118 Dionysius lived in Rome from c. 30/29 to c. 8/7 B.C. See DNP s.v. Dionysios [18].
one famous example of the way that Greek poetic discourse used “element metaphors”

(105-12):

ὁ Φθόνος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπ’ οὐδατα λάθριος εἶπεν. 105
"οὐκ ἄγαμαι τὸν ἂσιδὸν ὡς σωθ’ ὡσα πόντος ἀείδει." τὸν Φθόνον ὁπόλλοιον ποδὶ τ’ ἠλασεν ὡδὲ τ’ ἐειπεν·
"Ἀσσυρίου ποταμίῳ μέγας ρόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλὰ λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ’ ἕδατι συρρεῖστον ἐλκεί.
Δὴ ὅ’ οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὀδὸρ φορέουσι μέλισσαι, 110 ἄλλ’ ἤτις καθαρὴ τε καὶ ἀράπας ἀνέρπει πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβάς ἀκρον ἄωτον."

Envy whispered into the ear of Apollo: “I have no admiration for the poet who does not sing as great as the sea.” Apollo gave Envy a kick and spoke as follows: “The current of the Assyrian river is great, but it drags along a great amount of the filth and rubbish of earth in its water. Bees do not bring water to Demeter from just anywhere, but from the small trickle that issues from the holy spring pure and unsullied, the finest essence.

Ahuvia Kahane has felicitously described the use of the elements in this passage: “These famous lines present an argument by means of water and mud.”119 Although there is much debate over the interpretation of these verses, the general consensus is that πόντος (106) represents “grand and pure” Homeric epic, the source of all subsequent poetry, as Ocean traditionally was the source of all waters.120 The Assyrian river, muddied by the filth of γῆ or “earth,” is the poetry of contemporary, Homericizing epicists and the trickling, pure spring, of course, is Callimachus’ poetry.121 Kahane, moreover, argues that Callimachus’ contemporary Apollonius uses similar literary-critical metaphors involving water and earth, which were intended to be recognized by the “interpretive community”

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119 Kahane (1994) 121.
121 Kahane (1994) 121. Kahane (ibid.) 121-2, n.1 says that “Callimachus’ interest in rivers was, of course, very considerable: we have every reason to assume that water imagery is a significant component of his aesthetic perspective.”
of Alexandrian readers. It is likely, therefore, that the poetics of water and earth were a recognized part of Hellenistic literary-critical discourse. The widespread adoption of Callimachus’ image of the pure spring by Latin poets suffices to show how ingrained in Latin literary-critical discourse this passage (and its element metaphors) became.

A second traditional feature of literary-critical and poetic discourse that encourages a comparison between the elements of natural philosophy and the “elements” of poetry is the metaphor of the poem as cosmos, which is attested as early as Democritus, who supposedly said the following of Homer (Diels-Kranz 68 B21):

'Ὅμηρος φύσεως λαχών θεαξούσης ἐπέων κόσμον ἑτεκτήνατο παντοίων'. Homer, Democritus says, built a *kosmos* out of all kinds of words. In fact, the semantics of the Greek word *kosmos* encourages the analogy between poetry and the universe, since the word *kosmos* in its earliest attestations in the Homeric poems primarily has the sense of an aesthetically pleasing order. As M.R. Wright points out, this extended to poetry as well: “A song or story with the parts well arranged was also a *kosmos*.” *Kosmos*, then, was only subsequently applied to “the grand structure of earth, sea and the sky above,” reportedly by Pythagoras (Aetius 2.1.1): “He was the first to call the sum of the whole by the name of *kosmos*, because of the order which it displayed.” Pythagoreanism put a finer point on the analogy between aesthetic or artistic order and the universe in the form

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122 Ibid. 132.
123 Cf. the comments of Krevans (2002) 175 on paradoxography and Hellenistic poetics: “Marvels are the natural equivalents of the bizarre rituals and odd place-names of aetiology and often play into the stylistic preoccupations of the Alexandrians with their emphasis on extremes of size (very large or small items in nature) and on the mixing of opposites (fire and water) (emphasis mine).”
124 See, for example, Heyworth (1994) 65-6, esp. n. 44 with bibliography.
126 Ibid. Trans. Wright.
of the “music of the spheres,” which made the revolutions of the heavenly bodies a
cosmic poetry. Therefore the metaphorical relationship between cosmos and poetry
runs both ways, poetry sometimes serving as the tenor and cosmos as the vehicle, as we
saw in Dionysius, or conversely, the cosmos is the tenor and poetry the vehicle, as in the
Pythagorean “music of the spheres.”

The ambiguity of the Latin word *elementum* also encourages this comparison,
since it can refer both to one of the four elements from Greek natural philosophy (or
some other primary material such as the Epicurean atom) and “a letter of the alphabet” or
(in plural form) “the basic principles of an art.” Easily the most famous exploitation of
this double meaning appears in the *DRN*, in an analogy between Epicurean atoms and
letters of the alphabet that is repeated five times in the first two books of the poem. The
following is the second appearance of the simile, where Lucretius compares the diversity
of words that are produced by simply changing the position of common letters to the
diversity of the natural world that results from a similar rearrangement of atoms (1.820-9):

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namque eadem caelum mare terras flumina solem
constituunt, eadem fruges arbusta animantis,
verum aliis aliquo modo commixa moventur.
quum etiam passim nostris in versibus ipsis
multa *elementa* vides multis communia verbis,
cum tamen inter se versus ac verba necessest
confiteare et re et sonitu distare sonanti.
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127 For a description of the Pythagorean music of the spheres in Latin literature see the Dream of Scipio in Cicero’s *De Republica*. On the music of the spheres more generally see Kahn (2001) index s.v. “music of the spheres.”

128 See *OLD* s.v. *elementum*.

129 As Holmes (2005) 528, n. 4 observes, this double meaning goes back to the Greek *stoicheion*, which meant both “first element” and a letter of the alphabet. For bibliography on this, as well as on the double meaning of *elementum*, see Holmes ibid. See Oberhelman and Armstrong (1995) on Horace’s use of the Lucretian analogy.
tantum *elementa* queunt permutato ordine solo.

at rerum quae sunt primordia, plura adhibere
possunt unde queant variae res quaeque creari.

For the same constitute the sky, sea, earth, rivers, sun, the same crops, trees, animals, but only when they are mixed together and moved with different things in different ways. Indeed, even throughout these verses of mine you see many letters common to many words, although you nevertheless must admit that among themselves the verses and words are distinct both in meaning and sound. Of so much are the letters capable with only a change in order. But the first beginnings of things can bring more by which the variety of nature can be created.

There is disagreement among commentators on Lucretius as to how far to take this statement and the others like it, that is, whether it is simply an illustrative analogy or instead a statement of how “the poem participates in the same order of reality as the simulacra it produces.”\(^{130}\) In either case, it is an early, prominent example in Latin poetry of the trope of the poem as cosmos which compares the components of a poem to the material components of the cosmos, in this case the letters that are the component parts of words, although it is easy to see that this is the same type of figure used by Dionysius in his comparison of elements and styles. The Lucretian simile is important for another, related reason. Although it compares atoms and letters of the alphabet, it looks back to a simile of Empedocles in which he compares the plenitude of mimetic forms that a painter is able to produce by combining different “pigments” (φάρμακα) to the forms themselves in nature that are produced by the mixture of the four roots or elements (fr. 27/23):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ὁς δ` ὀπόταν γραφέες ἀναθήματα ποικίλλωσιν,}
\text{ἀνέρες ἄμφι τέχνης ὑπὸ μῆτις εὖ δεδαώτε·}
\text{ὅτι τ` ἔπει ὀν μάρψει πολύρχος φάρμακα χερσίν,}
\text{ἀρμονιή μίζαντε τὰ μὲν πλέω, ἄλλα δ` ἐλάσσω,}
\text{ἐκ τῶν εἰδεα πᾶσιν ἄλγικα πορσύνουσι,}
\text{δένδρεα τε κτίζοντε καὶ ἄνερας ἥδε γυναικὰς.}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{130}\) Holmes (2005) 532; and see ibid. 527-33 for an overview of the scholarship on this question. For the view that it is an illustrative analogy see Volk (2002) 103-4.
As when painters embellish votive offerings with many colors, men well-skilled in their art because of cunning, and when these take hold of many-colored pigments, mixing in harmony some more, others less, from these they prepare forms resembling everything, creating trees and men and women, and beasts and birds and water-nourished fish, and the long-aged gods best in honors. Thus let deception not convince you that the source of mortals, as many as have become clear – unspeakable – is anything else, but know these things clearly, since you have heard the story from a god.

Simplicius, our source for the fragment, also gives the valuable information that this simile illustrated the doctrine contained in fr. 26/21, which is a restatement that strife separates the elements and love blends them, and that when both love and strife are active, as Simplicius explains (Phys. 33.4), zoogony or the birth of θνητά results. It is clear not only from Simplicius’ testimony that the simile is meant to illustrate this, but also from the fact that Empedocles virtually repeats his description of the zoogony (26/21.10-12) in his description of the various forms that the two painters can represent by combining different pigments (27/23.6-8). As Simon Trépanier writes “The simile’s main purpose is to render plausible…the idea that the mixture of a limited number of elements, in varying ratios, can produce the countless variety of mortal creatures.”131 This is remarkably similar to Lucretius’ use of the comparison. Trépanier goes on to suggest that the simile may not only contain a correspondence between the painters’ pigments and the roots or elements, but that the “two craftsmen” or painters, described in the dual, who mix the pigments in harmony, are “…likely intended to designate the pair of Love

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and Strife…. As such, the lines even seem to intimate a distinction between material and formal causes, with the elements providing the matter which is given shape by the two painters.”

Trépanier puts this forward rather cautiously, but it seems to me almost certainly right, especially since love, at least, in the guise of Aphrodite is represented in several other fragments as a demiurgic figure who blends together the roots to form mortal things. I will have much more to say about love and strife in the next chapter, but for now I can simply observe that Empedocles seems to elaborate the trope of the cosmos as a work of art to include not only the idea that elements are comparable to the raw materials of artists, but that the forces of love and strife are comparable to the artists themselves.

Returning to Lucretius’ imitation of Empedocles, we can see that it is quite sophisticated. In fr. 26/21, which the simile of fr. 27/23 is supposed to illuminate, Empedocles lists the world-bodies and their qualities, in each of which is represented an element “not in its pure state, but as the predominant presence behind familiar natural phenomena, and giving each body its well-known properties” (fr. 26/21.3-6).

ηέλιον μεν λαμπρόν όραν καὶ θερμόν ἀπάντη,
ἀμβροτα δ’ ὀσσ’ εἴδει τε καὶ ἄργετι δεύεται ἀνῆ,
ὀμβρον δ’ ἐν πάσι δνοφόντα τε ῥηγαλέον τε·
ἐκ δ’ αἰής προρέουσι θελυμνά τε καὶ στερεωπά.

the sun which is brilliant to see and hot in every respect, and the immortals as many as are covered in heat and shining sunlight, and rain in everything dark and cold; and from the earth flows forth things heavy and solid.

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132 Ibid. 186.
133 See fr. 74.71, 76/73, 84/75, 100/86, 101/87, 102/95.
134 Aphrodite’s status as both the cause of generation in Empedocles, as well as the suggestion here that Love is a divine craftsman working with the four elements, is reflected in the dual role of Venus in Lucretius, as the cause of procreation in nature and the source of lepos in Lucretius’ verse.
In the atoms/letters analogy, Lucretius similarly uses natural phenomena as an example of the diversity of the natural world produced by combinations of atoms (1.820-4)

namque eadem caelum mare terras flumina solem
constituunt, eadem fruges arbusta animantis,
verum aliis alioque modo commixta moventur.
quin etiam passim nostris in versibus ipsis
multa elementa vides multis communia verbis,

... For the same constitute the sky, sea, earth, rivers, sun, the same crops, trees, animals, but only when they are mixed together and moved with different things in different ways. Indeed, even throughout these verses of mine you see many letters common to many words...

As others have suggested, Lucretius is not only referring to the four Empedoclean elements in line 820 (caelum = air, mare, flumina = water, terras = earth, solem = fire), but doing so in the context of a simile (atoms/letters) that alludes to Empedocles’ own simile comparing roots/elements to the pigments used by painters.\(^{136}\) Indeed, the Empedoclean elemental phenomena (caelum mare terras flumina solem, 820) occupy essentially the same position in Lucretius’ argument as they do in that of Empedocles; and in fact the phenomena are of the same material order in both, that is, they are combinations of the first principles. But whereas in Empedocles these visible phenomena are reliable proof of the existence of the four roots, each of which predominates in one or another of the phenomena, for Lucretius these same phenomena are the result of combinations of atoms; and in this regard the visible world is deceptive, since one might

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\(^{136}\) Precedents for the identification between caelum and air in Lucretius are found both in the proem and in the praise of Empedocles in book 1, an identification that is ultimately based on Empedocles’ own use of “sky” (οὐρανός) for his element air. See Sedley (1998) 15 and 17. See Bailey (1947) ad DRN 1.820-1 on the identification of the Empedoclean elements and Garani (2007) 14 on lines 820-9 as an allusion to Empedocles’ painter simile.
presume simply by looking at them that the sun is made of fire, rain of water and so forth. Lucretius, however, does use a simile that relies on vision in order to prove his point about what is not visible, namely the atoms that constitute the phenomenal world, although the analogy prompts us to look no farther than the page, in which myriad words are made up of a finite number of letters (elementa) in different combinations. Therefore elementa, which Lucretius was surely aware could also refer to the four Empedoclean elements, do make up caelum, mare, terra, etc., but not in the way that Empedocles had proposed. Lucretius, then, draws a number of elements, as it were, from Empedocles — the macroscopic analysis of the world into the four elements, the simile comparing first principles to artistic materials (pigments for Empedocles, letters for Lucretius) — partly in order to refute an Empedoclean argument. This means that Lucretius’ exploitation of the double meaning of elementum is connected to Empedocles’ own use of the trope of the cosmos as a work of art. Empedocles’ simile enabled later poets and thinkers to use the elements in diverse ways as a metaphor for poetry (or for art). It is because of this established tradition in which the material components of the natural world are analogous to the materials of art and the universe itself analogous to a work of art, that Ovid need not offer any statement as explicit as that of Lucretius in order to expect the reader to recognize his own use of the trope.

Still, there are good indications that Ovidian poetics can be described in a manner similar to Philip Hardie’s description of Lucretian poetics:

Lucretian poetics point to an identification of the natural creation and the verbal artifact: Venus presides over generation in the natural world; she is also the source
of the *lepos* of Lucretius’ verse. The Epicurean universe is constructed of building-blocks analogous to the *elementa* of the words that describe it.\(^\text{137}\)

If we glance ahead to a passage in book 4 of the *Fasti* that I will discuss in more detail later, we can see a similar identification of natural creation (by Venus) and the verbal artifact (in Ovid’s case this is elegiac poetry). It comes from a passage in praise of Venus that adapts Lucretius’ own hymn to Venus in the proem to *DRN* I. In the *Fasti* passage, Venus, as in the *DRN*, is a source of natural creation (4.93-100):

\[
iuraque dat caelo, terrae, natalibus undis,
perque suos initus continet omne genus.
illa deos omnes (longum est numerare) creavit, 95
illa satis causas arboribusque dedit,
illa rudes animos hominum contraxit in unum,
et docuit iungi cum pare quemque sua.
quad genus omne creat volucrum, nisi blanda voluptas?
nec coeant pecudes, si levis absit amor.
\]

She gives laws to the heavens, the earth, her natal waters and through here every race has its beginning. She has created all the gods (it is long to count them), is the origin of seeds and trees, has brought the savage minds of mankind together into one, and has taught each one to be joined with his mate. What creates the entire race of birds, unless soothing pleasure? Nor would the herds reproduce, if the light touch of love were absent.

Her power of creation, however, extends not only over nature, but over the realm of art, as well, notably elegiac poetry (4.109-14):

\[
primus amans carmen vigilatum nocte negata
dicitur ad clausas concinuisse fores, 110
eloquiumque fuit duram exorare puellam,
proque sua causa quisque disertus erat.
mille per hanc artes motae; studioque placendi,
quae latuere prius, multa reperta ferunt.
\]

They say that a lover was the first to have sung a vigilant song at the closed doors of his mistress, when the night was denied to him, and it was eloquence to persuade a harsh mistress; each man was a pleader on behalf of his own case. A thousand

\(^{137}\) Hardie (1985b) 86.
arts have been created by her; from the desire to please many discoveries come to light which lay hidden before.

What Hardie observes about Lucretian poetics, namely that Venus both presides over natural creation and is the source of *lepos* in Lucretius’ verse, is true to an even greater extent in this passage, since Venus, the force (*vis*, 105) responsible for generation in nature, is also the impulse for myriad arts (*mille per hanc* [sc. Venus] *artes motae*, 4.113), specifically elegiac poetry, as can be seen from Ovid’s inclusion of several of the most recognizable motifs of Roman erotic elegy, the *paraclausithyron* and the *dura puella*. That Ovid is offering an aetiology for erotic elegy is clear from the expression *primus amans*, which, juxtaposed with *carmen*, gives us the impression of the first love song; it also recalls another scene of erotic origins from the *Metamorphoses*, the programmatic *primus amor Phoebi* told at *Met.* 1.452-552, the first erotic tale of the poem. As Nicoll has shown, the exchange between Apollo and Cupid that leads to the *primus amor* of the *Metamorphoses* is modeled on Ovid’s depiction of his own origin as an elegiac poet in *Amores* 1.1. What is shared by the *primus amor* in the *Metamorphoses* and the *primus amans* in the *Fasti* is more, however, than simply this representation of an original scene of erotic poetry. In addition to this, both scenes are juxtaposed with and therefore implicitly compared to natural creation. We have already seen how this is the case in the *Fasti*, in which Venus is the impulse behind both natural creation and erotic poetry. In the *Metamorphoses*, the introduction of the first amatory tale in the *Metamorphoses* is preceded by the physical regeneration of the world after the cataclysmic flood through the *discors concordia* of the elements water and fire. Wheeler

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138 Nicoll (1980).
has observed that these elements bleed into the ensuing erotic narratives and therefore supply, in one sense, the primary materials for the construction of these narratives, as they had been the primary materials for the regeneration of the world: “The discors concordia of fire and water is transmuted into scenes of river nymphs pursued by gods burning with love. The association between mythological figures and the elements comes to a climax when Phaethon…seeks to prove his divine descent by driving his father’s chariot, the sun, across the sky (1.747-2.400).”\(^{139}\)

Returning to the first erotic tale of the poem, one can say that two origin stories or aetia (the regeneration of the world and the primus amor Phoebi) are set side by side; this encourages a comparison between them.\(^ {140}\) We will have more to say about this specific episode later. Now, however, it is necessary to explore in more detail how this kind of comparison between nature and art (which I have already sketched in Greek and Latin literature before Ovid) is highlighted at the beginnings of both the Metamorphoses and Fasti, a fact that helps to justify the importance I am attaching to natural philosophical concepts like the elements in the interpretation of the Fasti.

I will consider the Metamorphoses before moving on to the Fasti. In making the argument that both the Ars Amatoria and the Metamorphoses have art as their true subject, Joseph Solodow has said the following of the Metamorphoses:

A familiar pun in the Metamorphoses provides an early clue to the notion of art prevailing there: Ovid describes the primeval chaos of the universe as pondus iners (Met. 1.8), “an inartistic (or sluggish) mass”, which suggests that as its form becomes recognizable and it is occupied increasingly by animals and plants whose


\(^{140}\) Among other things, it suggests that the elementa or “first principles” of elegy are fire and water, which is appropriate since a philosophical interpretation of the goddess Venus attested in Varro (LL 5.61) explains Venus as the force that joins fire and water together in the act of generation.
names and characteristics are known to us, the world of the *Metamorphoses* evolves in the direction of greater artfulness; *art and the activity of the poem advance together* (emphasis mine).\(^{141}\)

Solodow’s insight is sharpened by Wheeler in his argument that the cosmogony in the *Metamorphoses* is modeled at least in part on the Homeric Shield of Achilles, which, as Wheeler notes, ancient critics interpreted as a philosophical allegory for the creation of the universe by a divine demiurge.\(^{142}\) Wheeler observes the artistic connotations of several of Ovid’s descriptions of chaos, first *rudis indigestaque moles* (1.7), which, according to Wheeler, “hints that chaos is a raw material that awaits refinement in the hands of an artist” and then *nec quicquam nisi pondus iners* (1.8), in which, like Solodow, Wheeler observes Ovid’s pun on *iners*, “meaning both sluggish and lacking art.”\(^{143}\) Wheeler adds to Solodow’s insight about *iners pondus*, however, by noticing that it is taken from the one poem of Ovid’s that is explicitly about art, the *Ars Amatoria*, in which the poet describes the raw stone of the sculptor Myron as a *pondus iners* (3.219-20):

\[
\text{quae nunc nomen habent operosi signa Myronis,} \\
\text{*pondus iners* quondam duraque mass fuit.}
\]

The statues which now bear the signature of the laborious Myron were once an inartistic weight and a rough mass.

Therefore, in Wheeler’s words, “What distinguishes chaos from cosmos…is the ameliorating influence of art.”\(^{144}\) If we pursue this analogy in which the the world is comparable to a work of art or, in Solodow’s words, “art and the activity of the poem

\(^{141}\) Solodow (1977) 126.  
\(^{142}\) Wheeler (1995a).  
\(^{143}\) Ibid. 105  
\(^{144}\) Ibid.
advance together” further, then the material constituents of the universe are comparable to or able to represent, the raw materials of the work of art. As we can see in the description of chaos, its raw materials are the elements of Greek natural philosophy. See especially Met. 1.15-20, in which both the elements and their qualities are represented, although not in any schematic way, as we would expect in a description of chaos:

\[
\text{utque erat et tellus illic et pontus et aer,}
\text{sic erat instabilis tellus, innabilis unda,}
\text{lucis egens aer; nulli sua forma manebat}
\text{obstabatque aliis aliud, quia corpore in uno}
\text{frigida pugnabant calidis, umentia siccis,}
\text{mollia cum duris, sine pondere habentia pondus.}
\]

Although there was land in that time and sea and air, the land was unstable and the sea unswimmable, while the air lacked light; nothing was holding its shape and everything was at odds, since cold elements were warring with hot, wet with dry, soft with hard, those having weight with the weightless elements.

These raw materials are eventually defined by the demiurge, a process that culminates, as we saw, in Ovid’s use of the most basic terms for the elements (1.52-3). This identification of the elements and the raw materials of the poem encourages us to see subsequent appearances of the elements in the poem as a possible means of talking about poetry. This does not mean that all elemental discourse in the poem is merely a coded discussion of poetry, but it alerts readers to the possibility of a poetic significance for the elements in addition to other meanings that may be in play.

While this analogy between the physical world and the poem is generally recognized by scholars of the Metamorphoses, this has not been the case for the Fasti, even though it too prominently features a philosophizing cosmogony in the form of an
inset narrative told to the poet by the god Janus, his first and in many ways, programmatic, interlocutor. Janus’ cosmogony serves a number of important functions in the Fasti, not the least of which is that Janus’ identification of himself as Chaos and narration of cosmogony (1.103-10) alludes to the Metamorphoses, which begins with the transformation from chaos to cosmos. There are not, however, any strong indications in Janus’ cosmogony of an analogy between the universe and a work of art. Indeed, Wheeler has contrasted what he calls the “evolutionary” cosmogony of the Fasti to the “creationist” cosmogony in the Metamorphoses in order to demonstrate that the cosmogony of the Metamorphoses is unusual in comparison to other poetic models of cosmogony. But even if it were the case that the cosmogony of the Fasti had artistic connotations, we could not, on this basis alone, apply to the Fasti Solodow’s observation about the Metamorphoses that “art and the activity of the poem advance together” since the activity of the poem is not a song ab origine mundi (1.3), but one that unfolds ab origine anni. If anything, the unfolding of the year should be compared to a work of art. This turns out, in fact, to be the case. The poet’s interrogation of Janus continues after the cosmogony and he asks the god why legal cases are tried on the first day of the year.

Janus offers an interesting explanation (1.165-70):

\[
\text{post ea mirabar, cur non sine litibus esset prima dies. “causam percipe” Ianus ait. “tempora commisi nascentia rebus agendis, totus ab auspicio ne foret annus iners. quisque suas artes ob idem delibat agendo nec plus quam solitum testificatur opus.”}
\]

Next I was curious as to why cases are heard on the Kalends. “Hear the reason,” Janus said. I’ve committed the beginnig of the year to business in order to avoid the

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auspice of an idle year. For the same reason each man offers a taste of his business and does no more than give evidence of his accustomed work.

Janus explains that he has "assigned the beginning of the year to business in order that, from the auspice, the entire year not be iners (167-8)." Since the adjective iners etymologically means in-ars or "without art or craft," as seen in Solodow’s and Wheeler’s discussion of the Metamorphoses, the phrase annus iners means "a year without ars." Ovid appears to gloss the etymology of iners in the next verse, 169: Janus explains that "for the same reason [i.e. to guard against the auspice of an annus iners] each man makes a token start of his own particular art (artes, 169). Legal cases, singled out among these artes in the poet's question, creates an “artful” year. This suggests that art and the activity of the poem, the unfolding of the Roman annus, proceed together.

There is still a third element in this equation, however. This passage looks to two other beginnings, the book 1 cosmogonies both of its own Fasti and the Metamorphoses. The last occurrence of the word lis in the poem had been in the cosmogony, where it was the impulse behind the separation of the mass of chaos and the formation of cosmic order (ut semel haec [sc. massa] secessit lite suarum, 1.107), a function, not coincidentally, opposed to that of lis or strife in the cosmogony of the Metamorphoses (1.21). The plural lites plays much the same role in the year as the singular lis had in Janus’ cosmogony: lites help to create an artful year just as the cosmic principle of lis had led to the separation of the elements and cosmic order. In fact, it may not only be lites that has a cosmological connotation: since the function of lites in the year has already recalled the similar function of lis in the Fasti cosmogony and through this, by means of a double allusion, the occurrence of lis in the Metamorphoses cosmogony, it is tempting to see an
echo of *iners pondus*, one of Ovid’s descriptions of chaos in the *Metamorphoses*, in the phrase *iners annus*. As we saw, the phrase *iners pondus* suggests that the demiurge in the *Metamorphoses* transforms the raw material of chaos in much the same way that a sculptor shapes his raw material into a statue. Similarly, the allusion to *pondus iners* in *annus iners* on the Kalends of January suggests that the year too requires the hand of an artist in order to take shape and, by the same token, that Janus is a model for this kind of artist.

This network of resonances accomplishes several things. It suggests that the year, whose beginning, January 1st, is compared to Janus’ cosmogony, operates according to the principles of natural philosophy, specifically the principles of Empedoclean cosmology, since it is one of the primary models for Janus’ cosmogony. In the *Fasti* this Empedoclean framework for the calendar is borne out not least by the position of Mars and Venus, allegorical representations of Empedoclean strife and love, in the central two books (3 and 4) of the six book poem as the presiding deities of March (Mars) and April (Venus). More importantly for our purposes in this section, however, is that this parallelism between the beginning of the calendar and Janus’ cosmogony establishes the four-element theory as an important component of Ovid’s representation of the year; we know what a prominent feature the four elements are in Janus’ cosmogony. Nor should

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146 In his letter to Augustus written from exile Ovid famously claims that he has written twelve books of *Fasti* (*Tr*. 2.459). However, as John Miller (2002) 168 has recently put it, “most now agree that he is overstating the achievement for apologetic purposes.” Additionally, as Miller points out, “strong intratextual links between Books 1 and 6 (among other things) suggest to some that Ovid finally designed the calendrical fragment which we possess as an integrated work.” Cf. Newlands (1995) 124-45 and Holzberg (1995) 353-62. See also Barchiesi (1997b) on the closural gestures in *Fasti* 6. I too am working under the assumption that the extant poem was designed as an “integrated work.” My observations in the second half of the dissertation on the architecture of the poem will contribute to this idea.
this come as a surprise in a poem that progresses through the seasons.\textsuperscript{147} Each season had various elemental and qualitative associations in ancient science as Ross has shown in his analysis of the \textit{Georgics}.\textsuperscript{148} I refer the reader to Ross’ overview of the elements and qualities and their tradition and will only summarize a few of his most important points.

Two sets of oppositions, the elements and the qualities, arose at the beginnings of Greek science and continued to remain important in various forms, until more or less crystallizing near the end of the 5\textsuperscript{th} century in their traditional groupings of four: the elements (earth, air, fire, water) and qualities (hot, cold, wet, dry).\textsuperscript{149} The four seasons (winter, spring, summer, fall) have their own associations with these elements and qualities: in general, winter (water, cold/wet), spring (water/fire, wet/warm), summer (fire, hot/dry) and fall (fire/water, dry/cold).\textsuperscript{150} Ross also observes the idea, exhibited, in particular, in three Hippocratic treatises (\textit{Airs, Waters, and Places}, \textit{Nature of Man}, \textit{Ancient Medicine}), that “the world and everything in it are related intimately: plants, animals, and men are equally the product of, and are affected by, landscape and climate, which in turn are affected by seasons and larger geographical or even cosmological considerations.”\textsuperscript{151} The “cosmological considerations” in large part means the elements, which form the foundation of the universe and make possible the various attempts at a

\textsuperscript{147} The importance of the seasons to the poem may be indicated in its opening word, \textit{tempora}. See Ahl (1985) 291 on \textit{Fasti} 1.1: “His song contains the seasons.” On \textit{tempora} as an alternate title for the \textit{Fasti} see Barchiesi (1991) 6. Ovid alludes to the convention of referring to entire works by their opening words in \textit{Am}. 1.15, a catalogue of authors and their works, when he includes in the same line \textit{Tityrus} and \textit{arma}, the opening words, respectively, of the \textit{Eclogues} and the \textit{Aeneid} (1.15.25): \textit{Tityrus et fruges Aeneiaque arma legentur}.

\textsuperscript{148} Ross (1987) 54-74.

\textsuperscript{149} Ross (1987) 73. These groupings of four elements and qualities received the sanction of Aristotle, most notably.

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid. 63

\textsuperscript{151} Ibid. 65
unified system of knowledge. Maybe Ross’ most important point is the flexible nature of the elements and qualities, “being capable of a variety of arrangements and correlations,” and it is this that enabled their survival for such a long time in popular thought.\textsuperscript{152} This flexibility also made the elements good materials for poetic adaptation.

1.4 Elements of Power

I focused in the last section on the trope of the universe as a work of art (and vice versa) and how Ovid’s use of this trope makes the elements analogous to the materials of poetic composition. This section, however, introduces another common trope, that of the comparison between the universe and Rome, in order to suggest how physics or natural philosophy (the study of the universe) and more specifically the elements are implicated in the representation of power in the \textit{Fasti}. One of the best ways of tracing this comparison is through the use of the punning apposition \textit{urbs/orbis}. As Nicolet has observed, “the theme of the contrasted apposition \textit{urbs/orbis} appears precisely at the very end of the Republican period (Cicero, \textit{Cat}. 4.11), in Nepos, and then in the Augustan writers and poets, such as Propertius (3.11.57) and especially Ovid” (emphasis mine).\textsuperscript{153} Nicolet’s chief concern is how Rome’s military expansion in the Late Republican and early Imperial periods was represented in literature and material culture as a domination of the \textit{orbis terrarum} or the terrestrial globe. Still, he notes the tendency in the ancient world for associating the terrestrial and celestial globes.\textsuperscript{154} In the context of discussing

\textsuperscript{152} Ibid. 74.
\textsuperscript{153} Nicolet (1991) 111. See also Ibid. 133, where Nicolet says that Cornelius Nepos “outlined for the first time a \textit{iunctura} that would become famous, but only in the Augustan period”: \textit{in ea urbe in qua domicilium orbis terrarum esset imperii} (\textit{Att}. 3.3).
\textsuperscript{154} For more on the concentric character and assimilation of the celestial and terrestrial spheres see Nicolet (1991) 37, n. 30 with bibliography.
the practical difficulty of distinguishing between the representation of these two globes on Roman coins, Nicolet writes that “In fact the distinction is artificial from the point of view of the ancients: for them the two spheres were concentric and naturally associated with each other.”¹⁵⁵ A little later Nicolet further explains the grounds for the conceptual association of the two spheres:¹⁵⁶

…the globe is less the sign of the concrete domination of space easily located on the surface of the earth than of a sovereignty the more recognizable for being general and “cosmic,” even more than geographic. No empire, no universal monarch could in antiquity reasonably wish to dominate the entire terrestrial sphere. Three-quarters of it remained literally unattainable in ancient cosmogony, out of reach of all human enterprise. A universal domination could not claim more than one known oikoumene. Nevertheless, they could claim to fit in the order of cosmic destiny — either they were under the protection of or they held covenant with the gods, or were in some way divine. They become therefore an element, or the guarantee, of world order.

How this sympathy between the cosmic and civic orders manifests itself in Vergil’s Aeneid is the subject of Hardie’s Virgil’s Aeneid: Cosmos and Imperium. He, like Nicolet, observes that the notion of the empire (often metonymically represented by the city) as coterminous with the orbis terrarum, much less the cosmos as a whole, has no basis in empirical reality, but “points to a far more widespread mythical or mystical equation of the city with the universe,” a universalism that was “reinforced…above all by the Stoic notion of the city of the universe, readily available to the Roman imperialist as a mystifying pretext.”¹⁵⁷ Hardie further recognizes that the conceptual association of the celestial and terrestrial spheres is extended to the semantic field of orbis, so that the pun urbs/orbis does not simply connote an equivalency between the city and the terrestrial

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.  
sphere, but between the city and the universe, as well. He makes this clear by recognizing that the pairing *urbs/orbis* can be substituted for his titular *cosmos* and *imperium*: “Hitherto I have operated with the pair of terms *cosmos* and *imperium*; when the empire is regarded as the extension of the walled city, the complementary pair of terms *urbs* and *orbis* comes naturally to mind.”158 Nor does calling it simply a pun do it justice, since the assonance of the two “was made the basis of a serious etymology by the Roman philologist,” and etymology in antiquity was often thought to reveal the nature not only of words, but also of things.159

As was suggested by Nicolet, the pairing *urbs/orbis* is especially well-represented in the poetry of Ovid. In the epilogue to *Cosmos and Imperium* Hardie looks both backwards and forwards from his subject, Vergil, to the treatment of the themes of his book in other Roman poets. He too singles out Ovid, who, he says, apart from Virgil, is the best source for the cosmic vision of empire. Hardie goes on to say that “Ovid’s greater explicitness and succinctness often makes it possible to use him as a kind of commentary on what in Virgil is only hinted at.”160 This seems to be an accurate assessment of Ovid’s use of the *urbs/orbis* apposition, which, again, should be seen as not only the comparison of the terrestrial globe and the city (or empire), but also by extension as the comparison of the universe and city. Its first occurrence in Ovid’s poetry is in book 1 of the *Ars Amatoria*, in a context describing the *naumachia* put on by Augustus in 2 B.C. This recreated the Battle of Salamis from the Persian Wars and

158 Ibid.
159 Stoic use of etymology was especially influential in this regard.
formed part of the festivities at Augustus’ dedication of the temple of Mars Ultor.\textsuperscript{161}

The Battle of Salamis was carefully chosen for its symbolic resonance, since it served, among other things, as a prelude to Gaius Caesar’s eastern campaign.\textsuperscript{162} In as much as Rome’s military expansion “could be understood as a somehow inevitable spatial identification of the urban model with its cosmic archetype,”\textsuperscript{163} Ovid’s equation of the urbs and orbis in this context is apt (\textit{Ars} 1.173-4):

\begin{quote}
\textit{nempe ab utroque mari iuvenes, ab utroque puellae venere, atque ingens orbis in Urbe fuit.}
\end{quote}

To be sure, boys and girls came from either sea and the great world was in our city. Although the spatial identification of the city and the universe is muted here, it receives clear expression in a passage in book 2 of the \textit{Fasti} (2.683-4):

\begin{quote}
\textit{gentibus est aliis tellus data limite certo: Romanae spatium est \textbf{Urbis et orbis} idem.}
\end{quote}

The land of other races has a fixed boundary. Rome and the world are coextensive.

This statement brings out the spatial aspect implicit in Jupiter’s prophecy in book 1 of the \textit{Aeneid} (1.279): \textit{imperium sine fine dedi}. Moreover, identifications such as this of the city and universe encourage similar identifications of Augustus and Jupiter, one of which had already been made earlier in the same book of the \textit{Fasti} (2.127-38).\textsuperscript{164}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{161} Hollis (1977) \textit{ad Ars Amatoria} 1.171.
\textsuperscript{162} Nicolet (1991) 114.
\textsuperscript{163} Hardie (1986) 365.
\textsuperscript{164} This passage is a good example of how the discourses of poetry and power are intertwined, since in the verses leading up to this passage Ovid questions whether his elegy is up to the task of bearing such a weighty burden as Augustus’ assumption of the title \textit{Pater Patriae} (and its cosmic associations). We should also note the presence of the elements in the passage. \textit{Aether} is clearly the divine element, earth the mortal one, although the path of the etherial sun is used at the end of the passage (136) — perhaps hinting at an identification of Augustus and Helios or Phoebus Apollo — to measure the extent of Augustus’ empire.
\end{footnotesize}
sancte pater patriae, tibi plebs, tibi curia nomen hoc dedit, hoc dedimus nos tibi nomen, eques. res tamen ante dedit: sero quoque vera tulisti nomina, iam priderem tu pater orbis eras. hoc tu per terras, quod in aethere Iuppiter alto, nomen habes: hominum tu pater, ille deum. Romule, concedes: facit hic tua magna tuendo moenia, tu dederas transilienda Remo. te Tatius parvique Cures Caeninaque sensit, hoc duce Romanum est solis utrumque latus; tu breve nescioquid victae telluris habeas, quodcunque est alto sub Iove, Caesar habet.

Sacred father of our country, the people, the senate, we the equestrians have given this name to you. Yet your deeds had already given it: late did you also receive your true title, though for a long time now you have been father of the Universe. You have the name throughout the lands that Jupiter has in the lofty heavens: you are the father of men, he of gods. Romulus, give way: Augustus makes the walls great by his guardianship, you had put up walls to be overleaped by Remus. Tatius, the tiny Cures and Caenina recognized your rule, while under our leader Caesar the land on either side of the Sun is Roman; you had a tiny plot of conquered territory, whereas Caesar possesses whatever is underneath the realm of Jupiter.

Although this formulation maintains a certain distance between Augustus and Jupiter —
the former is the ruler of lands and men, the latter of the heavens (aether, 131) and gods — such a formulation, as Innes observes about Hor. Odes 3.4.5-8, is a “suitable source for compliment to Augustus ἀπὸ τοῦ μείζονος εἰς τὸ ἔλαττον as recommended by rhetorical theory.” As both Hardie and Nicolet suggest, the civic order, here represented by Augustus’ domination of the orbis terrarum (cf. 130-1) can be said to reflect the cosmic order; or, to put it another way, the civic order metonymically represents the cosmic order because it participates in it. In fact, in our passage the qualifying terrarum is detached from orbis, so that, before terrae appears in the next

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165 While the analogical potential of the title is fulfilled in this passage by the explicit comparison between Augustus and Jupiter, the title, simply by itself, as Nicolet (1991) 43 observes, “could, by explicit analogy to the Father of the Gods, suggest a universal terrestrial domination.”

166 Innes (1979) 166.
verse (131), one can read line 130 as “for a long time now you (Augustus) have been a father of the Universe.” This potential identification between Augustus and Jupiter, even though it is suppressed in the subsequent verses, is a strategic one that points to the real fluidity of the similitude, in which the *pater urbis*,\(^\text{167}\) Augustus, can become the *pater orbis*, simply by the substitution of a single letter.\(^\text{168}\)

As we saw in the last section, the trope of the universe as a work of art can be extended to include the elements, the primary materials of the universe, as the raw materials of the poet. This makes it possible for Ovid to use the language of natural philosophy to make statements about his poetry. We should ask, then, whether Ovid’s discourse involving the identification of the universe and the city of Rome opens up a similar possibility, that is, the possibility that the discourse of the state and that of the elements intersect. Let us return to Lucretius, who had offered Ovid a Latin precedent for the use of *elementa* to refer to both the primary materials of the universe (atoms in Lucretius) and the basic components of poetry (in Lucretius’ analogy, letters of the alphabet, although *elementa* can also mean the basic principles of an art such as poetry). Hardie has suggested that the opening of the main section on atomic motion in book 2 of *DRN* “may conceal a polemical comparison of atomic history and Roman history” (2.62-

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\(^{167}\) The expression *pater urbis* is used once in the *Fasti*, of Romulus at 3.71-2 as he addresses his father Mars: *i'am, modo quae fuerant silvae pecorumque recessus, / urbs erat, aeternae cum pater urbis ait.* Manilius also refers to Romulus as *pater urbis* at 4.718, also in the context of his descent from Mars: *Martia Romanis urbis pater induit ora.* Cf. Juvenal 2.128-30, of Mars: *o pater urbis, / unde nefas tantum Latiis pastoribus? unde / haec tetigit, Gradive, tuos urtica nepotes?* Vergil also uses it of Dardanus (*Aen*. 8.134): *Dardanus, Iliacae primus pater urbis et auctor.* Romulus is frequently called *parens urbis*: Prop. 4.10.17, *Ubris virtuisque parens*; Livy 1.16.3, *regem parentemque urbis.*

\(^{168}\) According to Nicolet (1991) 31, the expression *orbis terrarum* begins appearing in Roman political terminology at the beginning of the 1st century B.C., but *orbis*, by itself, only in the Augustan period. Could this be significant, that is, could this detachment of *orbis* from the delimiting *terra* in the Augustan period be intended to make *orbis* connote something more like the “sum of all things” or the universe rather than simply the *oikoumene*?
6): nunc age, quo motu genitalia materiae / corpora res varias gignant genitasque resolvant...expediam. Hardie is working from a suggestion of Fowler’s\(^{169}\) that the use of genitalis is “deliberately anti-providential” since this Ennian coinage had been applied to Romulus’ divine origins in the Annales: Romulus in caelo cum dis genitalibus aevom / degit (Ann. 110-1 Sk.).\(^{170}\) Hardie, moreover, goes on to observe that “Lucretius’ atomic aetiology places the primordia, corpora prima at the start of temporal chains of causality and generation, as in the ‘syllabus’ at 1.55-61,” to which Hardie compares the “aetiological ‘syllabus’, so to speak of the Aeneid, with its talk of origins from first beginnings, leading to the birth and continuing propagation of a race.”\(^{171}\) As often, this modern reading of Vergil seems to have been anticipated by Ovid, who, in Hardie’s words, “footnotes the ‘atomic’ origin of Rome”\(^{172}\) at Ars Amatoria 3.337: et profugum Aenean, altae primordia Romae. Gibson ad loc. says too that altae primordia Romae is a “striking hexameter ending which grandly implies that Aeneas is the (Lucretian) ‘original substance’ of Rome.”

We might suggest that Ovid’s use of the Lucretian primordia for Aeneas is, like Lucretius’ use of the Ennian coinage genitalis for his atomic corpora, a similarly polemical comparison of atomic history and Roman history, since Aeneas’ quest and the eventual foundation of Rome in the Aeneid is explicitly guided by fate or destiny (fatum; cf. Aen 1.2, 32) at every turn. Indeed, Ovid’s quotation of Aeneid 1.2 (Italiam fato profugus Laviniaque venit) at Ars 3.337 (et profugum Aenean, altae primordia Romae) 

\(^{169}\) Fowler (2002) ad loc.  
\(^{171}\) Ibid. 14-5.  
\(^{172}\) Ibid. 15.
looks to Aeneas’ status as an “exile by fate.” But his qualification of Aeneas as the Lucretian primordia, substituting “atoms” for the Vergilian moenia of “lofty Rome” (altae moenia Romae, Aen. 1.7) places Aeneas in an anti-providential Epicurean universe, where Aeneas’ wandering is perhaps compared comically to the “wanderings” of Epicurean atoms through the void (nam quonian per inane vagantur, DRN 2.83); these atoms, like Aeneas, are “tossed about” (et quo iactari magis omnia materiali / corpora pervidea, DRN 2.89-90; cf. multum ille et terris iactatus at alto / vi superum, Aen 1.3-4) although not, of course, by the “violence of the gods.”\(^{173}\) By calling Aeneas the “(Lucretian) original substance of Rome,” does Ovid also hint at the mortality of the city, which, like everything else born from these Lucretian primordia, will eventually dissolve back into them (nunc age, quo motu genitalia materiai / corpora res varias gignant genitasque resolvant / ...expediam, DRN 1.62-6)?\(^{174}\)

In any case, this use of the language of natural philosophy (primordia) to refer to the origins of Rome is an extension of the urbs/orbis conceit that appears frequently in Ovid and other authors. We see a similar extension of the analogy in Ovid’s Fasti, one that suggests that the four Empedoclean elements can be used in that poem as a means of talking about the “elements” of Roman power. A passage to which I will often return in

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\(^{173}\) In applying Lucretian language to the Aeneid proem is Ovid picking up on somethign already in the text of the Aeneid? Note that the famous statement that “so vast was the effort to found the Roman race” (tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem, Aen. 1.33) includes a word, moles, that Lucretius had used to refer to the pre-cosmic state of the universe in his account of cosmogony (DRN 5.436-8): nec similis nostris rebus res ulla videri, / sed nova tempestas quaedam molesque coorta / omnigenis e principiis. As Hardie has demonstrated, the story of the Aeneid is depicted in some sense as the Roman “cosmogony.” Note too that in Lucretius moles is coordinated with nova tempestas. Of course, not long after the Aeneid proem, the Trojans are beset by their own “strange storm” (cf. Aen. 1.53, tempestatesque sonoras), part of the “vast effort” (tantae molis, Aen. 1.33) to found the Roman people.

\(^{174}\) Ovid elsewhere identifies Lucretius specifically by his belief in the mortality of the world: Am. 1.15.23-4, carmina sublimis tunc sunt peritura Lucreti, / exitio terras cum dabit una dies; Tr. 2.425-6, explicat ut causas rapidi Lucretius ignis, / casurumque triplex vaticinatur opus.
this dissertation is the cosmogony of Janus in book 1 of the *Fasti*, since it is not only the most conspicuous example of natural philosophy in the poem, but in many ways serves a programmatic purpose and therefore is a natural point of reference for much of what comes after. Remember that the cosmology of Janus’ speech is deeply Empedoclean, most obviously in that the cosmogony is fueled by the cosmic principle of strife (*lis*) and emphasizes the four-element theory as the fundamental way of analyzing the world. We should also note Hardie’s observation that Ovid’s “Janus episode conforms to a pattern that structures a wide range of Augustan texts including the *Aeneid*, namely an encompassing view of history that culminates in the universal extension of the *pax Augusta*, with a strong sense of the sympathy between political and cosmological order.”

This sympathy between the political and cosmological order extends specifically to the passage’s Empedoclean cosmology, since Janus’ role as keeper of the doors of peace and war can be understood in terms of regulating Empedoclean love and strife. Therefore, much of the ground has already been prepared for seeing an analogy between the Empedoclean elements, the building-blocks of nature, and the origins of Rome. There is a more or less clear acknowledgment of this at the beginning of *Fasti* 3. Remember that Janus had made this address to the poet as a preface to his narration of cosmogony (1.101-4):

\[ ‘\textit{disce metu posito, vates operose dierum, quod petis, et voces percipe mente meas. me Chaos antiqui (nam sum res prisca) vocabant: aspice quam longi temporis acta canam.’} \]

\[ 175 \text{ Hardie (1991) 49.} \]
\[ 176 \text{ Ibid. 50.} \]
Set aside your fear and learn, laborious poet of the days, what you seek, and grasp my words with your mind. The men of old called me Chaos (for I am an ancient being). Watch as I sing the events of a time long ago.

Ovid felt that this passage was important enough to have Mars virtually repeat it in his opening address to the poet in book 3 (177-8):

‘disce, Latinorum vates operose dierum, quod petis, et memori pectore dicta nota.’

Learn, laborious poet of the Latin days, what you seek, and mark my words in your remembering heart.

But whereas Janus had embarked upon a cosmogony (the formation of the cosmos out of the four elements) after his address, Mars refers to the “first beginnings” of Rome (3.179-80):

parva fuit, si prima velis elementa referre, Roma, sed in parva spes tamen huius erat.

Rome was small, if you wish to return to first beginnings, but nevertheless in that small town was the promise of this city.

Prima elementa is not an unusual phrase, but the self-conscious quotation of Janus’ preface to his narration of cosmogony should clue us in to other resemblances, at which point we can recall that Janus’ Empedoclean cosmogony had placed considerable emphasis on the four-element theory. Therefore, Mars’ designation of the origins of Rome as its prima elementa grandiosely suggests that the birth of Rome is analogous to cosmogony. The use of prima elementa for the beginnings of Rome suggests, even if somewhat humorously, that the four elements, specifically those of Empedocles, are part of Ovid’s discourse concerning Roman history and politics in the Fasti. As I hinted at,

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177 The idea that the elements are a part of political discourse is reinforced near the end of book 2, as well, when the poet says that revenge for his father’s murder was the prima elementa of Augustus (2.709-10):
this is not limited simply to the elements; I will talk more in chapter 5 about the
genealogy of Mars as Empedoclean Ares/Strife and the role of the cosmic principle of
strife in Roman history.

One can see the elements as the building-blocks or, perhaps, the alphabet blocks,
the ABCs, of Roman power in a slightly different way, as well. We can return briefly
to the passage in book 1 of the Ars Amatoria that I cited for its exploitation of the
urbs/orbis apposition. Part of the semantic constellation of this analogy, as we saw
clearly expressed in the passage from Fasti 2 concerning Augustus’ assumption of the
title Pater Patriae, is the comparison between Augustus and Jupiter. It is possible to see
Augustus’ power over the elements in the Ars passage as another way of blurring the line
between Augustus and Jupiter, since, as Hardie says in Cosmos and Imperium, control
over the elements is “strictly speaking, beyond normal human powers,” although “it is
possible to show the hero indirectly in control of the elements through the intermediary of
a friendly divinity.”

While Hardie seems concerned to maintain this distinction
between the divine and human, in referring to Neptune’s calming of the storm in Aeneid
1, the paradigmatic example in the poem of “control over the elements,” he says that “the
statesman simile of lines 148ff. also hints at an ancient idea of the ruler as a master of the
elements.” Indeed the divine associations of this power could, at least theoretically,
make it useful to poets as a means of elevating the ruler to a quasi-divine status.\(^{181}\)

Here is the passage from the *Ars* once again (1.171-4):

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quid, modo cum belli navalis imagine Caesar
Persidas induxit Cecropias rates?
nempe ab utroque mari iuvenes, ab utroque puellae
venere, atque ingens orbis in Urbe fuit.
```

What, when Caesar just recently brought in Persian and Athenian ships in a mock sea battle? To be sure, boys and girls came from either sea and the great world was in our city.

As we saw, one of the sub-texts of the apposition *urbs/orbis* is Augustus as Jupiter or ruler of the Universe (cf. *Fast.* 2.130: *iam pridem tu pater orbis eras*, “for a long time now have been a father of the Universe”). Ovid brings this out obliquely by pointing to Augustus’ power over the elements, in this case water in the spectacular *naumachia* of 2 B.C. As Hollis observes in his commentary about the preparations for the sea battle, of which Ovid’s Roman readers were surely aware, Augustus had not only had an artificial lake created on the right bank of the Tiber, but also an aqueduct, the *Aqua Alsietina*, to carry water to the lake.\(^{182}\) The *naumachia* left an enduring imprint on the cityscape (traces of it still remained in the reign of Alexander Severus\(^{183}\)) and Augustus felt it important enough to record in his *Res Gestae* (23). Yet, at the same time, the theme of

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\(^{181}\) Another important Vergilian passage expressing the idea of the ruler as a “master of the elements” is the proem to *Georgics* 1 (esp. 24-42), where Vergil wonders whether the apotheosized Octavian will rule over land, sea or sky, the three great regions of the world. But he also imagines Octavian as “lord of the seasons” (*tempestatumque potentem*, 1.27), making him a master of the elements. While *tempestates* can be translated as “seasons” (cf. *OLD* (1)), it can also more menacingly refer to “storms” as seen in Vergil’s use of the same hexameter ending for Aeolus at *Aen*. 1.80, *nimborumque facis tempestatumque potentem* (“you make me lord of clouds and storms”). Therefore, Octavian as *tempestatum potens* (“lord of seasons/storms”) is double-edged. In its connotations of violent upheaval, it anticipates the fear expressed later in the *Georgics* 1 proem that Octavian could become ruler of Hades (*G*. 1.36-7). Hardie (1986) 50-1 has astutely noted that Octavian’s control over the regions of the world in the *Georgics* proem means that he “in effect replaces, as cosmic overlord, the Venus of the proem to book one of the *De Rerum Natura*, whose power is articulated with reference to these three major world-divisions.”

\(^{182}\) Hollis (1977) *ad* 1.171-76.

\(^{183}\) Ibid.
control over the elements can be a problematic means of representing power. This blurring of the lines between divine and human is open to a negative interpretation, as well, perhaps especially in our passage from the *Ars Amatoria*: in a context that explicitly compares Rome’s imminent campaign against the Parthians to Athens’ war against the Persians, the attempt by Augustus to dominate nature and the elements is similar to the hubristic behavior of Xerxes and other Persian monarchs criticized in accounts of the Persian Wars such as that found in Herodotus.\(^\text{184}\) In any case, even this brief passage from the *Ars* gives us an idea how the elements can be a means of representing power.

The idea of control over the elements as a form of power is foregrounded in the *Fasti* in the Janus episode, in which the god describes himself and is described by the poet in terms fitting for Jupiter.\(^\text{185}\) In explaining his office to the poet, Janus says that no less than everything one sees in any direction opens and closes by his hand and that he has guardianship over the Universe (1.117-20):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{quicquid ubique vides, caelum, mare, nubila, terras,} \\
\text{omnia sunt nostra clausa patentque manu.} \\
\text{me penes est unum vasti custodia mundi,} \\
\text{et ius vertendi cardinis omne meum est.}
\end{align*}
\]

Whatever you see all around you, sky, sea, clouds, land, all opens and closes by my hand. Under me alone is the guardianship of the vast universe; mine also is the right of turning its hinge.

Notice especially that *omnia* (118), the sum of all things, is analyzed in terms of the four elements (*caelum, mare, nubila, terras*, 117). Later, near the end of the Janus episode, the

\(^\text{184}\) See, for example, Herodotus 7.34-6, in which Xerxes orders his men to lash the Hellespont as if it were his slave; Herodotus also says that he has heard reports that Xerxes ordered his men to brand the river with hot irons.

\(^\text{185}\) Hardie (1991) 60.
poet describes the god as he oversees the entire world, as if it were all his realm
(1.283-4):

dixit et attollens oculos diversa videntes
aspexit toto quicquid in orbe fuit.

He spoke and raising up his eyes that saw in opposite directions, he surveyed all
that was in the entire world.

We need to keep in mind Hardie’s observation that Janus is presented in the Fasti as “a
contradictory blend of the sublime and the ridiculous.” In fact, this phrase can
characterize Ovid’s use of cosmology more generally. To use just one example, Janus is
the custodia mundi, the “guardian of the Universe,” but “for all that, just a door-keeper
with the stick and key entrusted to that servile office,” which Hardie thinks “cannot
help but recall that typically elegiac target of abuse in the Amores, the ianitor of 1, 6, a
slave whom the desperate lover is reduced to addressing as if he were a god.”

Hardie’s comments hint at the fact that a similar juxtaposition of the sublime and the ridiculous
occurs in Amores 1.6, in which the ianitor is ironically compared to Jupiter (1.6.16): tu,
me quo possis perdere, fulmen habes (“you hold the thunderbolt by which you can ruin
me”). As McKeown notes ad loc. “by attributing a thunder-bolt to him, Ovid equates the
door-keeper specifically with Jupiter.”

Janus, then, is a complicated figure of authority in the Fasti. Nevertheless, the
Janus episode, as the first extended interview of a deity in the poem, and as one of the

186 Ibid.
187 Ibid.
188 Ibid. 62.
189 McKeown also suggests that Ovid is punning on fulmen as meaning not only “thunder-bolt,” but also
“door-bolt,” the latter of which, though unattested elsewhere, depends on McKeown’s hypothesis of a
derivation of fulmen from fulcire rather than fulgere.
longer episodes in the entire poem, establishes a model for a range of subsequent themes, the representation of power being one of these. We can see that Janus serves as a model in this respect by looking briefly at one subsequent representation of (human) power. Near the end of the Janus episode, Germanicus’ victory over the German tribes is described strikingly\(^\text{190}\) by the image of the Rhine handing over its waters as slaves to Germanicus (1.285-6):

\[
pax erat et, vestri, Germanice, causa triumphi, tradiderat famulas iam tibi Rhenus aquas.
\]

There was peace and, Germanicus, the reason for your triumph, the Rhine had now handed over its waters to you as slaves.

This comes immediately after the couplet quoted earlier, which characterized Janus in language appropriate for Jupiter (\textit{aspexit toto quicquid in orbe fuit}, 284). We can compare this collocation to the earlier one from the \textit{Ars Amatoria}, in which the \textit{urbs/orbis} apposition had appeared in the context of the spectacular moving of earth and water by Augustus in the \textit{naumachia} in 2 B.C. Green attractively suggests that Ovid’s image of the “slave” water in the \textit{Fasti} could “have been influenced by Roman triumphs, as ‘models’ of subjugated cities/rivers regularly formed part of the procession,” as at \textit{Ars} 1.219-20:

\[
\text{atque aliqua ex illis cum regum nomina quaeret, / quae loca, qui montes, quaeve ferantur aquae.}\]

\(^{191}\) Indeed, Germanicus’ (probably future) “triumph” (\textit{triumphi, Fasti} 1.285) is referred to in the couplet from the \textit{Fasti}.\(^\text{192}\) These shackled places and waters are a

\(^{190}\) See Green (2004) \textit{ad loc.}: “Though the general motif is common in Ovid, the particular imagery employed here is striking…” and “This powerful image of the ‘slave’ river clearly influenced later writers.” Cf. the image of the “slave” river at Prop. 2.1.31-2.

\(^{191}\) Green (2004) \textit{ad Fasti} 1.286. See also Hollis (1977) \textit{ad Ars} 1.220.

\(^{192}\) As Green (2004) \textit{ad Fasti} 1.285-6 notes, Germanicus did not celebrate the triumph until 26\textsuperscript{th} May, A.D. 17, by which time Ovid is thought to have already died. It is more likely to be the case that Ovid is referring to the senatorial decree of A.D. 15 granting a triumph to Germanicus prior to the end of the war.
striking symbol of the pretensions of the *triumphator* to power over the elements. We can say, then, that the comparison of Rome to the universe and the concomitant comparison of Roman rulers and gods, is often connected to the rulers’ control over the elements. In this respect, Janus’ power over the four elements in his cosmology is a model for subsequent figures of authority.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I set out to introduce the four elements as a theoretical apparatus used not only by philosophers or scientists in antiquity, but also by poets. After establishing the “primary” terms for the four elements through their occurrence in prose works, I have demonstrated that poets, unsurprisingly, have no technical vocabulary for the four elements, but instead frequently use metonyms in place of the primary terms. This common use of metonyms for the elements, however, raises the question of how we determine whether a collocation of such terms is meaningful. In the second section I argued that Ovid’s clear articulation of the four elements in the programmatic cosmogonies of both the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, in addition to their prominent reappearance at the *ends* of each poem, encourages us to see the elements as an important feature of the “universe” of the poems. After having established this methodology for finding meaningful collocations of the elements, in the third section I gave a very brief history of the analogy in Greco-Roman literature between the cosmos and works of art.

This image of the “slave” water, like that of Augustus’ *naumachia*, could be double-edged. As *Am. 1.1* demonstrates, such triumphal processions also represented these subjugated peoples/places/things as bound and shackled (*et nova captiva vincula mente feram. / Mens Bona ducetur manibus post terga retortis, Am 1.2.30-1*). But if Ovid calls to mind the image of the shackled waters of the Rhine at *Fasti 1.285*-86, is this not also slightly ridiculous? What use are chains on flowing water? This can be compared to Xerxes’ comically hubristic order that the Hellespont receive three hundred lashes and have chains thrown upon it as a symbol of his subjugation of the river (*Herodotus, Histories 7.35-6*).
including poems, beginning from the aesthetic origins of the Greek *kosmos* and Empedocles’ analogy between painter’s pigments to Lucretius atoms/letters analogy and finally Ovid’s own use of the trope of *elementa* as both the primary matter of the universe and a poet’s materials. In the fourth and final section I demonstrated that the elements, in addition to being part of poetic discourse, are also part of the cosmic vision of empire commonly expressed by poets during the Augustan period, especially Vergil and Ovid, in which the *urbs* is equated with the *orbis* and Augustus with Jupiter.

This chapter has ranged widely over different authors and periods in Greco-Roman literature, which has served to contextualize Ovid’s use of the elements in his *Fasti*, the poem which will be the focus of the final three chapters of this dissertation. Along with the *Metamorphoses*, the *Fasti* is the work of Ovid’s in which the elements feature most prominently. There are a number of reasons for this. The poem is presented as unfolding simultaneously with the year,\(^{193}\) whose seasons each had distinct elemental and qualitative associations of which Ovid was clearly aware. Furthermore, we will see that the poems on which I have focused in this chapter, Empedocles’ *Peri Phuseos*, Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura* and Vergil’s *Georgics* are all important intertexts for the *Fasti*; and part of the dialogue between the *Fasti* and these earlier poems involves their use of the discourse of the elements. This includes Lucretius, who, as we saw, occasionally uses the four-element scheme as a means of analyzing the world, even if he cannot subscribe to the idea that they are the four most basic substances in the universe; such was the attraction of the four elements as a conceptual framework. These earlier poems are all written in the tradition of didactic poetry on natural philosophy, a tradition

\(^{193}\) Volk (1997).
in which, as we will see, Ovid places his elegiac *Fasti*; and an important inheritance of this tradition was the elements as a discursive feature.
CHAPTER 2
Love and Strife in the *Amores* and their Sources

Introduction

Whereas my first chapter introduced the four elements, this chapter introduces the philosophical concepts of love and strife as an object of literary study. My aim in this chapter is twofold. I first offer a survey of the way that these themes (love and strife) are connected to philosophy in the Greco-Roman literary tradition by looking at authors such as Homer, Apollonius, Ennius, Lucretius and Vergil. Very early on in the reception of the Homeric poems, certain episode began to be interpreted as physical allegories. I focus on the interpretations of the Shield of Achilles from the *Iliad* and the second song of Demodocus from the *Odyssey*, since both of these came to be seen as anticipating Empedocles’ cosmology. I discuss the fact that subsequent poets exploited this interpretive tradition in their poems. In the second half of the chapter, I argue that the themes of love and strife are especially prominent in Ovid’s *Amores* and, moreover, that Ovid incorporates epic’s treatment of these themes into the *Amores*, to characteristically witty effect. Building upon Hardie’s argument that the speech of Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses* offers a tendentious interpretation of the epic tradition as “Empedoclean *epos,*” I will argue that Ovid’s idiosyncratic presentation of epic poetry in the *Amores* similarly highlights certain Empedoclean aspects of this tradition, aspects that, not coincidentally, are central to Ovid’s elegiac poetics.

2.1 Literary Background: Empedocles in the Epic Tradition

Via allegory, two early versions of the pair love and strife, one from the *Iliad* and one from the *Odyssey*, were connected to Empedoclean cosmology. Both became very
influential in the subsequent Greco-Roman literary tradition: the first is the representation on the Shield of Achilles of two cities, one at peace and one at war (*Il. 18.490-540*),\(^{194}\) the second is the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite in the second song of Demodocus in book 8 of the *Odyssey* (266-366).\(^{195}\) There is considerable evidence that allegorical interpretation of Homer began as early as the sixth-century B.C. and continued into Ovid’s time.\(^{196}\) In fact, we should at least entertain the possibility that Empedocles himself is interpreting the second song of Demodocus allegorically when he refers to his principles of Neikos and Philia as Ares and Aphrodite respectively.\(^{197}\) We know that Empedocles used the Homeric poems extensively,\(^{198}\) even earning the designation Ὅμηρικός from Aristotle,\(^{199}\) so it would be unsurprising if he had interpreted the myth allegorically as a form of creative imitation. While this idea, however attractive, has to remain in the realm of speculation, we also have a probable terminus ante quem for the interpretation of the Shield and the second song of Demodocus as Empedoclean allegories in Apollonius of Rhodes’ *Argonautica*, since he seems to indicate his knowledge of their allegorical interpretation when he has Orpheus in book 1 sing a

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\(^{194}\) The description of the Shield as a whole comprises *Il. 18.478-608*.

\(^{195}\) As Heraclitus explains in his *Homeric Problems* the shield should really be interpreted as a cosmic allegory from which Empedocles derived his doctrine of the principles of love and strife (49.2-4). While Heraclitus is usually dated to the latter part of the first or the beginning of the second century A.D. (the recent edition of Russell and Konstan (2005) xi-xii suggests a date of around 100 A.D. for its composition), it is generally accepted that this allegorical reading, as well as the allegorical reading of the second song of Demodocus circulated long before Heraclitus’ time, as I explain in what follows. Thus, Hardie (1986) 336-76, for example, bases his influential analysis of the Shield of Aeneas as a cosmic allegory on the assumption that Vergil knew the allegorical interpretation of the Shield of Achilles and specifically the interpretation of the two cities as Empedoclean allegory.

\(^{196}\) In general see Buffière (1956) and, more recently, Feeney (1991) 5-56.

\(^{197}\) Nelis (2000) 91, n. 22.

\(^{198}\) On Empedocles’ debt to Homer, see Kingsley (1995) 42-5 with bibliography.

\(^{199}\) Diogenes Laertius (8.57) reports that Aristotle described him thus in *On Poets*. Of course, this contradicts what Aristotle says in the *Poetics* (1147b), namely that Empedocles and Homer have nothing in common except meter and that the former should really be called a *physiologos* rather than a poet.
patently Empedoclean cosmogony in an episode that both alludes to the Homeric *ephrasis* of the Shield and is modeled on the Demodocus passage in the *Odyssey*.\(^{200}\) We will examine the song of Orpheus shortly, but first we will need to look at a few of the details of the two Homeric passages to which it alludes.

The first city described on the Homeric Shield (*Il. 18.490-508*) is the so-called “city of peace,” since the Shield depicts marriages and feasts taking place there (18.491). In spite of the presence of a legal *neikos* (18.497-9) the first city was interpreted as the the city of peace or, in Empedoclean terms, the city of love, as in the Heraclitean allegory (*Homerica Problems* 49.4). The second city is the “city of war” or strife (*Homerica Problems* 49.4). It is besieged by two armies, so that the strife depicted in this city is not legal, but decidedly martial strife (535): ἐν δ´ Ἐρις ἐν δ´ Κυδομός ὀμίλεον, ἐν δ´ ὀλοῆ Κῆρ (“and amid them Strife and Battle-Din joined in the fray, and deadly Fate”). This passage lent itself all the more readily to an interpretation in terms of Empedoclean physics because Empedocles uses these same terms as part of his linguistic repertoire for denoting his principle of strife.\(^{201}\)

Ancient critics applied similar allegoresis to the second song of Demodocus in book 8 of the *Odyssey*, in which the Phaeacian bard sang of the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite (*Od. 8.266-366*), and, as I suggested earlier, Empedocles himself can perhaps be seen as offering a similar interpretation. However, in addition to the possibility of

\(^{200}\) See Nelis (1992) 153-70.

\(^{201}\) See for example fr. 122/128 where Empedocles appears to describe a Golden Age that is characterized by the absence of strife, one of the representations of which is *Kydoimos* (“Battle-Din’); for his use of *eris* see fr. 38/20.4. In addition to *neikos* and Ἐρις, this includes such words as κότος (fr. 26/21.7) and ὀλοῆ (fr. 120/122.2). Both Skutsch (1985) 395 and Hardie (2009a) 100 suggest that Empedoclean Neikos/Eris is descended from Homeric Eris.
Empedocles’ creative use of allegory, critics who wanted to redeem Homer from the charge of impiety also had recourse to the allegorical interpretation. In the Heraclitean version of the allegory, their love affair represents the union of the two opposed principles of Neikos and Philia in concord, for which Heraclitus appeals to the legend that Ares and Aphrodite had a child named Harmonia. It is an open question as to why Empedocles featured so prominently in the allegorical readings of Homer, but Hardie speculates that “Such an approximation of Homer and Empedocles might have been encouraged by the status of Empedocles himself as both poet and philosopher.” Once again, Empedocles’ own “poetic” vocabulary for his cosmic principles of love and strife made the job of the allegorists relatively easy. He frequently personifies his principle of love by calling it Aphrodite or Kypris (see fr. 25/17.24 and passim) and calls strife at least once by the name of Ares (οὐδὲ τις ἦν κέινοισιν Ἄρης θεός, “They had no god Ares,” fr. 122/128). Therefore, the allegorizing interpretation of the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite — perhaps by Empedocles himself — helped to establish a philosophical background for Ares and Aphrodite (or Mars and Venus) that later poets would exploit.

In his Argonautica Apollonius Rhodius imitated not only both of these Homeric episodes, the ecphrasis of the Shield and the second song of Demodocus, but also incorporated their allegorical/philosophical background into his imitations. Damien Nelis first argued that the song of Orpheus in Argonautica 1 is modeled on the second song of Demodocus and, moreover, that the cosmological content of Orpheus’ song — the

202 Heraclitus Homeric Problems 69.7-11.
204 See Sedley (1998) 27, n. 98. Examples like these, in addition to other striking uses of figurative language, led Aristotle in the same passage in which he described Empedocles as “Homeric” to also describe him as μεταφορικός (D.L. 8.57).
separation of the primordial elements through “deadly strife” (νείκεος ἐξ ὅλοοίον, Argon. 1.498) — makes explicit the allegorical interpretation of the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite as a physical allegory.²⁰⁵

Just as importantly, Nelis demonstrates that the content of Orpheus’ song reflects the themes of its narrative context, a number of which are important to the Argonautica as a whole.²⁰⁶ This function of Orpheus’ song is paradigmatic for subsequent poems. Instances of embedded cosmology are not merely set-pieces detached from their context, but often reflect and comment upon that context and indeed, in the case of Orpheus’ song, the poem as a whole. The prophet Phineus, for example, in giving advice to the Argonauts, emphasizes the importance of cunning or intelligence and love (Kypris) in their quest, just as Orpheus celebrates the intelligence of Zeus in his song (2.423-4):

ἀλλά, φίλοι, φράζεσθε θεᾶς δολόεσσαν ἀρωγήν / Κύπριδος. ἐκ γὰρ τῆς κλυτᾶ πείρατα κεῖται ἀέθλων (“But, my friends, think of the cunning aid of the Cyprian goddess. For through her lies the glorious end of your toils.”).

This prophecy encapsulates one of the distinguishing features of the Argonautica in relation to the Homeric epics: the dependence of the heroes on the aid of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, which makes Argonautica in one sense an “erotic epic.” In light of

²⁰⁵ Nelis (1992) 153-70. Nelis further notes that the song of Orpheus also alludes to the Shield of Achilles (Argon. 1.496 = Il. 18.497), the other locus classicus in the Homeric poems for Empedoclean allegory.
²⁰⁶ For example, prior to Orpheus’ song Idas insults Jason and a quarrel (neikos, 492) among the Argonauts ensues, which is only brought to an end by Orpheus’ singing. In Nelis’ (1992) 160 words, “This movement from discord to concord parallels the developments sung by Orpheus when cosmic strife gives way to order and creation and the struggles of earlier generations of deities will be brought to an end with the rule of Zeus.” Other points of contact emerge: Idas’ reliance upon pure force is implicitly rebuked in Orpheus’ song by its reference to Zeus’ intelligence, with which he is able to overcome his father. This question of the usefulness of armed force in contrast to other other skills, such as intelligence, is related to Jason’s identity as a hero and the identity of the Argonautica as an epic poem.
Nelis’ argument that the twin themes of *eros* and intelligence are programmatically announced in the (Empedoclean) song of Orpheus, it is worth noting that Aphrodite or love seems to have been responsible for intelligence (and knowledge) in Empedoclean epistemology.\(^{207}\) The relationship of Empedoclean physics to the plot of the *Argonautica*, then, may include this connection between Aphrodite and intelligence or cunning, as opposed to Ares and force or violence, a contrast that Apollonius continually dramatizes in the poem.\(^{208}\)

A further important aspect of Apollonius’ use of Empedoclean cosmology is that it establishes a cosmic setting for the action of the poem. The observations made by Nelis about the song of Orpheus can be applied to the poem’s use of cosmological material more generally: “He [sc. Orpheus] tells of the beginning of the cosmos just before the description of the beginning of the voyage. The feats of the Argonauts are thus placed in a cosmic setting and given their place in the whole panorama of history since the creation of the world. The song acts as a kind of cosmic overture to the poem and as such is of far-reaching relevance.”\(^{209}\)

Orpheus’ song also glances ahead to the beginning of *Argonautica* 3, a further passage in the *Argonautica* that exploits Empedoclean cosmology and the tradition of

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\(^{208}\) Nelis (1992) 163-70 with bibliography. This tension between opposites finds an emblem in the cloak that Jason wears during his visit to Hypsipyle’s palace in *Argonautica* 1 (721-67). Represented on the cloak, which is modeled on the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18 (see Nelis (1992) 164), is Aphrodite carrying a shield of Ares (742-46). Among the image’s referents is likely the Empedoclean interpretation of the Shield of Achilles; furthermore, the Empedoclean background of Aphrodite and Ares on the cloak connects it to Orpheus’ song. Both are representations within the poem of the cosmology of Empedocles. The cloak is also connected to Orpheus’ song by its depiction of the Cyclopes in the act of finishing a thunderbolt (*Arg*. 1.730-4), which alludes to the mention of the Cyclopes and the weapons of Zeus at the end of Orpheus’ song. See Nelis (1992) 166.

\(^{209}\) Nelis (1992) 156.
Homeric allegoresis. *Argonautica* 3 begins with a well-known and much-imitated invocation of the Muse Erato (3.1-5):

εἰ δ᾽ ἁγε νῦν, Ἐρατώ, παρά θ’ ἱστασο καὶ μοι ἔνισπε
ἐνθὲν ὅπως ἢς Ἰολκὸν ἀνήγαγε κῶς Ἡσον
Μηδεὴς ὑπ᾽ ἔρωτι. σὺ γὰρ καὶ Κύπριδος αἴσαν
ἐμορεῖς, ἀδήμητα δὲ τεοῖς μελεδῆμαι θέλγεις
παρθενικάς· τὸ καὶ τοι ἐπῄρατον οὖνομ’ ἂνηρται.

Come now, Erato, stand beside me and tell me next how Jason brought the fleece back to Iolcus through the love of Medea. For you also have a share in the power of Cypris, and by your cares you bewitch unwed girls; therefore to you too is attached the lovely name.

As commentators acknowledge, these lines announce the theme of love, which will dominate the third book and, in some respects, the rest of the poem. The ascendancy of love in the second half of the poem is reinforced by the striking way in which Aphrodite and Eros are introduced as characters into the poem. After the proem Apollonius describes the attempt of Hera and Athena to enlist the aid of Aphrodite, to whom they pay a visit at the house of her husband Hephaestus (36-110).

As commentators have long recognized, the primary model for this scene is Thetis’ visit to Hephaestus to request divinely fashioned arms for her son Achilles in *Iliad*. The Homeric context is crucial. Hera and Athena ask Aphrodite to get her son Cupid to inflame Medea with passion for Jason. At first this seems to have little or no relation to the kind of help that Thetis seeks from Hephaestus in the *Iliad* and indeed Hephaestus is absent when Hera and Athena visit. Apollonius, however, offers several hints that the reader ought to keep Hephaestus (and the divine arms he gives to Achilles) in mind while reading his adaptation of the episode (3.39-44). The mention in this

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211 Hunter (1989) ad 3.36.
passage of the \( \pi\αντα \, \delta\alphaι\delta\alphaλα \) (41-2) that Hephaestus makes is picked up later, when Aphrodite bribes the difficult Eros to do her bidding with the promise of a wondrous toy (\( \alpha\thetaυρ\muα \), 132) which is as fine as any made by Hephaestus (131-41). Not only is the ball worthy of the work of Hephaestus, but it once belonged to Zeus, given to him by his nurse Adrasteia while he was still an infant on Mt. Ida in Crete. As commentators note, this is no ordinary toy, but in fact a representation or an image of the cosmos.\(^{212}\) This helps to make the connection to Zeus more intelligible, since Adrasteia’s gift of this cosmic toy can be seen to symbolize the power that Zeus will eventually have over the universe. In turn, Aphrodite’s promise of this same cosmic toy to Eros suggests the (troubling) idea of the boy-god’s universal power, the same Eros who has just been described as a spoiled brat and a cheat (3.100-5, 129-30).\(^{213}\)

The connection that Apollonius makes between Zeus and Eros, however, does more than simply suggest Eros’ universal power. The reference made to Zeus’ childhood in the passage is actually a close verbal allusion to the end of Orpheus’ song in *Argonautica* 1 and his description of the infant Zeus in his cave on Mt. Ida (*Arg*. 3.134 = 1.508-9).\(^{214}\) In fact, there are several connections between the two passages, the main one for our purposes being the shared cosmological subject matter of Orpheus’ song and Apollonius’ *ecphrasis* of the cosmic toy promised to Eros.\(^{215}\) Richard Hunter, moreover, has suggested that the cosmic toy is an image of a specifically Empedoclean cosmos,

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\(^{215}\) The song of Orpheus alludes to the interpretation of both the second song of Demodocus and the Shield of Achilles as Empedoclean allegories. In turn, the passage where the cosmic toy appears is based on the Homeric events in *Iliad* 18 surrounding the creation of Achilles’ armor, notably the Shield. This network of allusions compels us to recognize the connection between the toy and the Shield, both being representations of the cosmos.
since Empedocles held that the cosmos took on the shape of sphere (cf. σφαίραν, 135) under the complete dominance of love.\footnote{Hunter (1989)  ad 3.135. Kyriakou (1994) 316 has subsequently recognized verbal parallels between Apollonius’ cosmic toy and the Empedoclean sphairos.} Therefore, just as the Homeric Shield, which is the model for Apollonius’ cosmic toy, was interpreted as a cosmic allegory that included the representation of Empedoclean love and strife, so Apollonius’ cosmic toy is a symbol of the Empedoclean cosmos under the sway of love.\footnote{Kyriakou (1994) 316.}

However, love in Apollonius is chiefly a cause of strife and disorder.\footnote{Ibid. 312-8.} This is a significant departure from the Empedoclean model, in which love is generally a beneficent force. Medea’s passion for Jason is a source of familial strife: inside the temporal frame of the poem it leads to the murder of Medea’s brother Apsyrtus and, outside of it, to Medea’s murder of her own children. In this sense the cosmic toy promised to Eros represents the duality of strife and love just as much as the Shield on which it is modeled, even though this duality is embodied in the single figure of Eros rather than distributed over the two cities, as in Homer. Indeed, in as much as Eros is a cause of such great strife, one might say that he assumes the role of the Homeric Eris\footnote{On eros and eris in the Argonautica and Apollonius’ puns on the verbal similarity between the two, see Mori (2008) 52-60.} in Apollonius’ poem.\footnote{Vergil at least seems to have understood the god in this way, since Vergil’s demonic Allecto in Aeneid 7 appears to be modeled on the Eros of Argonautica 3 (cf. Nelis (2001) 290-3). This is the same Allecto who is also a Vergilian version of (Empedoclean) Discordia from Ennius’ Annales 7. Hardie (2009a) 101 says that Allecto “correctly identifies herself as a reconstitution of Ennius’ Discordia: 545 ‘en, perfecta tibi bello discordia tristi’ ‘See, discord is made perfect in the horror of war.’” Nelis (2000) 96 further speculates that Vergil’s imitation of both the Ennian Discordia of Annales 7 and the Eros of Argonautica 3 in Aeneid 7 suggests that Vergil saw some connection between the two, i.e. that Ennius’ Discordia is an inversion of Apollonius’ Eros.} in Apollonius’ poem.\footnote{Ibid. 312-8.} In any case, Apollonius does not merely reproduce the doctrine of Empedocles; instead he builds his own argument out of elements of Empedoclean
cosmology, but is under no obligation to follow rigidly the system of Empedocles. This creative license is obviously true for the other poets we will consider, as well.

Ennius inaugurates the reception of Empedocles in Latin poetry in the form of the demon Discordia who appears in Annales 7 (Sk. 225-6): *postquam Discordia taetra / Belli ferratos postes portasque refregit* ("Then monstrous Discord broke open the iron doors and the Gates of War").

Eduard Norden was the first to argue that this Discordia is a Latin version of Empedocles’ cosmic principle of Neikos. His argument, which is now taken for granted, is based largely on an identification of Discordia with the *paluda virago*, who appears earlier in Skutsch’s reconstruction of book 7 (Sk. 220-1): *Corpore tartarino prognata paluda virago / Cui par imber et ignis, spiritus et gravis terra* ("A swampish virgin born with a Tartarean body, equal to whom is rain and fire, spirit and weighty earth"). The description of this “swampish virgin” seems to be modeled on a passage in Empedocles. We can compare the Ennian description to Empedocles fr. 25/17.18-20:

\[\pi\gamma\rho\varepsilon\kappa\iota\ \varphi\iota\nu\zeta\alpha\iota\varepsilon\ \kappa\iota\iota\kappa\iota\theta\alpha\nu\varepsilon\varsigma,\]
\[\text{Neikós } \tau' \ \omega\upsilon\lambda\omicron\mu\acute{e}n\nu\delta\iota\chi\tau\nu, \ \omicron\tau\acute{a}l\alpha\nu\nu\omicron\alpha\pi\acute{t}n\eta,\]

221 Hardie (2009a) 99 has called Ennius’ Discordia “the most famous Empedoclean creature in Latin poetry.”


223 *Paluda* is capitalized in Skutsch’s edition since he regards it as a name rather than a descriptor.

224 In Appendix B I examine Norden’s argument in more detail. It is speculative enough that it should not simply be taken for granted, but I nevertheless accept his basic conclusions and operate in this dissertation under the assumption that Discordia can be identified with the Empedoclean *paluda virago*.

225 My translation of *paluda virago* takes *paluda* from *palus* “swamp” rather than the probably erroneous Varronian (*L*. 7.37) etymology from *paludamentum* (“a military cloak”). See OLD s.v. *paludamentum* (b). Skutsch (1985) *ad loc.* notes that Friedrich (1948) 291ff. had pointed out that “the Stygian swamp is a suitable matrix for hellish beings,” alluding to the entrance to the underworld described in fr. 222, *sulpureas posuit spiramina Naris ad undas*. Skutsch notes that the juxtaposition of breathing holes and Nar is likely a pun on *naris* meaning “of the nose,” so that Ennius strikingly suggests that the holes in or near the river’s banks are the nostrils of hell. The analogy between the earth and (human) body (for a good example in Latin see Lucilius fr. 784-90 Marx) was strikingly used by Empedocles, who called the sea the “sweat of the earth” (fr. 59/55).
καὶ Φιλότης ἐν τοίσιν, ἴση μὴκός τε πλάτος τε:

fire and water and earth and the immense loftiness of air, and deadly strife separate from these, equivalent in every respect, and love among them, equal in length and breadth.

The sense of these lines is uncertain. Numerous interpretations have been offered,226 but, as Denis O’Brien has said, the “choice of interpretation hinges primarily on whether the equality spoken of in ἴση and implied in ἀτάλαντον is to be thought of as internal or external,” that is, whether Neikos and Philotes are “equal in some way each to itself” or “equal to all the elements taken together, to each of the elements singly, or one to another.”227 Each of these interpretations has their proponents, but I find O’Brien’s interpretation the most compelling. Following others, he takes the lines as referring to the sphere under the dominance of Philia, and suggests that both Neikos and Philia are equal to themselves, the latter “stretched out in the form of a sphere, ‘equal (as it were to herself) in length and breadth,’ while Neikos “is ‘equally balanced on every side’, or more simply ‘equal on every side’, because it forms a hollow spherical layer, presumably surrounding Love.”228 In respect to Ennius’ adaptation of the lines, Skutsch reasonably concludes that “it seems clear that even if ἀτάλαντον and ἴση should not compare νεῖκος and φιλότης to the four elements, they may have been taken by Ennius to do so” and “cui par imber etc. thus appears as a close rendering of ἀτάλαντον ἀπάντητη (?) ἔκαστω.” Yet,

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226 See O’Brien (1969) 130-1 for a survey of earlier interpretations. Subsequently Wright (1981) 170 has said of ἀτάλαντον ἀπάντητι that “it is not that Strife is materially equal in weight to each or all of the roots but that its power can stretch evenly and comprehensively over them all.” She interprets ἴση μὴκός τε πλάτος τε in the same way, that is, “for Love’s uniform extension over the roots.” KRS (2007) 290 suggest that love and strife are “equal” to the elements and that this equality refers to the fact that love and strife dominate in alternation just as the elements do.


228 O’Brien (1969) 139-40. For this interpretation of Neikos in relation to the sphere, cf. Bignone (1963) ad loc., where he says that Neikos is “equalmente librata tutt’intorno.”
it is unclear precisely how the *paluda virago/Discordia* is “equal” or “like” to each of the elements. It probably does not mean that she consists of each element in equal proportion, but rather that she is equal or like to them in some other undefined way. Regardless of the precise interpretation of either the Empedoclean source passage or its Ennian adaptation, we can say with relative confidence that Ennius’ *paluda virago* (or *Discordia* as she is called in fr. 225) is a version of Empedocles’ principle of strife.

Also important for our purposes is Ennius’ application of Empedoclean cosmology to Roman history, since this had considerable influence on the subsequent reception of Empedocles in Latin poetry. Fr. 225-6 of the *Annales* is taken to refer to the opening of the doors of the temple of *Ianus Geminus* at a specific point in Roman history, after the temple had been closed at the end of the first Punic War for just the second time in its existence. The precise historical setting of the fragment is disputed, but it is hard to believe that Ennius did not connect the opening of the temple by Discordia to the start of the second Punic War (218 B.C.), the narrative of which begins in *Annales* 7 and continues for the next two books (8 and 9). According to Skutsch, the appearance of the demon Discordia will have been a sufficiently striking way to begin what was clearly an important juncture in Ennius’ poem (and Roman

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229 Hardie (2009a) 99 with bibliography.
231 Varro, *Ling.* 5.165. Varro maintains that it was closed for the first time in the reign of Numa, who was also traditionally regarded as the founder of the temple. This same passage in Varro is also our source for the temple’s closure at the end of the first Punic War, during the consulship of Titus Manlius.
232 The two alternatives are the revolt of Falerii in 241 and the revolt of the Sardinians, at the instigation of Carthage, in 235. Varro’s testimony (*Ling.* 5.165) points to the Sardinian revolt, since he says that the temple was closed and opened during the consulship of Titus Manlius (235 B.C.), the same year in which the revolt occurred. For the argument in favor of the Falerian revolt see Skutsch (1985) 393-4.
history): “The brief summary of the first Punic War must have ended with the closing of the Janus Gate, and the main narrative thus began most impressively with the intervention of the Empedoclean daemon who would not let it stay shut even for the space of one year.”

Bignone had earlier taken this juxtaposition of Empedoclean cosmology and Roman history further. Building on Norden’s identification of Discordia as Empedoclean Neikos, he argued that Ennius connected this shift from peace to war in Roman history to Empedocles’ cosmic cycle of love and strife. As we will see, in the Fasti Ovid’s Janus describes himself as an Empedoclean deity and therefore makes the Ennian interpretation of the Janus Geminus as an “Empedoclean monument” almost explicit.

The suggestion that the transition from peace to war at the outbreak of the second Punic War is analogous to a cosmic shift will have reinforced the importance that the narrative of the war seems to have had in Ennius’ poem. The importance of the narrative beginning in Annales 7 can be seen by the fact that it contains a major proem, in which Ennius refers to himself and his work. Scholars, moreover, have argued for both a triadic and hexadic structure for the Annales. In both cases, Annales 7 represents an important juncture, since it will have been the opening book in the triad (7-9) that

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233 Skutsch (1985) 393.
234 Bignone (1929) 10-1. Bignone’s argument has been accepted by a number of scholars (Nelis (2000) 91; Garani (2007) 26) although not by all. Skutsch (1985) 394 cautions that “We must not…try to import into Ennius other ideas of the Empedoclean fragment: Discordia, to give her the name she bears in frg. xiii [= 225], is here [sc. 220-1] said to be ‘born’, and her divine nature cannot therefore be inferred from her having no beginning and no end; and in the context where the Gates of War (see below, p. 402) are opened again immediately after having been closed for the first time since they were built by King Numa, the idea of various forces holding sway in turn would be inappropriate.”
covered the second Punic War or the second (middle) hexad (7-12) of three in the
eighteen books of the *Annales*.\(^{236}\)

Ennius’ use of the temple of Janus Geminus as a closural and opening device in
his narrative — its closing marks the end of one sequence, the summary of the first Punic
War, and its opening, the beginning of another, the second Punic War — would also be
influential in subsequent Roman poetry. The most famous example of this is Vergil’s
imitation of *Annales* 7 in *Aeneid* 7 to mark a new beginning in his own poem, since it is
Juno’s opening of the Gates of War (*Aen. 7.601-22*) that inaugurates the war in Latium
whose narrative will occupy the second half of the *Aeneid*. In chapters 4 and 5 I will
argue that the temple is used to reinforce certain structural features of the *Fasti*, as well.
Ennius thus connects the temple to the question of teleology, in both a literary and a
historical sense. This is picked up by Vergil in *Aeneid* 1, in which Jupiter’s prophecy of
the imprisonment of Furor (= Ennian Discordia) inside the Gates of War under Augustus
symbolizes the end of history.\(^{237}\)

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\(^{236}\) It is generally agreed that the triad is an important structural unit in the *Annales*. See Skutsch (1985) 5-6. The question of the poem’s architecture is complicated, however, by the evidence that a fifteen-book version of the *Annales* existed for some time on its own before books 16-18 were added, on which see Farrell (2008) 9 with bibliography. Granting that the fragmentary state of the *Annales* makes it difficult to make more than tentative claims regarding, in Farrell’s words, “what features may have served to articulate the poem’s structure,” it is nevertheless the case that we can be reasonably confident that major proems opened books 1 and 7, which in an eighteen-book poem at least suggests that the hexad could have been a significant structural unit. While this has to remain extremely speculative regarding the question of Ennius’ design for the poem, we are on firmer ground when it comes to later poets’ reception of the *Annales*. Farrell (2008) 10-4 has persuasively argued that regardless of whether Ennius designed the hexad as a structural unit of the *Annales*, Lucretius took it to be one and modeled the six-book scheme of the *DRN* in part on the perceived hexadic structure of the *Annales*. I too will be primarily concerned with later poets’ interpretation of the structure of the *Annales* rather than Ennius’ own design for the poem.

\(^{237}\) See esp. Hardie (1992) 72: “For Virgil the possibility (or hope) of calling a halt to the endless transformations of history is given vivid realisation in the image of the closing of the Gates of Janus (*Aen. 1.293-4*).” See also Labate (2005) 186. The Senate, in fact, closed the gates three times during the principate of Augustus, a fact mentioned by Augustus in the *Res Gestae* (13).
While the Empedoclean principle of Philia seems to be conspicuous mostly for the brevity of its “reign” in the *Annales* — the doors of the Janus Geminus appear to have been closed for less than a year — it has a privileged position in the form of Venus Genetrix at the beginning of Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura* (1.1-43). Scholars have long recognized that the *De Rerum Natura* is heavily influenced by Empedocles, although the exact nature of this influence is still under debate. It is, however, generally accepted that Venus, the personified natural force of love who holds sway over the four cosmic masses or elements, is a Lucretian version of Empedoclean Philia, and that, furthermore, the erotic tableau of the lovers Mars and Venus later in the proem is an allegorical representation of Empedoclean strife and love. Moreover, Lucretius, as Ennius had done with Empedoclean Discordia, “relates Mars and Venus to human life and contemporary Roman history (1.40…*petens placidam Romanis, incluta, pacem*); the cosmic forces are reflected in human experience.”

However, Lucretius’ relationship to Empedocles, especially in terms of philosophy, is problematic, since as an Epicurean he would have had to reject much of

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238 See, for example, Kranz (1944) 68-107, in which he collects many of the parallel passages. For a recent full-scale study of Lucretius and Empedocles, see Garani (2007).

239 See Furley (1989) 172-82 for the argument that Lucretius has a philosophical affinity with Empedocles; and Sedley (1998) 16-21 for the opposite view, in which he argues directly against Furley’s thesis, although both agree that Lucretius is deeply influenced by Empedocles as a poet. Recently, several scholars have argued that Lucretius programmatically announces Empedocles as a model in the proem to book 1 (Sedley (1998) 21-34. Nelis (2000) 97-100 offers further indirect evidence for Sedley’s argument). David Sedley has gone so far as to argue that Lucretius’ proem in praise of Venus is modeled closely on Empedocles’ own hymn to Aphrodite in the proem to his *Peri Phuseos*. In the absence of Empedocles’ proem, Sedley’s argument must remain speculative.


241 Nelis (2000) 100. Cf. Hardie (1986) 82 on Ennius and Discordia: “If Norden is correct in interpreting this [i.e. fr. 220-1 Sk.] as a description of the demon *Discordia*, we have an example of natural-philosophical material being used to gloss an event in the world of human history (the outbreak of the Second Punic War).”
Empedoclean doctrine. This tension can be witnessed in Lucretius’ praise of
Empedocles in *DRN* I (716-33), where Empedocles appears as the foremost proponent of
the four-element theory, which is incompatible with the Epicurean theory of matter;
nevertheless, Lucretius praises Empedocles in terms used elsewhere only for the great
master, Epicurus.\(^{242}\) It goes without saying that this passage, in which Lucretius rejects a
feature of Empedoclean doctrine while still praising the man himself, is used in the
argument that Lucretius regards Empedocles simply as an important poetic predecessor in
didactic natural philosophy. Still, the most recent monograph on Lucretius’ relationship
to Empedocles uses this same passage as part of an argument that Lucretius owes a
considerable philosophical debt to Empedocles, as well.\(^{243}\) In any case, it is clear that
Lucretius’ subsequent treatment of the themes of love and strife in the poem is never
unproblematically “Empedoclean.” To take just one example, the Venus of the proem, as
a personified force of sexual desire and generation, seems to be a version of the
Empedoclean Aphrodite,\(^{244}\) but this depiction of Venus is countered by the negative
depiction of “love” in Lucretius’ famous diatribe against sexual passion in book 4. There
love or Venus is chiefly a cause of strife and disorder, not unlike the Eros of the second
half of the *Argonautica*, which is itself a revision of the Empedoclean principle of
*Philia*.\(^{245}\)

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\(^{242}\) Farrell (1991) 302-3. For example, as F. notes, the divinity attributed to Empedocles (1.731) is “a
quality to which only the Epicurean sage approximates and only Epicurus himself is said actually to have
achieved.”

\(^{243}\) Garani (2007) 16. She maintains that by praising Empedocles’ *praecelara reperta* (1.732), Lucretius
“points especially to his predecessor’s *epistemological methods of inquiry* into the unseen, methods which
he extensively draws upon and creatively modifies (emphasis is Garani’s).”

\(^{244}\) Although by no means does this exhaust the Lucretian Venus’ field of reference. See Edmunds (2002),
for example, on a possible Hellenistic model for the depiction of Mars and Venus in the proem.

\(^{245}\) Kyriakou (1994) 312-8.
As we saw in the previous chapter, although Lucretius as an Epicurean cannot consider the four elements of earth, water, air and fire as the basic materials of the universe, he nevertheless often uses the four-element scheme as a means of analyzing the macro- rather than micro-structure of the universe, that is, the *maxima mundi membra* (5.243-4) of earth, water, air and fire (5.235-6) whose mortality he discusses in the beginning of book 5 (5.235-323). Lucretius also uses the Empedoclean four-element scheme in arguing that the strife between “elements” (5.380) will eventually lead to the destruction of the world.²⁴⁶ Lucretius, moreover, looks to Empedocles in his account of cosmogony in the same book, where he describes the four great masses of earth, air, water and fire corresponding to the four Empedoclean elements forming out an initial *tempestas* or *discordia* of atoms (5.432-42).²⁴⁷ Therefore, even if Lucretius could not subscribe to the doctrine of Empedocles, he frequently uses Empedocles as a model for his description of strife among the material components of the universe. Because of this, later poets’ imitation of this Lucretian strife among the atoms or elements will often be a

²⁴⁶ Hardie (1986) 170 has used this passage as an example of the fact that “Lucretius frequently adopts ‘elemental’ language, using, in a manner more Empedoclean than Epicurean, the four elements as the basis for the analysis of more complicated structures and events (for example the ‘battle of elements’ at 5.380ff.).” Points of detail in Lucretius’ description of this battle look to Empedocles as an important model, as well. Kranz (1944) 98-9 compares Lucretius’ description of the four elements as the “limbs” (*membra*, 381) of the world to Empedocles’ own use of “limbs” (γυῖα, fr. 33/27) for parts of the universe, which is representative of Empedocles’ use of an analogy between the macrocosm (universe) and the microcosm (human body). Cf. Garani (2007) 71-81on “*mundus as makanthropos*” in Lucretius and Empedocles. Lucretius’ anthropomorphizing description of the strife among the elements (*pio nequaquam...bello*, 381) can be compared to Empedocles’ use of similar imagery in describing the activity of both the four elements and love and strife. Cf. Garani (2007) 67-8 and Hardie (2009a) 120.

²⁴⁷ Lucretius’ description of chaos as the non-existence of the different parts of the universe has an Empedoclean model (cf. frr. 30/24 and 33/27), while the description of the primordial storm of atoms is likely modeled on a similar description in Empedocles of a storm of elements in strife’s cosmogony. See. O’Brien (1969) 270-1. It has to be said that none of the fragments of Empedocles describe a storm of elements at the beginning of the world, but O’Brien (1969) 268-73 makes a compelling case from indirect evidence that Empedocles’ account of strife’s cosmogony featured such a storm.
double allusion to both Lucretius and Empedocles, as in Ovid’s description of chaos at
Met. 1.5-20.\textsuperscript{248}

The final poet in this survey is Vergil, whose influence on subsequent Latin
poetry, even in genres other than epic, cannot be overstated.\textsuperscript{249} Vergil’s use of natural
philosophy and the tradition of natural philosophical poetry has been well studied.
Hardie, for example, has demonstrated the ubiquity of cosmological patterns in the
Aeneid and Farrell has shown that Vergil uses natural philosophy to unify his diverse epic
models in the Georgics.\textsuperscript{250} However, a survey of the connection between love and strife
and philosophy in Vergil has to begin with Eclogues 6 and the philosophizing song of
Silenus (6.31-73). The song — in reported speech — includes a brief cosmogony
exhibiting both Empedoclean and Lucretian features,\textsuperscript{251} and an early history of the world,
before proceeding to a variety of themes, prominent among which is love, a fact
reinforced by the appearance of the Roman elegist Cornelius Gallus (6.64).

The poem has been extensively studied and I will only note here Farrell’s
intriguing suggestion that Vergil’s juxtaposition of natural philosophy and erotic themes
in the song may point to a tradition of interpreting mythological stories, many of which
revolved around the theme of love, allegorically.\textsuperscript{252} We might note too that the beginning
of the song alludes to both Lucretius, the most Empedoclean of Latin poets, and to the

\textsuperscript{248} Hardie (2009a) 144.
\textsuperscript{249} Ovid, for example, begins Amores 1.1 with what is conventionally regarded as an allusion to the first
line of the Aeneid, so that, in one sense, Ovid defines even his elegy in relation to the Aeneid. The best
account of Vergil’s influence on the subsequent epic tradition is Hardie (1993).
\textsuperscript{250} Hardie (1986); Farrell (1991). Other important studies of natural philosophy in Vergil are Ross (1986)
\textsuperscript{251} Stewart (1959) 183-6.
\textsuperscript{252} Farrell (1991) 308. Fabre-Serris (2011) goes further and suggests that the erotic stories in Silenus’ song
can be read in an Empedoclean light, since they feature love transformed into various kinds of strife. See
also Most (1987) for the possible allegorical interpretation of another erotic myth, Peleus’ rape of Thetis.
Empedoclean cosmogony in Apollonius’ song of Orpheus in *Argonautica* 1 (496-502), as if Vergil were acknowledging the influence of earlier Empedoclean poets.\(^{253}\) We know that at least one erotic myth in Homer, the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite in *Odyssey* 8, was interpreted allegorically. Vergil seems to allude to the allegorical background of this myth and perhaps to a wider tradition of interpreting erotic myths allegorically in a direct descendant of Silenus’ song, the song of the nymph Clymene in *Georgics* 4 (345-7):

\[ \text{inter quas curam Clymene narrabat inanem} \\
\text{Volcari, Martisque dolos et dulcia furta,} \\
aque Chao densos divum numerabat amores. \]

In the midst of these [nymphs] Clymene narrated the unrequited love\(^{254}\) of Vulcan, the wiles and stolen pleasures of Mars, and beginning from Chaos she was recounting the frequent amours of the gods.

After alluding to the adultery, Vergil says that Clymene sang about the loves of the gods and that she began her tale from the creation of the universe (*aque Chao*, 347), the same point at which the *Theogony* of Hesiod had begun (cf. \(\pi\rho\dot{o}\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\ \chi\alpha\omicron\zeta\), 116). *Densos divum numerabat amores* (347) can encompass the cosmogonical unions of the primordial gods.\(^{255}\) Vergil’s juxtaposition of this Hesiodic universal history and the Homeric tale of Ares and Aphrodite very likely points to the allegorical interpretation of the latter.\(^{256}\) Therefore, in the song of Clymene Vergil alludes to the allegorical

\(^{253}\) I owe this point to Joseph Farrell. See Farrell (1991) 301-4 for the allusions to Lucretius and Apollonius.  
\(^{254}\) This translation of *curam...inanem* as “unrequited love” follows Hardie’s (1986) 83 interpretation of the passage, in which he takes *curam* in its amatory sense: “Vulcan’s love is then *inanis* in the sense that it is unrequited or made futile by deception.” Fabre-Serris (2011) notes that, in addition to *curam, dolos* and *dulcia furta* are also “elegiac terms.”  
\(^{255}\) Ibid. 84.  
\(^{256}\) Ibid. See also Farrell (1991) 270.
background of the adultery of Mars and Venus, an aspect of this myth that Apollonius and Lucretius before him had exploited.²⁵⁷

At this point I should emphasize the erotic component in the reception of Empedocles’ philosophical poetry. This stems in large part from the erotic nature of the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite, which is one of the main vehicles for the reception of Empedocles’ philosophy in subsequent poetry and sets an important precedent for the extension of allegorical techniques to erotic themes more generally. Poets, however, less interested in the “redemption” of Homer than moralizing allegorists, could also use the allegorical significance of erotic themes as a means of placing human events and history, even in the case of love affairs, in a cosmic setting. This connection of the traditionally humble theme of love to sublime cosmology will have appealed to the paradoxical sensibility of Hellenistic poets and their Roman successors.²⁵⁸

We saw a striking example of this juxtaposition of the sublime and the humble or ridiculous in the toy sphere promised to Eros in Argonautica 3, which is simultaneously a child’s toy and an *imago mundi*. Similarly, Lowell Edmunds has recently offered a counter-balance to the prevailing interpretation of the tableau of Mars and Venus in the *DRN* proem as an allegorical representation of Empedoclean strife and love and therefore simply a symbol of Lucretius as the sublime Empedoclean poet of natural philosophy.²⁵⁹

Edmunds, while maintaining the Empedoclean frame of reference for Mars and Venus,

²⁵⁷ Fabre-Serris (2011) points out that the adultery of Mars and Venus occupies the same position (first) in the list of subjects in Clymene’s song as the cosmogony in the song of Silenus, which, as we know, alludes to the Empedoclean song of Orpheus from Apollonius’ *Argonautica* 1. Fabre-Serris does not say this, but her observation becomes even more meaningful if we remember that in Apollonius’ imitation of *Odyssey* 8 in *Argonautica* 1 Orpheus’ Empedoclean song takes the place of Demodocus’ tale of the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite.

²⁵⁸ See Krevans (2002) on paradoxography and Hellenistic poetics.

²⁵⁹ Edmunds (2002).
has persuasively argued that Lucretius is also modeling his representation of the two
gods on an Hellenistic erotic schema. Edmunds’ argument presents the tableau as a
composite of stylistic registers and poetic traditions. On this reading Lucretius’
representation of Mars and Venus can be seen as an influential precedent in Latin poetry
for the combination of Hellenistic themes and sublime Empedoclean natural philosophy,
in which neither is necessarily privileged over the other, as opposed to the traditional
allegorical reading of the myth that seeks to negate the immoral, erotic aspect of the myth
in favor of the physical “truth” that underlies it.

This congruence of erotic themes and philosophy continues in the Aeneid. As
we saw, the second song of Demodocus in Odyssey 8 was interpreted allegorically by
Empedocles himself and by Apollonius, Lucretius, and Vergil in the Eclogues and
Georgics. A third example of embedded cosmological poetry alluding to both the second
song of Demodocus and the song of Orpheus is the song of Iopas in Aeneid 1 (742-46).
As others have recognized, the song of Iopas at Dido’s banquet for the Trojans and
Carthaginians is the Vergilian equivalent of Demodocus’ performance before the
Phaeacians in Odyssey 8 and therefore performs the function of the three songs sung by
Demodocus. But the natural philosophical content of Iopas’ song, much like Orpheus’
in book 1 of the Argonautica, signals a particular relationship with the song of Ares and
Aphrodite. The consequences are important for our understanding of Vergil’s project

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260 Empedoclean themes also appear in the Georgics. For example, see Nelis (2004) on concordia and
discordia at the end of Georgics 2.
261 Knauer (1964) 165ff.; Hardie (1986) 52-66. However, as Joseph Farrell points out to me, Demodocus’
Trojan War songs become the first part of Aeneas’ narrative (book 2), and Odysseus’ apologoi the second
desparte (book 3).
in the *Aeneid*, as Farrell recognizes: “By selecting as his model a mythological love poem rather than the heroic and “historical” themes of the quarrel and the sack of Troy, Vergil outlines an important part of his epic program, a program inherited from the Hellenistic masters such as Apollonius of Rhodes. Vergilian epic will treat not only of “kings and battles”…but will concern the life of love as well.”

Therefore, while Iopas’ song omits mention of the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite (or any erotic subjects for that matter), the erotic content of the source text is displaced onto the narrative context of Iopas’ song, which will soon be dominated by the love affair of Aeneas and Dido, culminating in its tragic end. In fact, Hunter has argued that this end is anticipated in the song’s allusion to Orpheus’ song in *Argonautica* 1. One of the subjects of the song, namely the deadly Empedoclean Neikos that separates the elements at the beginning of the universe, reflects the *neikos* between Idmon and Idas in its own narrative context. Hunter argues that this Apollonian context is translated into the *Aeneid*, in the form of the “deadly strife” that arises between Dido and Aeneas and the fact that this strife leads to the formation of a new order.

In as much as Vergil’s Dido is an elegiac figure, the action at Carthage represents yet another placement of elegiac motifs in a cosmic setting and an assimilation of the love affair of Dido and Aeneas to the cosmic history in Orpheus’ song. The mutual implication of love and strife in the story of Dido and Aeneas is also seen in the figures of Venus and Cupid, who cause Dido’s tragic passion for Aeneas. One of the source texts for this is Aphrodite’s order to Eros to inflame Medea with passion for Jason in

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264 Hunter (1993) 177.
Argonautica 3. There Eros is primarily a force of strife and disorder, which is repeated in the role of Venus and Cupid in Aeneid 1, since Dido’s passion leads to strife between her and Aeneas and between Carthage and Rome. Indeed, in so far as the affair of Dido and Aeneas is the action for the future Punic Wars, Venus and Cupid in Aeneid 1 are further descendants of Discordia in Annales 7, who bursts open the Gates of War and begins the second Punic War. This is part of a pattern in which Vergil eroticizes the figure of Ennian Discordia, another example of which occurs in Vergil’s treatment of the themes of love and strife in Aeneid 7.

Early in book 7 Vergil invokes the Muse Erato to aid him in undertaking a "greater work" (7.37–46). Vergil announces that one of the major themes of the second half of the Aeneid will be the war in Latium between the Trojans (and allies) and the Italians, which is put into stark relief by the initial description of ancient Latium, where a long peace had reigned under King Latinus (longa...in pace, 46). This dichotomy of peace and war had already been implicit in Vergil’s invocation of Erato, the “lovely” Muse, to help him sing of war. The invocation of Erato suggests a collapse of the categories of love and war similar to that accomplished by the elegiac trope of militia amoris. Indeed, love (of Turnus for Lavinia) is one of the main pretexts for war. A tendentiously elegiac reading of the battle in Latium could reduce it to a rixa between erotic rivals (Turnus and Aeneas). The dichotomy of war and peace is complicated by the presence of amor, which the elegiac poets demonstrate can be used fluidly as a sign of peace (elegiac poetry, as the poetry of peace, is the antithesis of martial epic poetry) or war (militia amoris). Once again, this complicates the simple opposition between love.

and war. It is no coincidence that Vergil’s address to Erato alludes to Apollonius’ address to the same Muse at a similar juncture in his poem. In the *Argonautica* the figure of Eros is like the Homeric Eris in the strife he causes: love and strife are therefore embodied in the single figure of Eros in the *Argonautica*. A similar collapse of antithetical categories is accomplished by Vergil in the figure of the demon Allecto, who is modeled on both the Eros of *Argonautica* 3 and the Discordia of *Annales* 7. These combinatory figures reflect the notion that *amor* can be a form of madness that leads to strife. This is powerfully expressed in Lucretius’ diatribe against *amor* in *DRN* 4 (1058-1287) and Vergil’s similar diatribe in *Georgics* 3 (209-94).

The fact that Vergil uses Apollonius’ Erato to aid him in singing of war indicates Vergil’s recognition that the theme of *eros* in the second half of the *Argonautica* is a problematic one and that it eventually leads to terrible strife. Apollonius had chosen to express this collapse of love and strife in part through Empedoclean cosmology, of which the cosmic toy used to bribe Eros served as a symbol. The address to Erato also anticipates an important “Empedoclean moment” later in book 7, the opening of the Gates of War of the Janus Geminus (*sunt geminae Belli portae*, 7.607) and the transition from peace to war in Latium, which in the *Annales* had been accomplished by the Empedoclean demon Discordia. In the *Aeneid* too the Gates are opened by a

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268 In chapter 3 we will see that Ovid uses the address to Erato at the center of the *Ars* to indicate a similar engagement with the themes of love and strife and Empedoclean cosmology.
269 Janus (*Ianique bifrontis imago*, *Aen.* 7.180) had appeared earlier in book 7 in Vergil’s description of Latinus’ palace (7.170-91). As I plan to discuss elsewhere, this description features a number of Empedoclean themes and also proleptically alludes both to the opening of the Gates of War later in book 7 and to the Shield of Aeneas in book 8.
supernatural force, the discordant goddess Juno, in a clear allusion to the Ennian lines (7.620-2):^{270}

\[
\text{tum regina deum caelo delapsa morantis}
\text{impulit ipsa manu portas, et cardine verso}
\text{Belli ferratos rumpit Saturnia postis.}
\]

Then the Queen herself descending from heaven struck the gates with her hand, and having turned the hinge she bursts open the iron Gates of War.

Therefore, the temple of Janus Geminus symbolizes the (Empedoclean) forces of peace and war or concord and discord in the *Aeneid*.^{271}

The final passage in the *Aeneid* I need to consider (all too briefly) is Vergil’s description of the Shield of Aeneas in book 8.^{272} Like its principal model, the Shield of Achilles from the *Iliad*, it too is a cosmic icon or an *imago mundi*. In his description of the Shield Vergil suggests an equivalency between the cosmos and Roman *imperium*. The ecphrasis features the themes of peace and war, love and strife, as had Homer’s description of the Shield of Achilles; as we know, the representation of a city at war and a city at peace on the latter had been interpreted as a physical allegory of the cosmic principles of Neikos and Philia, thus anticipating the cosmology of Empedocles. The Shield of Aeneas depicts Rome’s historical evolution, in which war and conquest of course played a central role. Naturally, then, the goddess Discordia, the Ennian equivalent of Empedoclean Neikos, appears in the center of the Shield (8.702-3).^{273} But

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^{270} Juno’s relationship to Ennian Discordia can also be seen through Juno’s surrogate Allecto, whom the goddess summons from Hell. Allecto announces herself as a force of discord and offers proof of her descent from the Ennian Discordia at *Aen*. 7.545: *en, perfecta tibi bello discordia tristi*. See Hardie (2009a) 101.


^{272} I rely heavily here on Hardie’s (1986) 336-76 analysis of the Shield in *Cosmos and Imperium*.

^{273} Hardie (2009a) 102.
the Shield also represents the peace (and therefore the suppression of Discordia) accomplished by Augustus; this looks back to Jupiter’s prophecy of the pax Augusta in Aeneid 1, of which the closing of the temple of Janus Geminus and the imprisonment of impius Furor (= Discordia) had been a symbol.

More subtly, the contrast between war and peace is also present on the Shield via Vergil’s allusion to the Empedoclean/Lucretian figures of Mars and Venus from the proem to DRN 1. The allusion comes in Vergil’s description of the she-wolf caring for Romulus and Remus in a cave sacred to their father Mars (Aen. 8.630-4). Vergil uses the same phrase (tereti cervice, 6.333) to describe the she-wolf that Lucretius had used of a recumbent Mars in Venus’ lap (tereti cervice, DRN 1.35). In one sense, then, Vergil is “cleaning up” the Lucretian image of the adulterous lovers by using the same language to describe a maternal scene of the wolf licking Romulus and Remus into shape (illam tereti cervice reflexa / mulcere alternos et corpora fingere lingua, Aen. 8.333-4). Vergil had similarly revised the scandalous Lucretian image by using language from the passage to describe an earlier scene in book 8, Venus’ request of arms for Aeneas from her husband Vulcan and their ensuing sexual encounter; instead of an adulterous affair, a licensed exchange between husband and wife. But, as Vergil surely knew, the Lucretian Mars and Venus are also allegorical representations of Empedoclean Neikos and Philia and therefore Vergil combines allusion to the allegorical tradition of the Shield of Achilles and of Ares/Mars and Aphrodite/Venus, again as part of his project of universalizing

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274 Hardie (1986) 361. He notes other verbal echoes, as well.  
275 Aen. 8.383, genetrix ~ DRN 1.1, genetrix; Aen. 8.394, aeterno...devinctus amore ~ DRN 1.34, aeterno devictus...amore; Aen. 8.406, gremio ~ DRN 1.33, gremium.
Roman history on the Shield. Therefore the *Aeneid*, like the other works in our survey, connects its complex exploration of love and strife to natural philosophy, especially the cosmology of Empedocles.

2.2 Love and Strife in Elegy

With this epic background in mind, I turn from the *Aeneid* to Ovid’s early elegy, a transition made to appear seamless by Ovid’s quotation of the first word of the *Aeneid* in the first word of his opening elegy in the *Amores*. This invitation to compare the *Amores* and the *Aeneid* is hardly gratuitous. The *Amores* takes up certain themes from the *Aeneid*, such as that of Furor, and adapts them into an elegiac context. As we will see, this dialogue with the *Aeneid* includes that poem’s use of Empedoclean themes and imagery.

2.2.1 Love, Strife and militia amoris in the *Amores*

While Ovid’s epic poem the *Metamorphoses* is obviously his most thorough exploration of metamorphosis, it is also the case that transformation is an important theme from the beginning of Ovid’s poetry. To begin with, the prefatory epigram to the *Amores* announces that five books have been transformed into three. Then, in *Am*. 1.1 the poet’s second hexameter is transformed by the god Amor into a pentameter by the theft of a single foot (1.1.1-4) and thus the poem from a martial epic in hexameters to an erotic-elegiac poem in alternating hexameter and pentameter lines, making it, in one sense, a hybrid unit of verse. We should remember that Amor himself is a hybrid, since he was typically represented in antiquity as having the form of a youth or boy, but also

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276 Hardie (1986) 360-1.
277 See Kenney (2002) 27.
278 I thank Joseph Farrell for reminding me of this initial metamorphosis.
279 See Sharrock (1994b) 129-31 on the elegiac couplet as a “hybrid unit.”
the wings of a bird. The poet too, of course, is transformed from a poet of martial epic to an erotic-elegiac poet (cf. Am. 1.1.21-6). In this sense Am. 1.1 anticipates one of the central themes of Ovid’s epic *Metamorphoses*, the transformational power of Amor/amor.

As we saw in our earlier survey of love and strife in the Greco-Roman literary tradition, poets frequently used Empedoclean themes and imagery to describe the transition (metamorphosis?) from strife/war to love/peace and vice versa, since Empedocles more than any other poet or philosopher in antiquity made this process central to his worldview. It is against this literary background that Amor transforms the first poem of *Amores* 1 from a martial, hexameter epic poem to an erotic-elegiac poem, a transformation from war (poetry) to (poetry of) peace that has far-reaching consequences for Ovid’s poetic career.

This theme of a transition from war to peace in Am. 1.1 is not only elaborated in the closely connected Am. 1.2, but also related to contemporary politics. Am. 1.2 famously describes Amor as a Roman triumphator. Importantly, at the end of the poem, the triumph of Amor over hexameter martial epic and the burgeoning epic poet is implicitly compared to the triumphs of Augustus. The poet asks Amor to be as merciful in victory as Caesar (1.2.51-2): *adspice cognati felicia Caesaris arma / qua vicit, victos protegit ille manu* (“Look at the happy arms of your kinsman Caesar — he protects the conquered by the same hand he has used to conquer”). This couplet reminds the reader of the common descent of Augustus and Amor from the goddess Venus. Scandalously,

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perhaps, Ovid encourages the reader to see Amor as a surrogate of Augustus, whose boyish exploits had been similarly ambitious and triumphant.\textsuperscript{281}

The universal domination of Amor reflects that of Augustus. As the poem tells us, Amor, because of his soldiers, Blanditiaee, Error and Furor, can conquer gods and men (1.2.37-8): *his tu militibus superas hominesque deosque; / haec tibi si demas commoda, nudus eris* (“With these soldiers you conquer both men and gods; if you should lose these advantages, you will be naked”). While Cupid’s omnipotence is a traditional theme, the line ending *hominesque deosque* closely resembles expressions used by earlier Latin poets of Jupiter’s universal power.\textsuperscript{282} As McKeown perceptively suggests, it may be relevant that Roman *triumphatores* seem to have appeared in the guise of Jupiter.\textsuperscript{283} Cupid’s triumph is also in an important sense the triumph of Venus — she applauds her son’s victory (1.2.39-40) — just as the rise to power of the Julian family in the *Metamorphoses* can be seen as fulfilling the “masterplot of Venus.”\textsuperscript{284} *Am. 1.2* therefore exploits the delicious paradox that Augustus’ military domination of the globe leads to the reign of Venus, in as much as she is the *genetrix* of the Julian family; this is another transition from Mars/war to Venus/peace.

One might compare the universal power of Amor (*superas hominesque deosque*, 1.2.37) and his mother Venus (*mater*, 1.2.39) and their victory over martial epic poetry and war to Lucretius’ representation of a similarly maternal, cosmic (and Empedoclean) Venus (*Aeneadum genetrix, hominumque divomque voluptas*) triumphant over the wild

\textsuperscript{282} McKeown (1989) *ad Am. 1.2.37-8*.
\textsuperscript{283} Compare this to the usurpation by Eros of Zeus-like power at the beginning of Apollonius, *Argon. 3*.
\textsuperscript{284} Barchiesi (1999), “Venus’ Masterplot.”
works of war (*fera moenera militiae, DRN 1.29*) and Mars by means of *militia amoris* (*devictus vulnere amoris, 1.34*). *Am. 1.2*, however, is more clearly a clever and mischievous realization of Jupiter’s prophecy in *Aen.* 1 of the imprisonment of Furor in the Janus Geminus temple and the *pax Augusta.* While the personified Furor accompanying the triumphant *Amor* alludes to Propertius’ programmatic elegiac *furor* in poem 1.1, Furor also has a strongly Vergilian resonance. Vergil’s *impius Furor* (*Aen.* 1.294) is specifically the fury of civil strife; the humorously military nature of the Ovidian Furor (it is one of the *milites* of *Amor, 1.2.37*) and the idea of Amor as a surrogate of Augustus, whose most famous triumphs had taken place after his victory in the civil wars, both support the Vergilian frame of reference. The triumph of Amor, Augustus’ relative (1.2.51), represents the triumph of the Julian family and the resultant *pax*, but instead of Furor being imprisoned, as in Jupiter’s prophecy of universal *pax* in *Aen.* 1., the *pax Augusta* has enabled elegiac (rather than martial) Furor to walk freely (as part of a military triumph!) in Rome, while conventional virtues like *Mens Bona* and *Pudor* are scandalously bound in the manner of the Vergilian Furor of civil strife.

Therefore, the themes of love and strife are not only remarkably prominent at the beginning of the *Amores*, but these themes are also wittily connected to recent political history and propaganda. The representation of love and strife, however, accommodates

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285 Especially since the only prior personification of Furor in poetry had been Vergil’s. See McKeown (1989) *ad loc.*
286 Cf. *Am.* 1.2.31, *Mens Bona ducetur manibus post terga retortis* and *Aen.* 1.294-6, *Furor impius intus / saeva sedens super arma et centum vinctus aenis / post tergum nodis fremet horridus ore cruento.* As Phillips (1980) 275 intriguingly argues, the pair *Mens Bona* and *Pudor* are substituted in the *Amores* for the Vergilian pair of *Fides* and *Vesta* (*Aen.* 1.292) referred to by Jupiter immediately before his description of Furor. Phillips notes that *Vesta* is closely connected to *pudor.*
287 Love and strife, especially in the form of Venus and Mars, the divine ancestors of the Roman people — and the imperial family in particular —, had a strong presence in the Augustan iconographic program. In
not only a Julian interpretation, but also an Empedoclean one. Indeed, in Am. 1.2 Ovid uses the Vergilian Furor, a descendant of Empedoclean Neikos, to announce the earth-shaking shift at the beginning of his poetry — one that is also related to the equally earth-shaking political, and by extension, cosmic ascendancy of Venus’ family — from war to peace and from literal militia to milita amoris.

Augustus’ ascendancy and the realization of Jupiter’s prophecy represents an ending — one might remember Jupiter’s entrance into the Aeneid, et iam finis erat, “already it was the end” (1.223) — but in the Amores this is transformed into a beginning. The release of Furor or Discordia had previously represented poetic beginnings, in the sense that Annales 7 and Aeneid 7 are poetic openings. In terms of the Aeneid, Don Fowler has offered a gendered reading of Vergilian Furor, in which he identifies female furor and poetic energy — Juno bursts open the Gates of War in Aen. 7 and her main agent of war is the female Allecto, discordia incarnate. Fowler says “Male power when manifested as control becomes a lack of power, in that it stops things happening, it shuts gates, whereas female furor opens the gates and starts things up: it lets the genius out of the bottle, and inspires the poet to further poetry.” Fowler perceptively acknowledges the sexual undercurrents roiling just beneath the surface of furor in the Aeneid: the association of martial furor and sexual furor in the second half of the poem is emblematized in Vergil’s address to Erato for aid in singing of war. It is

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general, see Zanker (1988) 195-201; Kuttner (1995) 22-5. This is best seen in the intersecting Julian and Augustan Fora, which featured, respectively, the temple of Venus Genetrix and temple of Mars Ultor. As Barchiesi (2002) 6 suggests, this may have led some contemporary “readers” of the monuments to speculate about possible Empedoclean interpretations of their symbolism.  
against this background, then, that Ovid, confronted by an end — the pax Augusta — ingeniously transforms it into a beginning by unleashing an eroticized Furor that — in Ovid’s clever hands — has been made possible by the ascendancy of Augustus (and therefore his relatives Amor and Venus) and the end of martial Furor.

As we know, Philip Hardie has articulated the importance of Empedoclean themes in the epic tradition, using the term “Empedoclean epos” to describe Ovid’s tendentious recasting of this tradition in Metamorphoses 15. In the Amores Ovid clearly situates his elegy in relation to the epic tradition by making the first word of the Aeneid, arma, also the first word in his elegiac Amores; however, this signals the beginning of a dialogue with not only the Aeneid, but also the wider epic tradition, especially in terms of the opposition between love and war and the conflation of the two in militia amoris. To offer just one further example, Ovid’s presentation of an amor closely tied to Furor looks to not only Prop. 1.1, but also to the Lucretian and Vergilian diatribes against amor in the DRN and Georgics, where amor is a type of furor. It has become increasingly clear that Empedocles’ poem about cosmic Neikos and Philia is a crucially important part of the epic tradition; and it therefore seems reasonable that Ovid, in cleverly and humorously incorporating epic poetry into his Amores, also incorporates Empedoclean themes and imagery. While the Furor of Am. 1.2 is descended from Vergilian Furor and therefore ultimately Ennius’ Empedoclean Discordia, Empedocles is only in the distant background of the beginning of the Amores. Still, one of the things that the beginning of the collection accomplishes is to make epic a programmatic frame of reference for Ovid’s elegy, especially in terms of the themes of love and strife, peace and war. At the beginning of
the *Amores* Ovid as an elegiac poet paradoxically lays claim to the epic tradition, much as he complains Amor ambitiously lays hold of a new “genre,” epic, in *Am.* 1.1 (13–4): *sunt tibi magna, puer, nimiumque potentia regna: / cur opus affectas, ambitiose, novum?* (“Your kingdoms, boy, are great and too powerful; why do you ambitiously lay hold of a new genre?”).  

### 2.2.2 Love and Strife in Tibullus and Propertius as predecessors to the *Amores*

Ovid’s treatment of love and strife in his elegy comes into greater focus by comparison with the other two principal surviving Roman elegists, Tibullus and Propertius. One of the defining characteristics of Roman elegy as a genre is the elegiac poet’s definition of his poetry against epic. This is often glossed by the opposition of love and war, a frequent component of which is the conceit of *militia amoris*. While both of these *topoi* are present in the poetry of all three principal Roman elegists, commentators generally recognize that they are explored in more detail in the elegy of Ovid than in that of Tibullus or Propertius.

Duncan Kennedy’s remarks on *Am.* 1.1 can be a paradigmatic example:

> “The theme of the mistress is not central to the *Amores* in the way that it is to Propertius I, but the themes of *arma*, the male equipment [wink wink], and *violenta...bella*, i.e. *rixae*, arguably are.”

As we will see in a moment, love and strife and *militia amoris* are literally central in the first book of the *Amores*.

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290 As Buchan (1995) 65–6 says, “In 1.1, Cupid is guilty of genre imperialism; he refuses to stay within the confines of elegy, but instead incorporates Ovid’s epic talents into his sphere, thus creating a *novum...opus.*”


292 Kennedy (1993) 59. See also ibid. 61. The relative unimportance of Corinna to the *Amores* in comparison to Delia in Tibullus and Cynthia in Propertius is a commonplace. Breitzigheimer (2001) has
This does not mean, of course, that *militia amoris* is unimportant in the elegy of Tibullus or Propertius. It occurs, for example, in a programmatic context at the end of the first poem in Tibullus’ first book (1.1.73-7):

```
nunc levis est tractanda Venus, dum **frangere postes**
non pudet et **rixas** insinuisse iuvat.
hic ego **dux miles**que bonus: vos, signa tubaeque,
ite procul, cupidis vulnera ferte viris,
ferte et opes: ego composito securus acervo
despiciam dites despiciamque famem.
```

Now is the time for light-hearted Venus to be practiced, while it is not shameful to break in doors and it is pleasurable to incite quarrels. In this I am a general and a good soldier: you, military standards and trumpets, be gone, bring wounds to greedy men, and bring them wealth: with my own store heaped up, secure, I will despise wealth and despise hunger.

In light of the “release” of Furor in *Am. 1.2*, which I compared to poetic openings in *Annales 7* and *Aeneid 7*, it is notable that the first poem of Tibullus’ first book contains the image of breaking open the doors of the mistress. Although the *topos* of forcing entry to the mistress’ house is taken from comedy,\(^{294}\) the reference to bursting open doors at a point of poetic opening — the first poem in Tibullus’ first book — may also playfully allude to the Ennian and Vergilian use of related imagery in epic “openings,” in the sense of opening new narratives.\(^{295}\) We can compare Tibullus 1.1.73-74 to Ennius *Annales 225-6 Sk.: postquam Discordia taetra / Belli ferratos postes portasque refregit* ("Then monstrous Discord broke open the iron doors and the Gates of War"). As Ennius’

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\(^{293}\) Also recently made the argument that the *Amores* are not organized around the poet’s relationship to Corinna.

\(^{294}\) In contrast, the middle poems of books 1 of Tibullus (5 and 6) and Propertius (11 and 12) concentrate on the poet’s mistress.

\(^{295}\) At *Ars 3.71, nec tua francetur nocturna ianua rixa* (nor will your door be broken by a nighttime quarrel”), Ovid uses the closing of the (elegiac) doors or, more precisely, their not being broken, as part of the argument that the women he is addressing in *Ars 3* will one day no longer be desirable objects for lovers – their life as elegiac *puellae* will come to a close.
Discordia heralded the start of war, the opening of the mistresses’ door in Tibullus heralds the start of love as war (cf. *hic ego dux milesque bonus*, 75). A second (ironic) intertext for the Tibullan lines may be Lucretius’ own adaptation of the Ennian fragment in the beginning of the *De Rerum Natura* in his praise of Epicurus’ shattering of the gates of nature (1.66-71):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{primum Graius homo mortalis tollere contra} \\
\text{est oculos ausus primusque obsistere contra;} \\
\text{quam neque fama deum nec fulmina nec minitanti} \\
\text{murmur compressit caelum, sed eo magis acrem} \\
\text{irritat animi virtutem, effringere ut arta} \\
\text{naturae primus portarum claustra cupiret.}
\end{align*}
\]

A Greek man first dared to raise his mortal eyes against [sc. religion] and first dared to stand against her; neither the rumor of the gods nor thunderbolts nor the sky and its threatening murmur suppressed him, but all the more they incite the ardent manliness of his soul, so that he desires to be the first to break the tightly secured bolts of nature’s gates.

Lucretius recognized the use of the Ennian image as an opening device and applied it to the beginning of his poem.\(^\text{296}\) Tibullus, in turn, may use the Ennian and Lucretian imagery in the opening of his elegy.\(^\text{297}\) This idea gains support if there are other Lucretian elements in the background of Tibullus 1.1, namely the erotic tableau of Mars and Venus.\(^\text{298}\) As I will discuss in just a moment, Tibullus never explicitly refers to the Mars and Venus myth, but the two gods do bracket poem 1.1 (*Martia cui somnos classica pulsa fugent*, 1.4 and *nunc levis est tractanda Venus dum frangere postes*, 1.73), Venus

\(^{296}\) Fowler (1998) 154-74, although focusing on the opening of the gates in the *Aeneid*, notes that “there are many more gates to take into consideration,” one of which is this passage from the *DRN*. His discussion does not extend to elegy, however.

\(^{297}\) Although see Fowler (1998) 167 for his comparison of Juno’s opening of the Gates of War in the *Aeneid* to Epicurus’ assault on the gates of nature at *DRN* 1.66-78. Fowler observes that “this [sc. *DRN* 1.66-78] shares with the *Aeneid* a use of sexual imagery for the opening of the gates.”

\(^{298}\) O’Rourke (2013) has recently suggested this in a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Philological Association.
appearing, as we saw, in the context of breaking open the lover’s doors. The
transition from Mars to Venus and *militia amoris* is a typically elegiac one, and the
expression of the relationship between the two may owe something to the Lucretius’
tableau of the Empedoclean figures of Mars and Venus in the *DRN* I proem.

Tibullus’ use of the image of breaking open of doors and the inauguration of
*militia amoris* offers an important elegiac precedent for Ovid’s connection of his elegiac
Furor to the Vergilian Furor of *Aeneid* I. It is left to Ovid to make the association
between the gates of war and the doors of the *puella* explicit.299 Of course, Tibullus also
defines elegy in programmatic passages through the opposition of love and war, as in
poems 1.1 and 1.10.300 Therefore, as Monica Gale has said, it is in Tibullus that “for the
first time, *militia amoris* becomes the defining feature of a poetic programme and a way
of life: by speaking of love in terms of *militia*, Tibullus both contrasts it with literal
warfare and simultaneously asserts that love and love-poetry have equal validity with a
more conventionally respectable career.”301

While Tibullus defines his elegy in part by its opposition to war and exploits the
conceit of *militia amoris* as part of this more general opposition, neither of these motifs is
explored in much detail in the two books of Tibullus.302 Most of his references, especially
to *militia amoris*, are made in passing. Propertius, however, develops the contrasts and
similarities between love and war to a greater degree than Tibullus, especially in Books 2

299 *Am.* 1.9.20: *hic portas frangit, at ille fores* (this one [i.e. the soldier] shatters gates, that one [i.e. the
lover] doors”).
300 This opposition also occurs in 1.2.67-80, 2.4.16 and 2.6.
301 Gale (1997) 79.
302 The theme of *militia amoris* occurs in 1.1.73-7, 1.2.65-8, 1.3.82, 1.10.53, 1.10.53, 2.1-10, 2.1.71-2,
2.3.33-50, 2.5.106, 2.6.1-18. The opposition of love and war in 1.1, 1.2.65-8, 1.10, 2.4.16, 2.6.
and 3. Still, it is fair to say that it is the contrast, rather than the similarity, between love and war with which Propertius is principally concerned. Most of his references to militia amoris are relatively brief and, unlike the opposition of love and war (or elegy and epic), are generally excluded from programmatic contexts; and even the opposition of love and war is subordinated to Propertius’ exploration of his relationship with Cynthia, especially in the first book. This focus is famously announced in the first line, indeed the first word of the *Monobiblos* (1.1.1): *Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis.* Compare this to the opening line of *Amores* 1.1, in which the first word is *arma* (1.1.1): *arma gravi numero violentaque bella parabam.* This militarization of Propertius continues in the second poem. In Prop. 1.2 the poet had said that Amor is naked and therefore has no love for the “cosmetologist” (8): *nudus Amor formae non amat artificem.* In *Am.* 1.2 Amor is pointedly not “naked.” Instead he is accompanied by his “soldiers” Error and Furor (37-8): *his tu [sc. Amor] militibus [sc. Error and Furor] superas hominesque deosque; / haec tibi si demas commoda, nudus eris.*

This point need not be pressed further, since the figure of militia amoris is certainly an important feature of the poetry of Tibullus and Propertius, but there are two other points of contrast between Ovid, on the one hand, and Tibullus and Propertius on the other, that are related to militia amoris and that more clearly demonstrate Ovid’s difference from these other elegists. The first is Ovid’s use of the Homeric tale of the

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303 Gale (1997) 79.
304 The topos occurs at 1.6.29-30, 2.1.45, 2.12.15-20, 2.15.8, 3.5.2, 3.6.41-42, 3.8 (the argument of this poem is that rixae are a sign of love), 3.8.29-34, 3.20.16, 4.8.88.
305 However, cepit may be a muted allusion to militia amoris, since capio can mean to “seize or capture by military action (OLD (6)).
adultery of Mars and Venus and the second his humorous connection of elegiac motifs such as *militia amoris* to cosmology.

Ovid’s interest in the pair of Mars and Venus and specifically the myth of their adultery is largely unsurprising: the myth can appear as if it had been created for the purposes of elegiac poetry, since it can be exploited in both the conventional elegiac opposition of love and war and in the trope of *militia amoris*. In opposing love and war, the elegiac poets argue that love is superior to war; and the Homeric myth, in which the god of war, Mars, succumbs to the charms of the goddess of love, Venus, is a compelling piece of evidence in support of the superiority of love. On the other hand, it can be adduced as an archetype of the trope of *militia amoris* or, in Ovid’s formulation at *Am.* 1.9.1, the argument that *militat omnis amans*, since it demonstrates that Mars, the soldier par excellence, is also a lover. The myth represents an ironic collapse of two normally antithetical categories, soldier and lover, which is one of the main objectives of the conceit of *militia amoris*, making the myth a veritable embodiment of the conceit.

The myth and its connection to *militia amoris* relate to a number of the most important issues in Augustan poetry, such as the question of genre. *Militia amoris*, in the sense that it is both an acceptance and a rejection of *militia* or both is and is not *militia*, reflects the dynamism that characterizes much of Augustan poetry’s approach to genre and is perhaps especially characteristic of Ovid. 306 This dynamism is embodied in *militia amoris*: the trope both observes the expected bounds of elegy in the sense that it subordinates war (and martial epic in hexameters) to love (and erotic elegy) and creatively transgresses it in the sense that it makes love a form of war. The adultery of

Mars and Venus will have been an especially useful expression of this generic dynamism, since it is an erotic myth that first appeared in an epic poem and has been taken by scholars to be emblematic of themes such as love and cunning intelligence that distinguish the *Odyssey* from the *Iliad* and enable it to be aligned with other poetic genres like elegy. It is therefore no surprise that Ovid often appeals to the myth in his poetry. It only becomes remarkable in light of the fact that Mars and Venus as a pair, including the myth of their adultery, hardly feature at all in the elegy of Tibullus and Propertius. Of course, the two gods often appear individually in both poets, especially Venus as the goddess of love and elegy, but it is striking that they are almost never juxtaposed. As we will see, this is far from the case for Ovid.

In this survey of love and strife in the tradition of Greco-Roman poetry before Ovid, I have demonstrated that the allegorical interpretation of the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite is a decisive factor in the reception of Empedoclean images and ideas in subsequent poetry. Arguably, these two figures became the most common symbol of the

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307 I am considering only the two books usually attributed to Tibullus, although the poems in the *Corpus Tibullianum* are an interesting case, since they contain a considerable number of Ovidian parallels, and scholars have often argued for Ovidian authorship of some of the poems, on which see the bibliography collected in Fredericks (1976) 761, n. 1. In any case, as we saw, Tibullus may obliquely allude to the Lucretian Mars and Venus in poem 1.1, but he nowhere explicitly refers to their mythological background as lovers. In terms of the *Corpus Tibullianum*, there is an oblique reference to the adultery of Mars and Venus in poem 3.8. Fabre-Serris (2011) has suggested that this poem alludes to the image of Mars and Venus at the beginning of the *DRN*. The pair is not much more prominent in Propertius. They appear in rather close proximity in poem 3.4 (11,19). This also appears to allude to the Lucretian tableau of Mars and Venus, as O’Rourke (2013) has suggested. In the next poem, 3.5, Propertius looks ahead to studying natural philosophy in the manner of Lucretius (*naturae...mores*, 3.5.25). Propertius also refers to the myth in passing at 2.32.33-34: *ipsa Venus, quamvis corrupta libidine Martis*, / *non minus in caelo semper honesta fuit*. Fabre-Serris (2011) has suggested that this couplet alludes jokingly to the cosmogonic reading of the Homeric myth, but she does not elaborate. The couplet appears in a strongly Gallan context in Propertius 2.32 and Fabre-Serris uses it as part of her argument that the Homeric myth also appeared in Gallus’ *Amores*. Leaving aside this argument and her overall thesis that Gallus adapted Empedocles themes in his elegy, I do not see any strong reason to think that Propertius is referring to the allegorical background of the myth.

forces of love and strife in the poetic tradition. Ovid’s use of the two gods and the
myth of their adultery in his early elegy, therefore, opens the way for him to playfully
exploit its philosophical associations in his elegiac poetry. While the cosmological
associations of the two figures are relatively muted in the Amores, they will become
increasingly prominent as Ovid ascends the ladder of elegy from the Amores to the Ars
Amatoria and ultimately to the “super-elegy” of the Fasti. Hardie has recently outlined
the way in which such elegiac motifs as militia amoris can extend beyond the relatively
narrow bounds that erotic elegy conventionally sets for itself:309

Through the figure of Venus the paradoxes of militia amoris extend to
metaphysical and political oppositions and fusions of love and war, peace and war: already in the Georgics in the play on the arts of war and the (agricultural) arts of peace; in the Aeneid in such things as the implied presence of both Mars and Venus at the beginnings of Roman history in the description of the shield (Hardie 1986: 360), and the infolding of both war and peace in the omen of Italian horses as interpreted by Anchises at Aen. 3.540-3.

This is all the more true if an elegiac poet uses the myth of Mars and Venus as an
illustration of militia amoris, since it had long been interpreted as an allegory of
Empedoclean cosmology and the interaction of love and strife. Elegy, however, had a
conventional antipathy towards philosophy, as can be seen in a number of passages from
Tibullus and Propertius that contain either rejections of didactic natural philosophy as
useless to the lover or defer its composition until their old age.310 While Ovid keeps to this
elegiac ethos for the most part in the Amores, he also humorously introduces
cosmological themes and the tradition of cosmological poetry into his Amores and begins
to lay the ground for the generic enrichment of elegy through philosophical motifs, most

309 Hardie (2009c) 108, n. 50.
310 Tib. 2.4.15-20; Prop. 2.34.27-30, 51-4, 3.5.23-8. Cf. Posidippus Anth. Pal. 5.134.3-4.
prominently, as we will see, in the central poems of the first book. The prominence of Mars and Venus at the center of the first book of the Amores, like their central position in the later Fasti, reflects their centrality in Ovid’s poetic universe.

2.2.3 Mars, Venus and the Center of Amores

As we saw, the opposition of love (poetry) and war (poetry) and the trope of militia amoris form the subject of the opening poems in the first book of the Amores. Duncan Kennedy’s suggestion that arma and violenta bella are central to the Amores is borne out quite literally by the predominance of these themes in the central poems (7, 8, 9) of the first book. While I am going to focus on Am. 1.8 and 1.9, Am. 1.7 needs to be briefly mentioned as part of this complex, since it ingeniously adapts the conceit of Am. 1.2, where Amor had been depicted as a military triumphator accompanied by soldiers like Furor. In Am. 1.7 the poet becomes the embodiment of furor (Am. 1.7.1-4):

adde manus in vincla meas (meruere catenas),
dum furor omnis abit, si quis amicus ades.
nam furor in dominam temeraria bracchia movit;
flet mea vesana laesa puella manu.

Put my hands into chains (they have deserved them), until all my madness departs, if any of you, my friends, are present. For madness has brought my reckless hands against my mistress; my girl weeps, injured by my crazed hand.

The poet’s ironic assertion that he should be granted a magnificent triumph for conquering his mistress (1.7.35-40) underscores the allusion to Am. 1.2 and Cupid’s triumph. As we saw, the quotation of the Aeneid in the first line of Amores 1.1 and the appearance of Furor in Am. 1.2 creates a structural correspondence between the beginning of book 1 of the Amores and the beginning of the Aeneid. The personified Furor technically makes its final (and only) appearance in Aen. 1, although many iterations of
furor appear in the rest of the poem. But Furor is implicitly present in Aen. 7 through Juno’s bursting open of the Gates of War — Furor’s prison in Aen. 1 — and through the characters overcome by furor. This implies that the opening of the Gates of War releases Furor and, indeed, furor plays an important role in the war in Latium, culminating in Aeneas’ furor and murder of Turnus at the end of the poem. 311

Not coincidentally, furor is the dominant motif in Am. 1.7. Ovid, I suggest, is playing upon the implicit breaking open of the Gates of War and release of Furor in Aen. 7 (and its model, the breaking open of the Gates of War by Empedoclean Discordia in Ann. 7) — note the sevens —, 312 although in an example of allusive variatio, the poet asks that he (possessed by furor) be bound in the manner of Furor in Aen. 1. 313 This poem contains several other allusions to the Aeneid, 314 but it is most important for our purposes that Ovid again uses the opening and closure of the Empedoclean monument of Janus Geminus from the Aeneid and the Annales as part of his elegiac treatment of militia amoris. Am. 1.7, therefore, anticipates the more sustained treatment of Empedoclean themes, most prominently Mars and Venus, in Am. 1.8 and 1.9. The pair Mars and Venus are introduced into poem 8 in book 1 of the Amores, just as the same pair forms an

312 I thank Joseph Farrell for reminding me that Ann. 7 is also relevant in these parallel “sevens.”
313 As Joseph Farrell points out to me, the shifting of poetic topoi between beginnings, middles and ends is characteristic of Ovid and other poets. A good example is the Callimachean Dichterweihe, which moves from Aet. 1 to Ecl. 6 to Serm. 1.10 and Carm. 4.15 and then Am. 1.1. One further example is the Ennian Dream of Homer in Ann. 1, which is then imitated in Aen. 6 and finally in Met. 15 (see Hardie (1995) 211). In terms of the relationship between the Amores and Aeneid, Am. 1.6 had already introduced an elegiac equivalent to the Gates of War in the form of the ianitor (cf. Janus Geminus) and the doors of the puella. The correspondence between Am. 1.7 and Aen. 7 is further reinforced by Ovid’s allusion in the poem to Vergil’s brief ecphrasis of Turnus’ shield (Aen. 7.789-92), also in book 7.
314 Morrison (1992) collects and discusses the parallels.
important part of the background of the Vergilian exploration of Empedoclean themes in *Aen.* 8, which further strengthens the parallel between *Am.* 1.7 and *Aen.* 7.\(^{315}\)

*Amores* 1.8

*Am.* 1.8 is a poem of remarkable prominence in the three-book collection of the *Amores*.\(^ {316}\) It is not only the central poem in the first book of the *Amores* — normally a privileged place in a Latin poetry book\(^ {317}\) — but also the longest poem in the entire collection of *Amores*. In fact, the inset speech of the *lena* Dipsas is by itself longer (86 lines) than all but one of the other poems in the *Amores* (3.6). Dipsas, therefore, is the most fully developed “poetic” voice in the *Amores* besides that of the poet himself.\(^ {318}\) All of this suggests that Ovid attaches a great deal of importance to the elegy. As I will argue, Dipsas is an embodiment of the poetic tradition as seen through the eyes of Ovidian elegy. This is in spite of the fact that the poet denigrates the *lena* and physically threatens her at the end of the poem (1.8.109-14). As Myers has demonstrated in her seminal discussion of the *lena* in Latin elegy, the poet’s antagonistic stance towards the *lena* masks the fact that she is in some sense an alter ego for the poet.\(^ {319}\)

If Dipsas offers us a view of the poetic tradition from the perspective of Ovidian elegy, what does it look like? It is kaleidoscopic, encompassing a wide variety of models, from unsurprising ones such as elegy and comedy, to the more surprising, such as martial

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\(^{315}\) Vergil alludes to the Lucretian/Empedoclean Mars and Venus from the *DRN* 1 proem several times in *Aen.* 8, first in his description of Venus’ request to her husband Vulcan for arms for Aeneas (see Edmunds (2002) 346; Casali (2006) 189-94), and then in the ecphrasis of the Shield of Aeneas (see Hardie (1986) 360-1).


\(^{317}\) See, for example, Crabbé (1981) on *Metamorphoses* 8 and more recently Kyriakidis and DeMartino, eds. (2004), *Middles in Latin Poetry*.

\(^{318}\) Myers (1996) 2 also notes that Dipsas is the only female voice in the *Amores*.

\(^{319}\) Myers (1996). Also see Labate (1977) 285-309 specifically on similarities between the poet and Dipsas.
epic and, as I will suggest, the didactic epics of Lucretius and especially Empedocles. Indeed, I will argue that several of the features of the poetic tradition as they appear through the eyes (Dipsas’ double pupils in each of her eyes can be a figure for the multiple intertexts of the poem) of Am. 1.8 can appear as “Empedoclean”: notably, in the tradition’s metamorphic aspect and, above all, in the centrality of the cosmic forces of Mars and Venus.

Philip Hardie has recently explored the idea that the Vergilian Fama from book 4 of the Aeneid is a representation of the epic tradition. Sévérine Clément-Tarantino has taken this further and argued that Fama in the Aeneid can be seen as an embodiment of the wider Greco-Roman literary tradition in light of the almost incredible number of intertexts in the Fama episode in the Aeneid. Of course, one of the meanings of fama is precisely “tradition.” I bring up the Vergilian Fama because Ovid quite surprisingly identifies the lena Dipsas with Fama. This identification is grounded in close verbal parallels between Ovid’s description of Dipsas and Vergil’s of Fama. Compare Am. 1.8.13-6,

\[
\text{hanc ego nocturnas versam volitare per umbras}
\]
\[
\text{suspicer et pluma corpus anile tegi.}
\]
\[
\text{suspicer, et fama est. oculis quoque pupula duplex}
\]
\[
\text{fulminat, et gemino lumen ab orbe venit.}
\]

I suspect that she flies transformed through the shadows of night and that her old body is covered with plumage. I suspect this, and rumor bears it out. A double pupil also flashes from her eyes, and a light comes from her twin orbs.

\[^{320}\text{On the diverse models for the elegy, see McKeown (1989) 198-201. On the elegy’s relationship to Prop. 4.5, the Acanthis elegy, see Morgan (1977). More generally on other elegiac lenae see Myers (1996).}
\[^{322}\text{Clément-Tarantino (2006).}
\[^{323}\text{OLD s.v. fama (3).}\]
to Vergil’s description of Fama at *Aen*. 4.181-5:

monstrum horrendum, ingens, cui quot sunt *corpore plumae*,
tot vigiles *oculi* subter (mirabile dictu),
tot linguæ, totidem ora sonant, tot subrigit auris.

*noc* *e* *v* *o* *l* *a* *t* *c* *a* *e* *l* *i* *m* *e* *d* *i* *o* *t* *e* *r* *r* *a* *q* *u* *e* *p* *e* *r* *u* *m* *b* *r* *a* *m*

stridens, nec dulci declinat *lumina* somno;

A terrible, huge monster, who, for the many feathers on her body, has as many searching eyes underneath – incredible to say – as many tongues, as many mouths ring out, as many ears prick up. She flies by night through the darkness, striding in between heaven and earth, nor do the lights of her eyes fall shut in sweet sleep.

After her (partial?) metamorphosis, Dipsas’ aged body is covered in feathers (*pluma corpus anile tegi*, 14), just as feathers cover Fama’s body (*cui quot sunt corpore plumae*, 181); Dipsas, like Fama (*n* *o* *c* *t* *e* * v* *o* *l* *a* *t* *...* *p* *e* *r* * u* *m* *b* *r* *a* *m*, 184), flies through the shadows of the night, *hanc ego nocturnas versam volitare per umbras / suspicious* (13).324 These are the closest lexical parallels, but as can be seen from the passages above, lines 13-6 of *Am*. 1.8 are saturated with allusions to the Vergilian passage: Dipsas’ eyes are compared to thunderbolts (*fulminat*, 16), while Fama is described like a thunderbolt.325 The prodigy of Dipsas’ double pupils (*pupula duplex*, 15) in each of her two eyes (*geminus orbis*, 16) corresponds to Fama’s miraculous *tot...oculi* (184).

While there is no single piece of evidence clinching the argument that Dipsas is modeled on Fama, line 15 comes close. The poet explicitly appeals to *fama* or “tradition” for his suspicion that Dipsas can transform herself into a Fama-like bird: *suspicor, et fama est*. This is typically translated along the lines of “I suspect [this is true], and rumor bears me out,” but *et fama est*, if taken parenthetically, can be read as “and she [i.e.

324 Hardie (2012) 390. Regarding Dipsas’ transformation into a bird, he also notes that Fama is compared to a screech-owl.
325 Hardie (2009a) 70-3 observes that Vergil depicts Fama as a Lucretian thunderbolt. Hardie (2012) 390 notes that both Dipsas and Fama “share...an affinity with the thunderbolt.”
Dipsas] is Fama.” If Ovid’s Dipsas is a version of the Vergilian Fama, then we might also suggest that Dipsas, like Fama, is a representation of the poetic tradition. What can the figure of Dipsas and her “song” tell us about Ovid’s view of this tradition?

I can begin by observing the variety of models for Dipsas. She is clearly modeled on earlier lena figures. The lena, in fact, is one of erotic elegy’s most familiar characters and, in this sense, Dipsas is a fundamentally elegiac figure. But her duplicity, symbolized by her double pupils (pupula duplex, 1.8.15) in her twin eyes (gemino...ab orbe, 1.8.16), her capacity for metamorphosis (versam, 1.8.13), and perhaps the sense she is some kind of hybrid, militates against any single or uniform interpretation of her character. She is not simply an elegiac figure. She is the comic, humble lena from elegy, but she is also akin to the Vergilian Fama, a representation of the epic sublime. The extraordinary length of the poem in the elegiac collection of the Amores gives the impression that the poem itself is nearly bursting the bounds of erotic elegy. The stylistic range of the poem is hinted at in the beginning, where the poet uses, in McKeown’s words, “a grand circumlocution for dawn” while comically introducing Dipsas as a drunk (1.8.3-4). This anticipates the mock-epic connotations of the comparison of the lena to the Vergilian epic Fama. This variety of stylistic and generic registers in the poem also includes didactic poetry, since Dipsas offers erotic instruction to the puella, indeed, she

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326 See Clément-Tarantino (2006) 216 and Hardie (2012) 390. Cf. Hinds (1998) 2 on the “Alexandrian footnote,” which is the “signalling of specific allusion by a poet through seemingly general appeals to tradition and report, such as ‘the story goes’ (fama est)...”

327 Once again, see Myers (1996).

328 The poet says he suspects that she is transformed (versam, 1.8.13) and that her aged body is covered in feathers (suspicor et pluma corpus anile tegi, 1.8.14). Does this mean she has completely transformed into a bird or is she rather a bird-woman?

329 For Vergil’s Fama as an embodiment of the epic sublime see Hardie (2009a) 67-135.
anticipates the poet-teacher of the *Ars Amatoria* on several key points. According to the poet, Dipsas even has a didactic *propositum*, although it is the scandalous one of profaning modest beds (1.8.19): *haec sibi proposuit thalamos temerare pudicos* (“she has set herself the task of profaning modest beds”).

Dipsas is also connected to a wider tradition of poetry than simply elegy through the power of her *carmina*. We learn that Dipsas knows the *carmina* of sorceresses such as Circe and Medea (1.8.5). Like these figures she has power over nature, including the elements (1.8.5-12):

> illa magas artes Aeaeaque carmina novit  
> inque caput liquidas arte recurvat *aqua*;  
> scit bene, quid gramen, quid torto concita rhombo  
> licia, quid valeat virus amantis equae.  
> cum voluit, toto glomerantur *nubila* caelo;  
> cum voluit, puro fulget in orbe dies.  
> sanguine, siqua fides, stillantia *sidera* vidi;  
> purpureus Lunae sanguine vultus erat.

She knows magic arts and Aeaean songs and can turn liquid waters back onto their source through her art; she knows well the potency of herbs, of the threads produced by the turning of the rhombus, and of hippomanes. Whenever she wishes, the clouds gather together throughout the sky; whenever she wishes, the day is resplendent in the clear vault. If you find me credible, I have seen the stars dripping with blood; the face of the moon was reddened with blood.

As we saw, she is also a shape-shifter and has the ability to fly, a common metaphor for poetry. We also learn that she is a necromancer, summoning (poetic?) ancestors from the grave (1.8.17): *evocat antiquis proavos atavosque sepulcris* (“she summons forefathers and ancestors from their ancient sepulchers”).

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330 To use only one example, Dipsas tells her pupil to encourage rivals for her love (1.8.95-6): *ne securus amet nullo rivale, caveto; / non bene, si tollas proelia, durat amor*. Cf. *Ars* 2.436: *si nulla subest aemula, languet amor.*

331 On flight as a metaphor for poetry, see Sharrock (1994b) 96.
Although these powers mark her as a sorceress, witches and wizards did not have a monopoly on this kind of power in antiquity: a similar power over nature is attributed to poets such as Orpheus. Through her similarity to Orpheus Dipsas is connected — outrageously — to the tradition of vatic poetry. The Augustan poets used Orpheus and, to a lesser degree, other legendary singers such as Amphion to help flesh out their image of the ideal vates. This included a knowledge of cosmology or rerum natura, as seen in the connection between Orpheus and later poet-philosophers such as Empedocles. Ancient poets and critics considered Orpheus, to whom mythological theogonies were ascribed, a forerunner of later practitioners of philosophical poetry like Empedocles. In other words, Orpheus came to be regarded as a philosophical innovator. The continuity thought to exist between Orpheus and Empedocles can be seen in the Song of Orpheus in Argonautica 1, in which the legendary poet sings a recognizably Empedoclean cosmogony. Later authors such as Plutarch (On the Delphic Oracles 402 E) make the connection explicit by including both Orpheus and Empedocles in a list of early philosophers.

In fact, many of Dipsas’ powers parallel those not only of Orpheus, but also of Empedocles: the power to control the elements in the form of meteorological phenomena and to raise bodies from Hades. In the following fragment Empedocles is addressing his pupil Pausanias (fr. 15/111):

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332 Myers (1996) 10: “The procuress’ powers over nature resemble those traditionally associated with poets such as Orpheus.”
333 Cf. Horace AP 391-6 on Orpheus and Amphion.
335 More obliquely, in Eclogues 6 the singing of the satyr Silenus is compared to that of Orpheus; and Silenus’ song too has Empedoclean features. There is also an intriguing passage in Ovid’s Ibis (597-600), in which Orpheus follows directly upon Empedocles in the catalogue of maledictions directed at Ibis.
You will acquire as many spells as are a defense against ills and old age, since I shall accomplish all of these things for you alone. You will check the force of the tireless winds which set themselves upon the earth and destroy the fields; and, if you wish, you will bring the requited winds back; and you will create a timely drought after dark rain, and after summer drought you will create tree-nourishing streams, which inhabit the air, and you will lead out of Hades the strength of a dead man.

Both Dipsas and the poet/Empedocles possess the ability to create one type of weather and then, if they wish, the opposite. And of course Dipsas, like Empedocles, is also a didactic figure.

However, Dipsas most closely resembles the Empedoclean didactic poet in her repeated appeal to Mars and Venus, embodiments of strife and love respectively, as part of her argument to her pupil. Her first mention of the two gods is in the form of the celestial bodies — a subject from natural philosophy! — Mars and Venus (1.8.29-30):

stella tibi oppositi nocuit contraria Martis; / Mars abiit; signo nunc Venus apta suo

(“The opposed star of Mars has harmed you; but Mars has departed; Venus is now favorably situated in a sign of her own”).337 The pair is naturally appropriate for the erotic context of the poem, suggesting that the universe reflects the conventional elegiac opposition of Mars/war and Venus/peace.338 The importance of these two figures to

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337 Translation is adapted from McKeown (1989) ad loc.
338 McKeown (1989) ad loc.
Dipsas’ teaching is underscored later as she opposes the rusticity of the Sabines under Tatius to the more refined and sexually liberated present under Venus, while Mars, a representative of the uncultured militancy of the Sabines, is off fighting foreign wars (1.8.41-2): *nunc Mars externis animos exercet in armis, / at Venus Aeneae regnat in urbe sui* (“now Mars tries souls in foreign wars, but Venus reigns in the city of her Aeneas”). McKeown notes that this couplet too, like the earlier pairing of the celestial bodies Mars and Venus, can be interpreted in astrological terms: both *exercet* and *regnat* are used elsewere in astrological contexts.339

Dipsas’ interpretation of the stars demonstrates to her pupil — the poet’s *puella* — that cosmology can be useful in her love life and therefore mischievously contradicts Propertius’ statement that didactic natural philosophy is useless to the elegiac poet because “no girl wants to study cosmology” (Prop. 2.34.27-30, 51-4):

> quid tua Socraticis tibi nunc sapientia libris proderit, aut rerum dicere posse vias?
> aut quid Cretaei [Aratei Nairn] tibi prosunt carmina plectri?
> nil iuvat in magno uester amore senex.
> ...
> harum nulla solet rationem quaerere mundi,
> nec cur frenatis luna laboret equis,
> nec si post Stygias aliquid restabimus undas,
> nec si consulto fulmina missa tonent.

What use will the wisdom of your Socratic books be to you now, or the ability to speak of the paths of nature? Or what advantage do the songs of the Cretaean lyre give you? Your old man is no help to you in a great love…no girl wants to study cosmology [*ratio mundi*], nor why the moon labors with its bridled horses, nor if something will remain of us after the Stygian waters, nor if lightning thunders when sent by a deity.

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339 For astrology as a part of natural philosophy, see Volk (2009) 174-82 on Manilius’ *Astronomica*, a poem that situates itself squarely in the tradition of didactic poetry on natural philosophy.
However, in addition to being an elegiac organization of the universe, Dipsas’ repeated allusions to a cosmically inflected Mars and Venus might remind us of Empedoclean cosmological allegory. In fact, there are some intriguing parallels in the fragments of Empedocles for the depiction of Mars and Venus in *Am.* 1.8.

The spatial relationship expressed in *Am.* 1.8 in which Venus is at the center (Rome) and Mars at the periphery (*externis...armis*, 41) and the way in which this is defined by relations of power (*Venus...regnat*, 42) has a precedent in the spatio-temporal dynamics of love and strife in Empedocles’ cosmology:

fr. 32/36

τὸν δὲ συνερχομένων ἐξ ἔσχατον ἱστατο νεῖκος

And while they were coming together strife was moving out to the limit

fr. 61/35.3-4, 9-10

ἐπεὶ νεῖκος μὲν ἐνέρτατον ἱκετο βένθος δίνης, ἐν δὲ μέσῃ φιλότητι στροφάλιγγι γένηται,

... ὦ γὰρ ἄμεμφεως πω πᾶν ἐξέστηκεν ἐπ᾽ ἔσχατα τέρματα κύκλου,

When strife reached the lowest depth of the eddy and love gets into the middle of the whirl,

... for not yet has it [strife] blamelessly moved entirely out to the furthest limits of the circle,

Fr. 32/36 is only a single line, but it is clear from Empedocles’ use elsewhere of forms of συνέρχομαι that the line is describing strife’s position while “things are coming together” under the influence of love.\(^\text{340}\) The reconstruction of the movements and positions of love

\(^{340}\) Empedocles often uses forms of συνέρχομαι to describe the work of love, an example of which occurs in the second fragment quoted above (fr. 61/35.5): ἐν τῇ δὴ τάδε πάντα συνέρχεται ἐν μόνον εἶναι.
and strife during the various phases of the cycle is controversial, but I accept

Inwood’s account in its basic outline:

When love is in complete control (33/27, 34/29&28), the elements are at perfect peace, in a blend dominated by love and with strife restricted to the outside of the sphere… When strife is completely dominant the situation is (in my view) equally static, but there is no blend of any sort. Though we lack any unambiguous description of the arrangement of the universe at this point, it seems most likely that the four roots are arranged in concentric spheres, with earth at the centre and water, air and fire, in sequence; love is on the outside of this sphere, as she must be if she is to be in a position to make the attack described in 61/35.4; strife’s location at this point is hard to determine, for all we are told is that he is then ‘at the lowest depth / of the eddy’ (61/35.4-5) (emphasis mine).

It seems to be clear that during the period of the complete control of love, strife “is restricted to the outside of the sphere.” Empedocles describes this in fr. 32/36: τῶν δὲ συνερχοµένων ἕξ ἐσχατον ἱστατο νείκος (“as they were coming together strife was retiring to the extremity”). In other words, during the phase of increasing love strife continues to move further and further towards the outside of the sphere until the time of the complete control of love when strife is on the outside of the sphere.

This is analogous to the scenario described in Dipsas’ song, in which Mars/Neikos is engaged in foreign wars while Venus/Philia “reigns” in the center, the city of Rome (1.8.41-2): nunc Mars externis animos exercet in armis, / at Venus Aeneae regnat in urbe sui. We see both the spatio-temporal dynamic of center versus periphery and its expression in terms of power relations (Venus...regnat, 1.8.42). Similar spatio-temporal dynamics occur in Dipsas’ first reference to Mars and Venus, where the planet Mars is said to have departed (abiit, 1.8.30), like strife in the phase of increasing love (cf. fr. 32/36), while Venus “is now favorably situated in a sign of her own”: stella tibi oppositi nocuit contraria Martis. / Mars abiit; signo nunc Venus apta suo. Therefore, in
addition to being both an erotic-elegiac and Augustan organization of the cosmos, the
dynamics of Mars and Venus in Dipsas’ speech may, quite surprisingly, look back to
Empedoclean cosmology.

We may note parenthetically that, as a didactic “poet,” Dipsas has other models,
as well. While her Orphic powers and eroto-didactic instruction on Mars and Venus make
her a comic perversion of vatic poets like Orpheus and Empedocles, Dipsas may also
humorously adapt one of the most famous statements made about his poetry by Lucretius,
that most Empedoclean of all Latin poets. As we know, Lucretius compares his
versification of Epicurean philosophy to the honey that doctors put around the rim of the
cup in order to get children to take their medicine (DRN 4.11-7). One of Dipsas’ final
instructions to the poet’s puella is to use flattering speech to deceive her lover, since
wicked poisons hide themselves under sweet honey (Am. 1.8.103-4): lingua iuvet
mentemque tegat — blandire noceque; / inpia sub dulci melle venena latent (“let the
tongue flatter and conceal the intention — flatter and harm; impious poisons hide under
sweet honey”). We might compare this to DRN 4.12-3: cum dare conantur, prius oras
pocula circum / contingunt mellis dulci flavoque liquore (“when they try to give them
[medicine], first they apply the amber glaze of sweet honey around the rim of the cup”).
Dipsas offers this advice to the poet’s girlfriend, but poison covered in honey is an apt
description of Dipsas’ own speech in the eyes of the poet-lover (1.8.20): nec tamen
eloquo lingua nocente caret (“yet neither does her speech lack a harmful eloquence”).

This idea of Dipsas as a (per)version of didactic poets of natural philosophy like
Empedocles and Lucretius may seem ridiculous, and it should, since Dipsas is clearly a
comic figure and such comparisons are patently ridiculous. But it should not seem implausible that Ovid uses a figure such as Dipsas as a vehicle for incorporating the tradition of didactic natural philosophy, however humorously, into his elegy. For the figure of Dipsas finds a useful parallel, and perhaps a conscious model, in an other Vergilian figure, the Silenus of Eclogues 6. That poem, like Amores 1.8, is (along with Ecl. 5) a central poem in its book and as the first poem in the second half of that book, it assumes a programmatic function. Silenus, like the lena, is a comic figure (and both are noted for their drunkenness). We should perhaps remember too that Silenus’ binding looks back to Menelaus’ capture of Proteus — a shape-shifter like Dipsas — in the Odyssey. Dipsas and Silenus also share a biform nature — Silenus a goat-man,\textsuperscript{341} Dipsas alternately an old crone or a bird or perhaps a “bird-woman.”

Once again, Dipsas’ powers resemble those of the legendary poet Orpheus. Similar magical powers are ascribed to Silenus’ singing (6.27-8): \textit{tum vero in numerum Faunosque ferasque videres / ludere, tum rigidas motare cacumina quercus} (then indeed you might see the Fauns and wild beasts frolic in measured dance, then the unyielding oaks bend their tops”); and he is explicitly compared to Orpheus (6.30): \textit{nec tantum Rhodope miratur et Ismarus Orphea} (“not so greatly do Rhodope and Ismarus wonder at Orpheus”). Silenus’ song, like that of Dipsas, comprises much of its poem — although in reported rather than direct speech.\textsuperscript{342} The poet tells us that Silenus began his song from the origin of the universe, a cosmogony that contains both Empedoclean and Lucretian

\textsuperscript{341} While originally imagined as equine, after the Hellenistic period satyrs and silens were increasingly represented as caprine, on which see Seaford (1996).

\textsuperscript{342} It is the shepherd Tityrus that is reporting Silenus’ song. See Thomas (1998) on the narrative “nesting” in Ecl. 6.
elements, and is often taken to represent “scientific” poetry in general.\textsuperscript{343} Silenus’ song, however, despite its lofty beginning, is comprised for the most part of erotic material — again like Dipsas’ song — and may allude to a tradition of philosophical/allegorical interpretation of erotic myths, as I am arguing Dipsas’ reference to the celestial bodies of Mars and Venus allude to their philosophical/allegorical background.\textsuperscript{344}

Silenus’ song, therefore, offers a synthetic picture of the poetic tradition, incorporating Empedoclean and Lucretian elements alongside Alexandrian stories of erotic suffering. Dipsas perhaps even acknowledges these different poetic traditions in her speech. As I suggested earlier, Dipsas is humorously connected to the vatic tradition by certain resemblances between her powers/song to those of poets such as Orpheus, Empedocles and Lucretius. Dipsas, however, contemptuously refers to her pupil’s poet-lover as a \textit{vates} at line 57. It has been suggested that in Ovid’s \textit{corpus} the term no longer carries the same connotations that it did for Vergil and Horace, for example, but scholars have persuasively demonstrated that Ovid’s use of the term often depends on the reader’s recognition of the same associations which the term had had in earlier poetry.\textsuperscript{345} For example, Ovid often exploits the conventional seriousness of the term by using it in comically incongruous settings, which appears to be the case when Dipsas calls her pupil’s poet-lover a \textit{vates}.

But is this all? Dipsas not only mockingly calls the lover a \textit{vates}, but ridicules the poet for offering his \textit{puella} only \textit{nova carmina} instead of expensive gifts (1.8.57-8): \textit{ecce},

\textsuperscript{343} Stewart (1959). See also Farrell (1991) 301-3 on the Empedoclean and Lucretian features of the song.
\textsuperscript{344} Farrell (1991) 308.
\textsuperscript{345} See, for example, Pasco-Pranger (2000) on Ovid’s vatic persona in the \textit{Fasti}.
**quid iste tuus praeter nova carmina vates / donat** (‘see, what does that poet of yours give you except new songs?’). The juxtaposition of *vates* and *nova carmina* is striking, since the notion of a *vates* composing *nova carmina* is paradoxical: *vates* is an ancient term, hardly connected to new, cutting-edge poetry. *Vates* and *nova carmina*, therefore, may represent two different poetic traditions, the one being the vatic tradition, including the poetry of Empedocles and Lucretius,° and the other the neoteric tradition (*nova carmina*, 1.8.57) of small-scale, highly refined Callimachean poetry in Rome. Of course, by the time Ovid was writing the *Amores*, the “new” poetry had not been new for some time.°°° Dipsas’ criticism may not be so much about the inconcinuity of the old and the new; instead, since she herself possesses certain characteristics of the *vates*, she may be criticizing for the poet for not being able to compose *that* kind of poetry, but only sterile “new” poetry: “your poet calls himself a *vates* but what does he offer but “new” poetry, which is not even as valuable as ephemeral gifts.” Dipsas, on the other hand, is an erotic poet in possession of the knowledge of *rerum natura* (the celestial bodies) and concomitant power over natural phenomena that is conventionally associated by the Augustan poets with the vatic tradition. Dipsas’ argument, of course, is deeply ironic,

°°°Lucretius, of course, strongly criticizes those he calls *vates* (1.102-9), in which he is following Ennius (see Newman (1967) 14-5). However, the pose of prophet-poet that Lucretius adopts is in fact very close to the subsequent Augustan ideal of the *vates*. In this I am following Hardie (1986) 17-21, who argues that Lucretius uses the vatic Empedocles as a model in fashioning his own poetic persona. See also Hardie (2009a) 145. Regardless of Lucretius’ own statements about *vates*, it seems that Ovid regarded him as a vatic figure (*Tristia* 2.425-6): explicant ut causas rapidi Lucretius ignis, / casuramque tripex vaticinatur opus.

°°°McKeown (1989) *ad loc.* notes the literary-critical significance of *nova carmina*.

°°°Cf. McKeown (1989) *ad loc.*: “The expressions *noui poetae* and *οἱ νεώτεροι* were somewhat dated by the Augustan period, and none of the elegists ever describes himself in such a manner. Old Dipsas may be using the terminology fashionable in her youth.” Cf. Verg. *Geo*. 3.4: *omnia iam vulgata.*
since she uses her vatic ability to enrich her mistress and most importantly herself (1.8.28).

Nevertheless, I suggest that Dipsas, much like Silenus in Eclogues 6, is an embodiment of superficially diverse poetic traditions, notably erotic-elegiac — she is one of the paradigmatic figures of elegy, the *lena* — and epic poetry, encompassing not only martial epic but also didactic epic such as that of Empedocles and Lucretius. Dipsas’ similarity to the Vergilian Fama — a representation of the epic tradition as Hardie shows — offers us insight into the importance of love and strife (and Empedocles) to Ovid’s characteristically duplicitous or double approach to the poetic tradition.

The parallels between Dipsas and the Vergilian epic Fama create an epic intertext for Dipsas and *Am. 1.8*, but this is in and of itself a little misleading, since Fama appears as part of one of the most elegiacally inflected episodes in the entire *Aeneid*, the love affair between Dido and Aeneas.349 However, this “love” transforms into horrible strife, and not just strife between lovers, but eventually the wars between Carthage and Rome. The principal agent of this transformation from love to war is Fama. As Hardie puts it:

*Fama* sows discord of a personal kind between Dido and Aeneas, turning what Dido would call a *con-iugium* into a *dis-cidium*. But the consequences of her intervention in the plot of the *Aeneid* are more momentous than sowing dissension between a pair of lovers. The rumours that she spreads have to do with *amor*, and at first sight she is *Fama Amoris*. But what she sets afoot will lead eventually and inevitably to the world-shaking wars between Rome and Carthage, and from this perspective she is *Fama Belli*. 350

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350 Hardie (2009a) 103.
In this respect and others Fama is akin to Ennius’ Empedoclean Discordia. Dipsas too is an agent of discord. She hopes that her machinations, like those of her model Fama, will lead to war (cf. proelia, 1.8.96). However, while the actions of Fama in the Aeneid “are more momentous than sowing dissension between a pair of lovers,” Ovid in fact reduces the actions of Dipsas/Fama to merely “sowing dissension between a pair of lovers” in a typically witty reductio ad amorem.

This comic reversal, however, may form part of a more serious point about poetics. Dipsas’ epic Doppelgänger Fama and the Dido-Aeneas episode suggests that from an overly schematic literary-generic perspective the Aeneid can appear to proceed fluidly from epic to “elegy” (love affair of Dido and Aeneas) and back to epic (in the sense that the rixa between Dido and Aeneas prefigures the Punic Wars). This is a metamorphic and double picture of epic that can be broadly characterized as Empedoclean. The Amores embodies a similarly metamorphic quality in as much as poem 1.1 is “transformed” from a martial epic into an erotic-elegiac poem. The fact that it is a collection of erotic elegies that can go by the alternate title of arma indicates its fundamental duplicity, one reflected in the over-determined doubleness of the figure of Dipsas, both a stock elegiac character and, via the Vergilian intertext, the epic Fama. Dipsas’ emphasis on the organization of the poetic (cosmos) around Mars and Venus also points to these figures as a thread capable of (humorously) unifying the epic and elegiac tradition. They appear in the epic Odyssey, the didactic epics of Empedocles and Lucretius, but can also be fluidly incorporated into an elegiac program.

Ibid. 103-4.
Although Dipsas by no means offers any serious natural philosophy, she does represent the expansive power of erotic-elegiac poetry, which can expand (like the vertically and horizontally expanding Fama) to include numerous other genres. Dipsas also demonstrates the metamorphic potential of Ovidian elegy: it can mutate into various new forms and hybrids, as indeed it will continue to do (becoming, for instance, didactic elegy, elegiac epistle, and so forth). We will see further hints of elegy’s potential for expansion in Am. 2.1, where Ovid discusses elegiac poetry’s power in a passage that alludes to the magical powers of Dipsas; this same passage also alludes to Tibullus’ rejection of natural philosophy, implying that elegy, although this is not entirely realized in the Amores, can expand to incorporate philosophical motifs, as it will in Ovid’s super-elegy, Fasti.

Amores 1.9

Ovid’s exploration of the interaction of love and strife, notably through militia amoris and the pair Mars/Venus, in Am. 1.7 and 1.8 comes to a climax in Am. 1.9, the most detailed treatment of militia amoris in Roman elegy. Its basic assertion, announced in the first line, is supported throughout the rest of the poem by a series of ingenious parallels between love and war (1.9.1-2): militat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido; / Attice, crede mihi, miliat omnis amans (“Every lover is a soldier and Cupid has his own camps; Trust me, Atticus, every lover is a soldier”). Am. 1.9 has been well studied,352 so my focus will simply be on the fact that it too refers twice to the pairing of Mars and Venus and thus matches the two references to this pair in Am. 1.8. This is just one of

several ways that the poet of the *Amores* mirrors Dipsas and, as I will suggest, *Am.* 1.9 can be considered the poet’s response to the poetic challenge of Dipsas’ “Empedoclean” elegy.

The first mention compares the uncertainty of battle to the uncertainty of love (1.9.29-30): *Mars dubius, nec certa Venus: victique resurgunt, / quosque neges umquam posse iacere, cadunt* (“Mars is doubtful and Venus uncertain: the conquered rise up again, and those that you deny could ever be laid low, fall”). Ovid’s allusion to the Dipsas elegy is reinforced by the fact that this couplet occupies exactly the same lines (29-30) as the first reference to Mars and Venus in *Am.* 1.8, where Dipsas’ point had been that the current position of the planets Mars and Venus is auspicious for lovers. In light of the comparison between the two couplets, one might even suggest that the rising (*resurgunt, 1.9.29*) and falling (*cadunt, 1.9.30*) of the fortunes of those engaged in love and war is an allusion to the rising and falling of celestial bodies, including Mars and Venus.\(^{353}\)

We might recall once more Hardie’s statement about *militia amoris*: “Through the figure of Venus the paradoxes of *militia amoris* extend to metaphysical and political oppositions and fusions of love and war, peace and war.”\(^{354}\) Indeed, the reference to Mars and Venus at *Am.* 1.9.29-30 may have both a political and a philosophical reference. McKeown has suggested that this couplet alludes to the rise and fall of cities: “*victi…resurgunt* also hints at contemporary political propaganda that Rome under the

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\(^{353}\) Manilius uses these same terms repeatedly for the “rising” and “setting” of the stars. Cf. 1.181, *qua cadat et subeat caelum rursusque resurgat*; 1.537-8, *omnia concordi tractu veniuntque caduntque, / qua semel incubuit caelum versumque resurgit.*

\(^{354}\) Hardie (2009c) 108, n. 50.
guidance of the Julian dynasty is a new Troy rising to greatness from the defeat of the old.” All the more so considering that the Julian gods Mars and Venus appear in the couplet. McKeown adduces a good parallel from the *Fasti*, namely Carmenta’s prophecy about the rise of Rome (1.523-6):356

\[
\text{victa tamen vinces eversaque, Troia, resurges;}
\]
\[
\text{obruit hostiles ista ruina domos.}
\]
\[
\text{urite victrices Neptunia Pergama flammæ!}
\]
\[
\text{num minus hic toto est altior orbe cinis?}
\]

Troy, although conquered, you will nevertheless become the conquerors and although destroyed, you will rise again; such a great ruin descends upon the homes of the enemy. Conquering flames, burn Neptunian Pergamum! Is this ash any less going to be higher than the entire world?

Carmenta here connects the fall of Troy and the rise of Rome to the physical battle of the elements, seen in the flames (*flammæ*, 525) overcoming *Neptunian* Troy (*Neptunia Pergama*, 525). The theme of rise and fall (or mutability of fortune) is also implicitly connected to natural philosophy in the *Amores* couplet, once again through its comparison to Dipsas’ mention in *Am. 1.8* of the celestial bodies Mars and Venus: one can see in the rising and falling of the lover’s or the soldier’s fortune an allusion to the cyclical rising and setting of celestial bodies. McKeown’s suggestion that the couplet alludes not just to the mutability of fortune, but also to the destruction and creation of cities is especially intriguing in light of the presence of both Mars and Venus, since Ares/Neikos and Aphrodite/Philia in Empedocles’ cosmology presided over the ceaseless

355 See also McKeown (1995) 304.

356 A closer parallel is Prop. 4.1A.53, whose position in poem 4.1 is disputed: *dicam: ‘Troia, cades, et Troica Roma resurges;’*. The combination of *cado* and *resurgo* seems common enough that it is not necessary to posit a relationship between Prop. 4.1A53 and *Am. 1.9.29-30*. In any case, Propertius’ use of these terms to explicitly describe the rise and fall of cities strengthens McKeown’s suggestion that the Ovidian couplet hints at this. See Heyworth (2007) 421 for his reasoning behind the position of lines 52-3 and the possibility that *Fasti* 1.523-6 imitates 4.1A.52-4.
cycle of creation and destruction in the Empedoclean cosmos. Ingeniously, Ovid connects this cycle to the rhythms of the elegiac couplet: the couplet too enacts a “cycle” of rising in the hexameter (resurgunt, 1.9.29) and falling in the pentameter (cadunt, 1.9.30) that can be compared to the rise/creation and fall/destruction of cities. It is of course no coincidence that resurgunt and cadunt occupy the line ends of the hexameter and pentameter respectively.\footnote{There is a striking precedent for such a cyclical temporality featuring the figures of Mars and Venus in the philosophy of Empedocles. Indeed, the reduction of such grandiose themes (the cosmic principles of Ares/Mars and Aphrodite/Venus and the cycle of creation and destruction) to a reflection of the elegiac couplet seems like a typically Ovidian joke.}

It is unlikely to be a coincidence, then, that the second and final mention of the two gods in Am. 1.9 is the myth of their Homeric adultery. This is also the last mythological exemplum in the poem and therefore appears emphatically at its conclusion. It connects the myth of their adultery to the subject of the poem, militia amoris (1.9.39-40): Mars quoque deprensus fabrilia vincula sensit: / notior in caelo fabula nulla fuit (“Mars too, captured, felt the chains of the smith: no tale in heaven was more notorious”).

As we saw, this myth was interpreted as an allegory of the fusion of the Empedoclean principles of Neikos and Philia and the creation of harmonia or concordia (39-40).\footnote{A useful parallel for the combination of the political history of states and natural philosophy (and the presence of Empedoclean cosmology) comes from the end of Pythagoras’ speech in Metamorphoses 15, in which he applies his doctrine of cosmic metamorphosis to the}
rise and fall of states, famously ending in a prophecy of Rome’s rise (15.434-6). Notably, this is material appropriate for the *vates* (*sic dicere vates*, 15.435). The philosophy of universal change, the subject of Pythagoras’ speech, is only briefly alluded to in *Am*. 1.8, as is the metaphysical and political opposition (and union) of love and strife, but the fact that Ovid is able to suggest these themes over the course of two remarkable couplets is a comic, ingenious and masterful response to the “Empedoclean” elegy of Dipsas in *Amores* 1.8.

The notion that *Am*. 1.9 attempts to “cap” the performance of Dipsas in *Am*. 1.8 is bolstered by one final aspect of the dialogue between the references to Mars and Venus in these interconnected poems. Whereas both of Dipsas’ references to Mars and Venus had emphasized their separation and antithesis, the poet brings them together in *Am*. 1.9: he first bridges the conceptual gap between the two by stressing the similarly uncertain nature of love and war (29-30); and in the second he alludes to the myth in which the two had come together as lovers (39-40), a representation, according to the allegorical interpretation of the myth, of *harmonia* or *concordia* of opposites. This is the first of numerous passages in the *Amores* that urges us to see Mars and Venus as analogous to the poet and his girlfriend, since Dipsas is concerned to separate the two, while the poet is concerned to bring them together.

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359 At 1.8.30, Mars departs, and is explicitly opposed to Venus; at 41-2 Mars is off fighting foreign wars, Venus is in Rome.

360 For example, in *Am*. 1.13 the poet implicitly compares the sunrise/Aurora’s interruption of him and his girlfriend’s night-time tryst to the Sun’s role in exposing the affair of Mars and Venus to Vulcan. In a witty reworking of this conceit in *Am*. 2.5, the poet says that he has seen his puella sharing *improba oscula* like those Venus has often given to Mars: *qualia credibile est non Phoebou ferre Dianam / sed Venerem Marti saepe tulisse suo*. The poet’s position here — on the outside looking in — anticipates that of Vulcan in *Ars Amatoria* 2, where the poet describes Vulcan’s discovery of the affair of Mars and Venus.
Therefore, *Amores* 1.8 and 1.9, taken together, can be seen as a witty exploration of the relationship between basic features of Ovid’s elegiac poetics such as Mars, Venus and *militia amoris* and the grandiose principles of cosmic Neikos and Philia from the epic tradition. In Empedoclean philosophy these principles enact a ceaseless cycle of growth and decay that can be seen in such historical processes as the rise and fall of cities. Ovid humorously suggests that such processes can also be seen to have an “elegiac rhythm,” since the couplet itself “rises” in the hexameter and “falls” in the pentameter. At the same time, one can see in these poems how elegy might be seen as a particularly good vehicle for exploring such weighty themes as “metaphysical and political oppositions and fusions of love and war, peace and war.” In the final section of this chapter, I will argue that *Am. 2.1* offers further hints at elegy’s potential for incorporating cosmological themes.

*Amares 2.1*

*Am. 2.1*, in addition to the opening poems of books 1 and 3, is one of a number of poems in the *Amores* that is explicitly about poetry. One of the literary topics it addresses is the kind of poetry that is useful to the lover. This poem is closely connected to *Am. 1.8*, which I argued concerns in part the power of poetry and the vatic tradition. *Am. 2.1* also implicitly connects the power of poetry to knowledge of cosmology or *rerum natura*.

At *Am. 2.1.29-32* the poet rejects the usefulness of martial epic poetry for his erotic purposes, a common elegiac argument. He then proceeds to make a positive statement about the kind of poetry that is useful to the lover (2.1.21-8):

blanditias elegosque levis, mea tela, resumpsi;

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361 Cf. Tib. 2.4.13ff.; Prop. 1.9.9ff.
mollierunt duras lenia verba fores.
carmina sanguineae deducunt cornua lunae,
et revocant niveos solis euntis equos;
carmine dissiliunt abruptis faucibus angues,
inque suos fontes versa recurrit aqua.
carminibus cessere fores, insertaque posti,
quamvis robur erat, carmine victa sera est.

I have resumed pleasant and light elegies, my weapons; gentle words have softened harsh doors. Songs draw down the horns of the blood-red moon, and call back the snowy steeds of the traveling sun; through song snakes can be killed, their throats severed, and water can be made to flow back towards its source. Doors have succumbed to songs, and with the door-post in place, even though it was oak, the bolt has been overcome by song.

Naturally, it is elegy that Ovid claims is useful in softening the harsh doors of his mistress. But then he goes on to claim that song has power not only in erotic pursuits, but over nature, as well. This is remarkably similar to the powers that Ovid had earlier attributed to Dipsas in 1.8. As we saw, such power is a feature of sorceresses like Circe and Medea, but is also similar to the power attributed in antiquity to Orpheus, whose control over nature in the form of moving rocks and trees came to represent knowledge of the workings of the universe or rerum natura.

But is there any indication that the power over natural phenomena described in 2.1 has a cosmological frame of reference? As commentators note, Ovid alludes in this passage to several other similar treatments of this theme in Tibullus and Propertius. In fact, Ovid’s description of poetry’s power over nature contains several allusions to a

\[\text{Myers (1996) 10 notes the similarities between the power Ovid claims for his poetry in 2.1 and the magical powers of the lena.}\]
\[\text{Cf. Met. 11.1-2: carmine dum tali silvas animosque ferarum / Threicius vates [i.e Orpheus] et saxa sequentia ducit. Is there an allusion to Orpheus’ famed ability to move trees in Ovid’s claim in lines 27-28 to be able to make the robur ("oak") yield to his song?}\]
passage in Tibullus 2.4 listing a number of the conventional subjects for didactic poetry taken from natural philosophy or cosmology (2.4.15-20):  

ite procul, Musae, si non prodestis amanti: 15
non ego vos ut sint bella canenda colo,
nec refero solisque vias et qualis, ubi orbem complevit, versis luna recurrit equis.
ad dominam faciles aditus per carmina quaero:
ite procul, Musae, si nihil ista valent. 20

Be gone, Muses, if you are no use to the lover: I do not cultivate you so that war may be my subject, nor do I recount the paths of the sun and in what state the moon, its horses turned, runs back when she has filled out her disc. I seek easy access to my mistress through song: be gone, Muses, if such songs have no power.

As McKeown notes, the paths of the sun and moon, the subjects of didactic poetry mentioned by Tibullus, are the first natural phenomena said to be influenced by the power of song in *Amores* 2.1. Furthermore, Ovid alludes again at the end of his list of natural phenomena to the same passage from Tibullus. Cf. *inque suos fontes versae recurrit aqua* (2.1.26) and *qualis... / ...versis Luna recurrit equis* (2.4.17-8). The similarity in sound is especially close. These allusions first of all point to the affinity between the two poems: they both contain rejections of certain kinds of poetry, martial epic and philosophical didactic in the case of Tibullus and martial epic alone in Ovid’s case. However, I also think that Ovid’s use of the Tibullan list of subjects from natural philosophical didactic poetry in his description of the “magical” powers of song implicitly acknowledges the connection in ancient thought between this mastery over the

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364 Murgatroyd (1994) *ad* 2.4.15-16 writes that “The drift in these and subsequent lines is as follows: T. has no interest in producing epic and didactic; instead he wants the Muse to inspire him to write poetry (love elegy) that is relevant and useful to him as a lover...i.e. poetry that will gain him easy access to his mistress (19). Epic and didactic are rejected as irrelevant and useless to T. the lover because they would have no interest to and have no effect on his girlfriend.”  
natural world and the knowledge of rerum natura or cosmology seen in natural philosophical didactic.

Empedocles is a key figure in this tradition, since he combined “magical” powers such as necromancy and the ability to control the weather (fr. 15/111) with knowledge of rerum natura. In fact, scholars increasingly recognize that the two may not have been so distinct in the mind of Empedocles and his audience as they are for us. One can see in the natural phenomena in fr. 15/111 metonyms for Empedocles’ elements. As Wright has written of the fragment, “The main point is that E. expects that an understanding of the nature of earth, air, fire and water alone and in combinations will bring with it the ability to manipulate them.” “Magic” and knowledge of rerum natura are not mutually exclusive. Ovid points to the relationship between these two spheres by alluding in his description of the “magical” power of song in 2.1 to the list of subjects taken from natural philosophy in Tibullus 2.4. As I argued, a similar acknowledgment of the affinity between these two spheres, mastery over nature and knowledge of cosmology, had been made in Am. 1.8. There Dipsas had possessed many of the same powers over nature as those enumerated by the poet in Am. 2.1 and represented a comic perversion of vatic poets of natural philosophy like Empedocles and Lucretius. Yet, in connecting the programmatic statement about the powers of poetry (specifically elegy) in Am. 2.1 to the unusually ambitious figure of Dipsas and her elegy in Am. 1.8, Ovid suggests his elegy’s own potential for expanding to include philosophical themes like those humorously alluded to in the Dipsas elegy, and like those implied in the allusion of Am. 2.1 to

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366 He frequently uses the technique of weaving the four elements into a descriptive passage.
Tibullus’ rejection of natural philosophy. Indeed, in the *Ars Amatoria* we will see Ovid explicitly inserting his didactic elegy into the same poetic tradition as the didactic epics of Empedocles, Lucretius and Vergil.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter we saw that poets in the epic tradition such as Apollonius, Ennius, Lucretius and Vergil relate the themes of love and strife in their poems to Empedoclean philosophy. Part of this is due to Empedocles’ own prominence in the tradition as one of the earliest practitioners of didactic epic on natural philosophy: Lucretius in particular sees him in an important sense as the founder of the kind of poetry he is composing in the *DRN*. But perhaps more important is the allegorical interpretation of two famous Homeric episodes, the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18 and the second song of Demodocus in *Odyssey* 8 as Empedoclean allegories. This enabled poets like Vergil to unify different strands in the epic tradition. While not writing epic in the *Amores*, Ovid from the very beginning of the collection establishes the epic tradition — represented by *arma* at *Amores* 1.1.1 — as a persistent frame of reference for his elegy. He also establishes such themes as the transformation from war to peace and vice versa, as well as the organization of the poetic universe around the antithetical and sometimes mutually implicated (i.e. in *militia amoris*) poles of love and strife as foundational ones for his elegy. The importance of these concepts to Ovid’s poetics can be seen especially in his focus on the figures of Mars and Venus. This thematic concern enables Ovid to playfully connect his elegy to the epic tradition, since they are such important figures, especially in the natural philosophical strand of the epic tradition, beginning from the allegorical
interpretation of Homer and going through Apollonius, Empedocles, Lucretius and Vergil. In *Am.* 1.8 in particular, an ambitious didactic elegy, Ovid begins to flesh out an elegiac poetry that can accommodate both the witty, learned Callimacheanism so important to Roman poetic practice and the poetry on nature or *de rerum natura* that earlier elegists like Tibullus and Propertius had for the most part rejected. In no way does Ovid seriously engage philosophical principles in the *Amores*, but *Am.* 1.8, the didactic elegy of Dipsas, and the poet’s response to this elegy in *Am.* 1.9, can be seen to anticipate the generically experimental elegies of the *Ars Amatoria* and *Fasti* that to a much greater degree incorporate themes from didactic natural philosophy.
CHAPTER 3
The *Ars Amatoria* and the Tradition of Didactic Natural Philosophy

Introduction

In this chapter I consider cosmological themes in the *Ars Amatoria*, especially those related to Lucretius and his important poetic model, Empedocles. Ovid, although composing a very different poem in terms of subject matter and tone than either the *Peri Phuseos* or the *DRN*, can nevertheless claim at least a superficial affinity between his *Ars Amatoria* and those august predecessors in as much as the *Ars* is a didactic poem about love. Lucretius and to a greater extent Empedocles prominently featured love in their poems, especially in the form of Aphrodite/Venus. In both poets Aphrodite/Venus is also closely linked to her mythological lover, Ares/Mars. The striking proemial image of Mars in the lap of Venus in the *DRN* proem is part of Lucretius’ acknowledgment of Empedocles as an important poetic model. Unsurprisingly, Ovid exploits this Empedoclean/Lucretian myth of the lovers Mars and Venus in the *Ars Amatoria*. In a tendentious reading of the *DRN* this opening image can be regarded as an “Ovidian moment in Lucretian epic,” since Lucretius makes the suitably erotic-elegiac request for Venus to calm the “wild works of war” (*fera moenera militiæ, DRN* 1.29).\(^\text{368}\) As I will suggest, Ovid is aware of the Empedoclean background of this Lucretian image and he uses Empedocles as a foil in a playful polemic against Lucretius, especially in *Ars* 2, which, in the first edition of the *Ars*, occupied the same structural position as book 4 of the *DRN* and Lucretius’ famous diatribe against Venus and sex; that is, each is the first

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\(^{368}\) I am adapting the title of John Miller’s (1997) article, “Lucretian Moments in Ovidian elegy.”
book of the second half of the poem. Vergil’s negative depiction of Venus and amor in *Georgics* 3 (209-94), which is modeled on the Lucretian diatribe and likewise appears in the first book of the poem’s second half, is involved in this dialogue, as well.

In a Lucretian-style cosmogony and prehistory at *Ars* 2.467-88 Ovid, as Vergil had done before him, points out the inconsistency of Lucretius’ depiction of Venus, but unlike Vergil, he “corrects” the view of Venus from *DRN* 4 towards a more positive, erotic-elegiac picture of the goddess. While Ovid’s allusions to Lucretius (and Vergil) in this passage have been read as self-mocking of Ovid’s epic pretensions, I read the passage instead as fully integrated into Ovidian erotodidaxis and elegy more generally. I will not argue that Ovid had any “personal” stake in the philosophy presented in *Ars* 2, but rather that he had a poetic stake in his argument. In the course of distancing himself from the Lucretian argument of *DRN* 4, Ovid uses not only Lucretius himself (in the form of his Venus hymn), but also Empedocles, Lucretius’ great predecessor, as a foil, since Empedoclean cosmology is part of the background of the positive image of Venus appearing in the *DRN* proem. Indeed, Empedocles more than Lucretius made Ares/Mars and Aphrodite/Venus the central figures in his didactic poetry. I also argue that Ovid playfully suggests that certain features of his didactic elegy the *Ars Amatoria* and the elegiac couplet itself can be considered “Empedoclean.”

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369 It is impossible to know whether Ovid originally intended the *Ars* as a two- or three-book poem. However, we can say that he encourages us to think of it as — at some point — having been a two-book poem by gestures such as the invocation to Erato at the beginning of the second book (2.16), since this is modeled on similar invocations at the beginning of the second halves of Apollonius’ *Argonautica* (3.1-5) and Vergil’s *Aeneid* (7.37). That said, as Joseph Farrell points out to me, even if we consider *Ars* 2 in terms of the structure of a three-book poem, the parallelism between it and *DRN* 4 is still strong, since then both books would belong to the middle third of the poem.
3.1 Cosmic Amor

In the proem to *Ars* 2 Ovid dramatizes the propensity for Amor (and *amor*) as a subject to take on cosmic proportions and consequently how difficult a task it is for the poet to keep it within the (generic) limits of elegy (2.17-20):

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{magna paro, quas possit Amor remanere per artes}, \\
&\text{dicere, tam vasto pervagus orbe puer.} \\
&\text{et levis est, et habet geminas, quibus avolet, alas;} \\
&\text{difficile est illis inposuisse modum.} \quad 370
\end{align*}
\]

I am preparing great themes, to tell by what arts Love can stay, that boy who wanders so over the vast globe. He is fickle and has twin wings with which he flies away: it is a difficult task to put a check on them.

The tension between great and small is apparent. The poet is preparing “great matters” (*magna*, 17), but the subordinate clause suggests that these *magna* concern holding back or perhaps restraint (*quas possit Amor remanere per artes*, 17), the restraint of a boy who wanders over the vast globe (*vasto...orbe*, 18). He is small and light (*levis*, 19), as befits a *puer*, but is nevertheless difficult to impose a limit (*modum*) upon, which, as the verse-end of the final couplet in the proem, sits in antithetical balance to the first word, *magna*, of the penultimate couplet, emblematic of the paradoxes that dominate the paired couplets. This book, the proem announces, is going to be about lofty subject matter that the poet attempts to place inside the modest limits (*modum*—also poetic *meter*) of elegy.\(^{371}\) I suggest that this tension results in part from the poet’s understanding that in a didactic poem the subject of *amor* potentially assumes a cosmic aspect (*vasto...orbe*, 18), since this is part of of the literary tradition into which Ovid places the *Ars*: many of

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\(^{370}\) The text of the *Ars Amatoria* is from the edition of Kenney (1961, 2nd edn. 1994).

\(^{371}\) Sharrock (1994b) 192 notes the double meaning of *modus* here: “Modus…is also metrical order, so the phrase also means ‘constrain love in verse’—write erotic didactic poetry.” See OLD s.v. *modus*. Cf. *Am*. 1.1.2 and 2.17.22.
Ovid’s predecessors in the didactic tradition (Hesiod, Empedocles, Lucretius, Vergil) treat love as a cosmic principle.\textsuperscript{372} The proem, therefore, dramatizes the poet’s anxiety about treating such potentially weighty subject matter in elegy.

In the \textit{Ars} 2 proem the poet does not express this anxiety explicitly (although he comes close in using \textit{modus}), as he does, for example, at several points in the \textit{Fasti}.\textsuperscript{373} The generic discourse rests on the possibility of understanding Amor as both a god and a symbol of elegy itself. For example, line 19 literally describes Amor: \textit{et levis est, et habet geminas, quibus avolet, alas}. It is also, however, an apt description of elegy and the elegiac couplet. Elegy is a \textit{levis} genre and its couplet consists of two verses (\textit{geminas}), like Amor’s two wings.\textsuperscript{374} Flight (\textit{avole}) is, of course, a common metaphor for poetry.\textsuperscript{375} Finally, as we saw, in saying that it is difficult to impose a limit (\textit{modus}) on the wings of Amor, Ovid also alludes to the imagined difficulty of imposing his chosen meter (\textit{modus}), elegy, on a subject that has the tendency for flights into cosmological poetry. At the same time, however, this statement is not a little disingenuous, since the two-winged Amor, the cosmic god or principle of love, is a symbol of elegy and the elegiac couplet, so that the poet tautologically asserts that it is difficult to impose the elegiac meter

\textsuperscript{372} Cf. \textit{Am}. 1.2.37, \textit{his tu} [sc. Amor] \textit{militibus superas hominesque deosque}. McKeown \textit{ad loc.} compares this to the omnipotence of Eros at Hes. \textit{Theog}. 120ff. Cf. Sharrock (1994b) 7, 55 on love as a universal force.

\textsuperscript{373} See Hinds (1992a) on such passages in the \textit{Fasti}.

\textsuperscript{374} Sharrock (1994b) 192. Although \textit{geminus} most often denotes two “like,” “identical,” or “equal” things, it can also refer to two “unlike” things joined together, as in the hybrid form of a centaur (see \textit{OLD} s.v. \textit{geminus} (7)). As we will see, “hybridity” is a marked concept at the beginning of this book.

\textsuperscript{375} See Ahern (1989) 292 and Sharrock (1994b) 96 with bibliography on flight as a metaphor for poetry in the Daedalus episode.
on...elegy. This gives up the game, as it were, and indicates that since Amor is the proper god and subject (amor) of elegy, even this cosmic aspect is fair game for the Ars.

An important intertext for this is the beginning of Apollonius’ *Argonautica* 3, to which Ovid alludes by his address to the muse Erato (*nunc Erato, nam tu nomen Amoris habes*, 16); Apollonius had addressed the same Muse at beginning of the second half of the *Argonautica* (3.1-5). The figure of Eros/Amor appears there too and more clearly than in the Ars, establishes a cosmic setting for the second half of the poem, since Eros is persuaded to do Aphrodite’s bidding by the promise of a toy ball described by Apollonius as an image of the Empedoclean cosmos under the influence of Philia. The opening of *Argonautica* 3 contains the same paradoxical combination of sublime and humble elements that I have identified in the Ars proem, since Apollonius characterizes Eros on the one hand as a spoiled brat and on the other as a frighteningly powerful god whose power extends over the entire cosmos.

3.2 Semibovemque virum semivirumque bovem

After the proem (1-20), the narrator tells the story of Daedalus and Icarus and in doing so has occasion to describe the Minotaur in an infamous line (2.24): *semibovemque virum*

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376 Cf. the proem to *Fasti* 4, in which Ovid plays a similar generic game: the poet invokes Venus who asks him what she has to to do with his current, more elevated project. The poet answers that she is his *propositum*, his didactic subject, and she is always his *opus*, maintaining the continuity between his earlier and later poetry in the figure of Venus, who is appropriate both for erotic elegy and the elevated elegy of the Fasti (in part because of her ancestry in didactic poetry – see her status as a didactic *propositum* and the Lucretian address – which includes her roles in Empedocles, Lucretius and Vergil).

377 *Ars* 2.16, *nunc Erato, nam tu nomen Amoris habes* – *Argon*. 3.1-5, εἰ δ᾽ ἔτεκε νόον, Ἐρατώ... τῷ καὶ τοι[επήμετον οἵνομα ἀνήπται]. Vergil had already imitated Apollonius’ address to Erato at the beginning of the second half of the *Aeneid* (7.37): *nunc age...Erato*. Vergil also announces that he is undertaking great(er) work (*maior rerum mihi nascitur ordo, / maius opus moveo*, 7.44-45), as Ovid does (*magna paro*, 2.17).

semivirunque bovem (“the man half-bull and the bull half-man”). Several scholars have suggested that Ovid's verse is an adaptation of a similarly chiastic word-play found in a fragment of Empedocles (fr. 66/61).

Many creatures with two faces and two chests arose, ox-like with men’s faces, and, on the other hand, man-like with ox-heads, mixed in one way from men and in another from female form, fashioned with dark-colored limbs.

This suggestion has been bolstered by David Sedley’s identification of an Empedoclean “fingerprint” in Lucretius, that is, the clustering of compound adjectives either in a single line or over the course of a few lines, a stylistic technique used to striking effect by Empedocles.

Ovid’s imitation of Empedocles in describing the Minotaur suggests that Ovid imagined the Minotaur as an Empedoclean monster, a conclusion that a second description of the Minotaur from the *Metamorphoses* helps to confirm. It comes from Scylla's reproach of Minos in the *Metamorphoses* (8.133): *discordemque utero fetum tulit* (“and she bore a discordant offspring in her womb”). Commentators typically point to *Ars* 2.24 as a comparandum. But is the Minotaur all that is shared by the two passages? In the passage from the *Metamorphoses* Ovid draws attention to the adjective

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379 This line is part of the famous anecdote told of Ovid by Seneca the Elder (*Contr*. 2.2.12), in which Ovid and his friends play a parlor game, the premise being that Ovid was to select only three verses out of his entire poetic output to keep and his friends three verses to expunge; after the results were tallied each side had chosen exactly the same verses, one of them being *Ars* 2.24.


381 This translation is adapted from Inwood (2001).


383 Bömer (1969-86) and Anderson (1997) *ad loc*.
discors by a striking extension of the word's meaning. However, Ovid's use of the adjective becomes more intelligible if we recognize that it looks back to a passage in the first book of the Metamorphoses (1.432-7):

cumque sit ignis aquae pugnax, vapor umidus omnes res creat et discors concordia fetibus apta est. ergo ubi diluuiio tellus lutulenta recenti solibus aetheris altoque recanduit aestu, edidit innumerás species partimque figuras rettulit antiquas, partim nova monstra creauit.

Although fire and water are enemies, a moist vapor creates everything and discordant concord is the right condition for birth. Therefore when the earth was muddy from the recent deluge, it became warm from the ethereal rays of the sun and the lofty heat, and issued forth countless species: in part she restored ancient forms, in part she created new monsters.

Met. 8.133 (discordemque utero fetum tulum) virtually repeats 1.433 (discors concordia fetibus apta est) and thus implicitly compares the Minotaur to the nova monstra such as Python that the earth brought forth after Deucalion's flood. But this is not all. Damien Nelis has recently argued that the literary genealogy of Ovid's monstra goes back to Empedocles through the mediation of Apollonius, Lucretius, and Vergil. The expression discors concordia seems to be a gloss on Empedocles' cosmological principles of Neikos and Philia. The noun discordia too had gained Empedoclean associations by Ovid’s time. Therefore, the description of the Minotaur at Metamorphoses 8.133 as discordem...fetum marks it as a specifically Empedoclean monster, as had Ovid's

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384 Bömer (1969-86) ad loc.: "discors zur Bezeichnung eines halb menschen-, halb tiersgestaltigen Wesens ist eine kühne und singuläre Bedeutungserweiterung."
385 Nelis (2009).
387 It is generally accepted that Ennius uses Discordia as a calque of Empedoclean Neikos (fr. 225-6 Sk.). See Skutsch (1985) 403, as well as my discussion in chapter 2.
adaptation of Empedocles' word-play at Ars 2.24, and this helps to explain Ovid’s otherwise unusual use of the adjective *discors*.

The Minotaur clearly had Empedoclean associations in Ovid’s poetry. But is Ovid's conjuring of the monster (*semibovemque virum semivirumque bovem*, 2.24) at the beginning of the second book of the *Ars* anything more than an isolated example of Ovid's verbal ingenuity? Alison Sharrock has argued that the *Ars* is a "hybrid work," which is symbolized by the hybrid nature of the characters in the first exemplum in the second book, Daedalus and Icarus, the "bird-men." Important for our purposes, she thinks the Minotaur too is implicated in this: "the double nature of the bull-man reflects the bird-man Daedalus, the hybrid unit of this verse, that is the elegiac couplet, and the hybrid subject of this work, that is didactic love elegy."388

Setting aside the possible implications of this for just a moment, it should be noted that scholars have suggested that a second of Ovid’s didactic elegies, the *Fasti*, has a similar emblem in the hybrid figure of the god Janus. Alessandro Barchiesi has said of Janus that "a fascinating correspondence can be seen between his double nature and the duality that is part of the elegiac couplet, with its alternation of longer and shorter lines."390 In addition to perhaps being emblematic of the elegiac couplet and their respective poems, Janus and the Minotaur share an Empedoclean lineage. Pfligersdorffer has persuasively argued that the cosmology of the Janus episode is greatly indebted to Empedocles, and Hardie, in reference to the figure of Janus himself, has observed that "...the monstrous *Mischwesen* that come into being at certain stages in the Empedoclean

388 Sharrock (1994b) 128.
389 ibid. 130-31.
Many creatures with two faces and two chests arose, ox-like with men’s faces, and, on the other hand, man-like with ox-heads, mixed in one way from men and in another from female form, fashioned with dark-colored limbs.

It appears, then, that both Janus and the Minotaur look back to the hybrid creatures that arose at a certain point in Empedocles’ zoogony.

Yet, if we take seriously the suggestions made by Sharrock about the Minotaur and by Barchiesi about Janus, we might suggest that the elegiac couplet itself can be considered an "Empedoclean verse form.” As far as we know, Empedocles never composed in any meter other than hexameter. Therefore, by “Empedoclean verse form” I mean that Ovid recognized that certain aspects of both the form and content of elegy predispose it to an Empedoclean interpretation. The couplet consists of the alternation of hexameter and pentameter verses; and as Amores 1.1 dramatically shows, the former is conventionally associated with martial epic and the latter transforms epic into elegiac verse (1.1.1-4):

arma gravi numero violentaque bella parabam
edere, materia conveniente modis.
par erat inferior versus; risisse Cupido
dicitur atque unum surripuisse pedem.

I was preparing to tell of arms and terrible wars in a weighty measure, with subject matter appropriate for the meter. The second verse was equal [to the first]; they say that Cupid laughed and stole a single foot.

A second passage from the *Amores* is even more explicit about the distinct characterization of the two parts of the elegiac couplet (2.17.21-2)

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carminis hoc ipsum genus impar, sed tamen apte
iungitur herous cum breviore modo.
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This kind of verse is itself unequal, but nevertheless a heroic meter is fitly joined with a shorter one.

Elegy, moreover, developed a technical definition as the *alternus versus*. The characterization of elegy found in *Tristia* 3.11 is common (*clauda quod alterno subsidunt carmina versu*). Perhaps, then, the alternation of the hexameter and pentameter can be seen as a metrical embodiment of the alternation of the principles of warlike, martial, epic strife (hexameter) and amorous, peaceful, elegiac love (pentameter) in Empedocles’ cosmology. Moreover, it is possible to see the "hybrid" elegiac couplet, in Sharrock's terms, as the result of a *discors concordia* of hexameter and pentameter similar to the *discors concordia* that produces *nova monstra* in *Metamorphoses* 1.

One final point is that the physical (re)generation of the world and birth of the Empedoclean *nova monstra* in the *Metamorphoses* is almost immediately followed by the first erotic tale of the poem (*primus amor*, 1.452), so that cosmic change is assimilated to generic change. This is most clearly embodied in the defeat of the epic Apollo (cf.

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392 See Keith (1994) 34 on the technical definition of the elegiac couplet as *alternus versus*. See also Horace *AP* 75; Ovid *Am.* 2.17.14, 21-2 and 3.1.37.
393 Cf. fr. 35/30.3, ἀμοιβαῖος, used of the alternation in dominance of Neikos and Philia in the cosmic cycle.
Apollo’s arma at 1.441) by the elegiac Cupid.\textsuperscript{394} At this programmatic point in the Metamorphoses Ovid suggests a parallel between Empedoclean discors concordia and the “birth” of (erotic) elegy. Therefore, Ovid’s use of Empedocles at both the beginning of Met. 1 and Ars 2 is implicated in his definition of his poetic program. In the next section I argue that the Daedalus story in the Ars further defines Ovid’s didactic poetry in the Ars in relation to predecessors such as Empedocles and Lucretius.

3.3 Daedalus, Lucretius and Empedocles

In the proem to book 2 of the Ars the poet once again, as he had done in the book 1 proem (\textit{vera canam: coeptis, mater Amoris, ades}, 1.30), asks Venus to aid his work, adding Amor (\textit{puer}, 2.15) and Erato to the prayer, as well (2.15-6):

\begin{quote}
nunc mihi, siquando, puer et Cytherea, favete,
nunc Erato, nam tu nomen amoris habes.
\end{quote}

Now, if ever, Cytherea and your child, aid me, now Erato, for you have the name of love.

As we saw, the address to Erato marks this as the beginning of the second half of the work.\textsuperscript{395} It is also clear that Ovid positions the Ars as a successor to earlier Latin didactic poems such as the De Rerum Natura and Georgics.\textsuperscript{396} The placement of the address to Erato in the same structural position in the Ars as it had occupied in the Argonautica and Aeneid indicates Ovid’s interest in relating the structure of his own poem to that of previous poems in the literary tradition. Therefore, it could not have been lost on Ovid that the books opening the second halves of the DRN and Georgics (4 and 3 respectively)

\textsuperscript{394} The description of Apollo’s defeat of Python is rife with epic diction. Nicoll (1980) discusses the metapoetic significance of the passage.
\textsuperscript{395} See Hollis (1977) xii-xiii for the argument that the Ars was originally planned in two books.
\textsuperscript{396} Gibson (2003) 8, n. 13 usefully collects the essential bibliography on the Ars and its relationship to the didactic poetry of Lucretius and Vergil.
each contain negative depictions of Venus and Amor/amor.\textsuperscript{397} Therefore, the poet’s prayer to Venus, Amor and Erato in the proem of \textit{Ars} 2, in the context of Ovid’s predecessors in Latin didactic, can be seen as an opening, polemical salvo against the criticism of Venus and Amor in \textit{DRN} 4 and \textit{Georgics} 3. While the poet’s prayer to Venus in \textit{Ars} 1 to be present at the undertaking of his work had looked back to Lucretius’ own prayer to Venus in the \textit{DRN} 1 proem, in the \textit{Ars} 2 proem Ovid begins to signal his departure from Lucretius. As we will see, later in \textit{Ars} 2 the poet fulfills this promise of polemic against Lucretius and Vergil on the subject of Venus and Amor hinted at in the proem.\textsuperscript{398}

However, I am going to argue first that Ovid begins to develop this playfully anti-Lucretian polemic immediately after the proem, in the story of Daedalus and Icarus. As we know, in the introduction to the myth, Ovid grabs the reader’s attention by an outrageous description of the Minotaur, which Daedalus had enclosed inside the labyrinth (2.23-4): \textit{Daedalus, ut clausit conceptum crimine matris / semibovemque virum semivirumque bovem} (“Daedalus, after he imprisoned the man half-bull and bull half-man, which had been conceived by the crime of its mother…”). While the line was infamous in antiquity as an example of Ovid’s lack of restraint, the matter is not quite so simple.\textsuperscript{399} As we saw, it is an adaptation of Empedocles’ description of hybrid creatures that arose during a zoogony at a certain point in the cosmic cycle, only to die out by means of natural selection and its clustering of compound adjectives imitates a characteristic feature of Empedocles’ style that had been noticed by Lucretius, who used

\textsuperscript{397} \textit{DRN} 4.1058-1287; \textit{G.3.209-94}.
\textsuperscript{398} I discuss this in the third section of this chapter.
\textsuperscript{399} Seneca (\textit{Con.} 2.2.12).
it as a means of signalling allusion to his predecessor. Therefore, in composing this outrageous line, Ovid may be poking fun at the stylistic excesses of both Empedocles and Lucretius rather than betraying his own lack of restraint, as his critics would have it.\footnote{Cf. \textit{Tristia} 7.15-8, where Ovid also seems to be undertaking a parody of the epic use of compound adjectives. The passage contains no less than six such adjectives, including another monster of a line alluding to \textit{Ars} 2.24 (\textit{Tristia} 7.18): \textit{centimanumque Gyen semibovemque virum}. On the themes of “excess” and “restraint” in the \textit{Ars Amatoria} generally, see Gibson (2007) 71-114.}

Indeed, this mention of the Minotaur, although ostensibly a symbol of linguistic excess, is in fact connected to the theme of restraint, since Daedalus has confined the Minotaur inside the labyrinth, perhaps as the poet of the \textit{Ars} is attempting to hold Amor in place (\textit{magna paro, quas possit Amor remanere per arte, / dicere}, 2.17-8). The themes of restraint and excess are prominent in the Daedalus story. Daedalus himself tries to escape the restraints of Minos, although, as he instructs his son Icarus, their release (via flight) has to be a moderate or restrained one; Icarus’ ruin is that he exceeds the limits Daedalus has placed on their flight. Therefore, one could say that Icarus’ excess has its stylistic equivalent in line 24 describing the Minotaur. Compound adjectives in general are a feature of epic style.\footnote{See Green (2004) \textit{ad Fasti} 1.334, 352 on such “grand compounds.”} The presence of two in a single line makes it hyper-epic, although Ovid playfully situates these epic adjectives in the pentameter rather than hexameter. Indeed, in a meta-poetic reading of the Daedalus story in the \textit{Ars}, Alison Sharrock has argued that Daedalus represents the stylistic middle ground of a Callimachean poet such as Ovid, whereas Icarus represents the high style of epic.\footnote{Sharrock (1994b) 133-46, 155-68.} Daedalus’ enclosure of this hyper-epic Empedoclean/Lucretian beast inside the intricately designed labyrinth can be seen as a symbol of this.
As we saw, however, Sharrock has suggested that the Minotaur is at the same time a reflection of the *Ars Amatoria*, since the *Ars* itself is a hybrid of elegy and didactic. On this reading, while Ovid could be poking fun at the stylistic excesses of Empedocles and Lucretius, he uses the existence of the hybrid figure of the Minotaur as a kind of justification for his “hybrid” poem. As it turns out, however, Empedocles and Lucretius disagree on the question of the existence of such hybrid creatures as the Minotaur. Here some of the ground has been prepared by Damien Nelis who has argued that Lucretius’ rejection of hybrid forms like Centaurs (*DRN* 5.878-9) is directed specifically at Empedocles’ “man-faced ox-progeny,” the model for Ovid’s Minotaur. Nelis’ argument is especially compelling because Lucretius’ denial of the existence of Centaurs comes at the end of an account of zoogony closely modeled on Empedocles’ own zoogony.  

Importantly for our purposes, Nelis argues that in book 1 of the *Met*. Ovid takes the side of Empedocles in this debate by making an Empedoclean *monstrum*, Python, emerge from the zoogony after the flood. Nelis concludes: “Lucretius in effect denies...not only the possibility of the formation of hybrid forms, but also the very possibility of metamorphosis, and so it should not come as a surprise that as he began the first metamorphic love story of his great epic, Ovid took good care to declare his debt to Empedocles’ epic about Love, Strife, and cosmic change and to invert Lucretius’ certainties concerning the *foedera certa naturae* and the fixed *discrimina* they

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enforce.” As we saw in the last section, Ovid suggests in the *Metamorphoses* that the Minotaur is similar to the *nova monstra* produced after the flood and is, much more clearly than Python, a hybrid Empedoclean monster. Not only hybridity, but the theme of metamorphosis too is prominent at the beginning of *Ars* 2. The “transformation” of Daedalus and Icarus had been anticipated by the presence of that quintessentially metamorphic figure Proteus as the closing image of book 1, where the poet instructs the *amator* to be as adaptable as the protean god (*Ars* 1.755-70). It seems no coincidence that the next mythological exemplum features other “metamorphic” figures.

Therefore, Ovid has a stake in the debate about metamorphosis and hybrid forms at this point in the *Ars Amatoria*. It seems natural, then, that here too, in a didactic poem, Ovid playfully engages in polemic against the Lucretian rejection of hybridity. I should acknowledge here that there has been some debate about whether Daedalus’ “transformation” into a bird is really a metamorphosis. In a strict sense, it is clearly not: Daedalus and Icarus do not become hybrids or change into entirely different creatures in the way that the Minotaur is a hybrid of ox and man. Ovid, nevertheless, strongly encourages the reader to see it as a *kind* of metamorphosis. Sharrock is right to see a connection between the bull-man Minotaur and the bird-men Daedalus and Icarus. Indeed, several features of the story encourage us to see Daedalus and Icarus, like the Minotaur, as part of the anti-Lucretian polemic in the passage.

As we saw, the very existence of the hybrid Minotaur is anti-Lucretian, since Lucretius roundly denies the existence of such hybrid forms, likely as part of a polemic

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404 Nelis (2009) 266.
406 Sharrock (1994b) 130-1.
against Empedocles. As Lucretius makes clear, such forms cannot come into existence because of the “laws of nature” or, in a common Lucretian formulation, the foedera naturai. Daedalus, in speaking about his flight and “transformation” into a bird, couches this in terms of changing the “laws of his nature” (2.42): sunt mihi naturae iura novanda meae (“the laws of my nature must be made changed”). Therefore, like the Minotaur, whose existence contradicts Lucretius’ foedera naturai, Daedalus’ own determination to “change” the laws of his nature is perhaps part of the anti-Lucretian fabric of the passage.

Later in the story Ovid appears to confirm that Daedalus and Icarus, in addition to the Minotaur, look back to Lucretius’ rejection of hybrid forms and, in turn, to Empedocles’ hybrid monsters. The poet describes them setting off from a modest height and appropriately so in light of Daedalus’ insistence on the “middle way” (2.71-2): monte minor collis, campis erat altior aequis; / hinc data sunt miserae corpora bina fugae (“There was a hill smaller than a mountain, but higher than the level fields; from here the two bodies set out on their doomed flight”). Corpora bina appears to allude directly to Lucretius’ rejection of hybrid creatures such as Centaurs at DRN 5.878-80:

\[\text{sed neque Centauri fuerunt nec tempore in ullo esse queunt duplici natura et corpora bino ex alienigenis membris compacta...}\]

But Centaurs never existed, nor at any time can creatures exist with a double nature and a two-fold body fastened together from heterogeneous limbs

Once again, this Lucretian passage comes immediately after the description of a strongly Empedoclean zoogony; moreover, Nelis has argued that this rejection of hybrid forms is

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408 The text in the next line is uncertain.
aimed specifically at Empedocles. As Sharrock has pointed out, Ovid’s “corpora bina
suggests not only two, but two-fold: half man, half bird,” and in this sense Daedalus and
Icarus contradict, if rather ambiguously, Lucretius’ rejection of hybrid forms.409

We might also recall that Amor himself is a hybrid figure. In ancient iconography
he is typically represented as having human form (either a young man or a boy), but also
the wings of a bird.410 In this sense the “bird-boy” or rather “bird-god” Cupid can himself
represent the hybrid elegiac couplet; he also anticipates the winged “hybrids” Daedalus
and Icarus. As we saw, the poet says that Amor has “twin wings” (geminas...alas, 2.19).
The adjective geminus, while literally referring to Cupid’s two wings, can also reflect
the two-fold or double form of Cupid, boy/god and bird. Indeed, geminus is frequently
used to mean “double-formed.”411 Amor is therefore part of the theme of doubling or
hybridity at the beginning of Ars 2. The theme is subtly alluded to at the opening line of
the book (2.1): Dicite ‘io Paean’ et ‘io’ bis dicite ‘Paean’. This is doubly appropriate for
the second book of the poem. As we know, Ovid’s interest in doubling, compound forms
and hybridity at the beginning of Ars 2 is clearest in his outrageous description of the
Minotaur at Ars 2.24, which contains two compound adjectives coined by Ovid for the
occasion. But even before this line he had used another compound adjective — this too
an Ovidian coinage — to describe the land of Amyclae (2.5): talis ab armiferis

409 Sharrock (1994b) ibid.
410 For examples, see LIMC (Zurich 1981-) s.v. “Eros/Amor, Cupido.”
411 Cf. Met. 2.630, geminique tuit Chironis in antrum, and Met. 6.126, ut Saturnus equo geminum Chirona crearit.
Priameius hospes Amyclis (“so the stranger, son of Priam, from arm-bearing Amyclae...”).

Therefore Ovid’s own experiment in doubling and hybridity is underscored on a stylistic level by his use of compound adjectives that he himself has coined. While it is particularly prominent at the beginning of Ars 2, Ovid’s penchant for coining compound adjectives is also evident in the Amores, suggesting that his interest in hybrid forms exists throughout his poetic corpus; this culminates, of course, in the Metamorphoses. But the Amores, for example, as I suggested in the last chapter, can be seen as a kind of hybrid, in as much as it is a collection of elegies whose alternate title is the epic arma. Furthermore, in Am. 1.1 Ovid dramatizes the transformation of his second hexameter into a pentameter, creating the hybrid elegiac couplet, perhaps, once again, reflecting the bird-boy/god Amor. Ovid does not advertise this in Am. 1.1 the way that he does in Ars 2, but the fact that Ovid’s elegy is a hybrid form created by Amor and that its origin is represented as a process whereby war or strife is transformed into love, makes his elegy ripe for a characterization as “Empedoclean.”

Therefore, while I have suggested that line 24 of Ars 2 is poking fun at both Empedocles and Lucretius, it also seems to place Ovid on the side of Empedocles against Lucretius concerning the existence of hybrid forms, perhaps as a metaliterary justification for Ovid’s own hybrid Ars Amatoria. Ovid’s description of the Minotaur and his playful engagement in the wider question of hybridity, however, also alerts us to both

412 See Janka (1997) ad loc. on Ovid’s penchant for -fer- and -ger- neologisms. While Ovid had already used armiferus in the Amores (2.6.35), he (or rather Daedalus) uses another coined compound adjective, ensiger, for the first time at Ars 2.56 during Daedalus’ instructions to Icarus on their flight path.

413 See McKeown ad Am. 2.2.25 and 2.6.35-6 for a collection of all the -fer- and -ger- compounds coined by Ovid.
Empedocles and Lucretius as intertexts for the Daedalus story and perhaps as potential models for the didactic figure of Daedalus. As Hoefmans has demonstrated, Lucretian resonances abound in the Daedalus story in *Met. 8*, in which Daedalus is depicted in some respects as a model Epicurean, although his Epicurean ataraxia is eventually undone by his grief over Icarus’ death. While we cannot simply read Lucretian associations back onto the story in the *Ars* on the basis of Lucretius’ presence in the corresponding story in the *Met.*, there have already been a number of allusions to Lucretius in the Daedalus story in the *Ars*, enough to suggest a Lucretian presence in the *Ars* story, as well. In fact, the Daedalus story in the *Ars*, like that in the *Met.*, is full of Lucretian reminiscences. However, whereas Daedalus in *Met. 8* is in some respects a good Epicurean, in *Ars* 2 he is rather an “anti-Lucretius,” a fact already hinted at by his duplicitous nature and his connection to hybrid forms.

But why does Ovid make any connection between Daedalus and Lucretius in the first place? First, it is important to remember that Daedalus is a didactic figure. Of all the mythological characters in the *Ars Amatoria*, he is most like the didactic poet, since he is represented as carefully instructing Icarus on their impending flight. At the same time,

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414 Hoefmans (1994) 137-60.

415 Ovid’s use of compound adjectives in describing the Minotaur alludes both to Empedocles’ hybrid figures and, in turn, to Lucretius’ technique of indicating his imitation of Empedocles by the accumulation of such adjectives; the “two-fold” bodies (corpora bina, 2.72) of Daedalus and Icarus, moreover, allude to Lucretius rejection of the two-fold bodies of Centaurs (corpore bino, 5.879).

416 *Ars* 2.45, remigium volucrum ~ DRN 6.743, remigii...alarum; *Ars* 2.59, aetherias...auras ~ DRN 3.405, aetherias...auras (cf. Verg. G. 2.291-2); *Ars* 2.85, cera...liquescit ~ DRN 6.516, cera...liquescat. Note also *Ars* 2.43-4, quis crederet umquam / aeras hominem carpere posse vias. As Ovid’s close reworking of these lines at *Met. 8*.219-20 makes more clear, the idea of looking in wonder at the sky and the question of belief looks back to Lucretius *DRN* 6.60-4. See Hoefmans (1994) 150 for the Lucretian source of *Met. 8*.217-20. Also see Janka (2007) *ad Ars* 2.61-2. While most of these parallels are noted by Janka (2007) in his commentary, no one, as far as I know, has discussed them. Sharrock (1994b) 193 also notes that the closing couplet of the Daedalus exemplum (2.97-8) “imitates a very Lucretian practice of ending a section by stating what he has just shown.”
Daedalus’ status as an artist makes it possible for him to be seen as a poetological figure. In these respects, he offers an opportunity for Ovid to explore the figure of the didactic poet. Sharrock has also pointed out that Daedalus is the inventor *par excellence* in antiquity and an example of the *Protos Heuretes* figure.417 His “discovery” (*repertum*) is his audacious path through the sky, *audacem pinnis repperit ille viam* (*Ars* 2.22), and his wings are his “inventions,” *quem licet, inventis aera rumpe meis* (2.54). As a discoverer and inventor, Daedalus is like Lucretius’ hero and *Protos Heuretes* Epicurus, who is an “inventor of things” (*rerum inventor*, *DRN* 2.9; cf. 5.9) and distinguished by his “discoveries” (*repertis*, 5.2). We might note too that other than Epicurus, Empedocles is the only figure singled out by Lucretius for his “illustrious discoveries” (*praecclara reperta*, 1.732).418 Epicurus’ discoveries made him the first of men to “shatter the confining bars of nature’s gates (1.70-1): *effringere ut arta / naturae primus portarum claustra cupiret* (“so that he, first, should desire to shatter the confining bars of nature’s gates”). Therefore, Epicurus, like Daedalus, breaks out of a sort of prison by means of his discoveries. Compare *Ars* 2.53-4: *aera non potuit Minos, alia omnia clausit; / quem licet, inventis aera rumpe meis*. Both also break out of their “prisons” by means of flight, Epicurus by a “flight” of the mind and Daedalus by a literal flight.

Yet, Daedalus is also an example of the “hero excluded from the elements or divisions of the world.”419 Because Minos possesses the land and sea, neither of these are open to Daedalus as a means of escape (*Ars* 2.35-6): *possidet et terras et possidet aequora Minos: / nec tellus nostrae nec patet unda fugae* (“Minos possesses the land and

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417 Sharrock (1994b) 140.
418 Cf. Sharrock (1994b) 140, n. 86.
419 Hardie (1986) 332.
he possesse the sea: neither land nor sea lies open for our escape”). Indeed, as we
saw, Daedalus says that Minos has closed off all other (elements?) to him except the air
(2.53): *aera non potuit Minos, alia omnia clausit* (Minos could not close off the air,
though he blocked everything else”). While Philip Hardie explains this theme of
exclusion from the elements in the *Aeneid* as “a heightening of the basic Odyssean theme
of the hero wandering over land and sea,” the theme is most clearly expressed in
Empedocles, where the poet (cf. τῶν καὶ ἐγὼ νῦν εἰμι, fr. 11/115.13) is rejected from each
of the four elements in turn (fr. 11/115).420 In this respect Daedalus also resembles
Lucretius’ great poetic predecessor Empedocles.

Therefore, Daedalus is like the scientific hero or *Protos Heuretes* Epicurus — and
perhaps Empedocles, as well — in several respects. However, Ovid also takes care to
distance Daedalus from Lucretius and Epicurus. As I suggested earlier, Lucretius’
diatribe against Venus and *amor* in *DRN* 4, the structural equivalent to *Ars* 2, is in large
part behind Ovid’s anti-Lucretian polemic in the book. I will also suggest that Ovid uses
Lucretius’ great poetic model Empedocles as a foil in this playful polemic. He can appeal
to Empedocles against Lucretius because Lucretius himself had adapted the Empedoclean
Aphrodite for his remarkable praise of Venus in the proem to *DRN* 1.

In her discussion of the differences between the twin Daedalus stories in the *Ars*
and *Met*. Barbara Pavlock has pointed to the fact that Daedalus’s piety is emphasized in
the former, while in the latter, Daedalus completely ignores the the gods, a sign of the

420 Ibid. Hardie (1986) 332, n. 77 notes that the Daedalus story in the *Metamorphoses* is an example of this
theme, but he does not discuss the corresponding story in the *Ars*. 
hubristic nature of his flight in the *Met.* 421 In the *Ars* Daedalus prays to Jupiter to pardon his flight (2.37-40):

restat iter caeli: caelo temptabimus ire.
da veniam coepto, luppiter alte, meo:
non ego sidereas adfecto tangere sedes;
qua fugiam dominum, nulla, nisi ista, via est.

The path of the sky remains: we will try to go through the sky. Pardon my undertaking, lofty Jupiter: I am not aiming to reach your starry seats; there is no path by which I can escape my master, if not that one.

Hoefmans has taken the absence of the gods in the *Met.* story as part of the Lucretian/Epicurean subtext of the myth. 422 Therefore, the emphasis on Daedalus’ piety towards the traditional gods in the *Ars* suggests he is less “Lucretian” than the Daedalus of the corresponding story in the *Metamorphoses*.

Hoefmans also notes that in the *Met.* Daedalus defines the world by the “Epicurean triad” of land-water-air (*Met.* 8.185-6). In support of the Lucretian associations of this triad, she cites *Tristia* 2.425, where Ovid refers to Lucretius’ poem in terms of the same triad. 423 In the *Ars*, however, the Empedoclean quartet of earth-water-air-fire is more prominent (2.59-62): 424

name sive aetherias vicino sole per auras
¡bimus, impatients cera caloris erit;
sive humiles propiore freto iactabimus alas,
mobilis aequoreis pinna mades cet aquis.

For if we go through the ethereal breezes and close to the sun, our wax won’t be able to endure the heat; or if we take our wings too low and near to the sea, our agile feathers will be drenched by its water.

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423 *Tristia* 2.425-6: explicat ut causas rapidi Lucretius ignis, / casurumque triplex vaticinatur opus.
424 The four elements also appear at *Ars* 2.35-9.
Here Daedalus offers instruction (in the mold of a didactic poet like Empedocles?) to his son Icarus, incorporating the four elements. Three are clearly represented (sol/fire, aura/air, aqua/water), while earth is implied by humiles (from humus, “earth”). As we saw, Daedalus had already been connected to Empedocles both by the theme of “exclusion from the elements” and by his enclosure of the Empedoclean Minotaur in the labyrinth. The secure allusion to Empedocles earlier at line 24 prepares us to see this oblique representation of the four elements.

Also anti-Lucretian is not just Daedalus’ piety, but specifically his belief in the Underworld, one of the main targets of Lucretius’ criticism of religio. Daedalus, in asking for Jupiter’s pardon, says, “let a path be given by Styx and we will swim across the Stygian waters” (2.41): *per Styga detur, Stygias transnabimus undas*. As commentators point out, this statement is ironic because of Icarus’ impending death, but Daedalus also alludes here to the epic theme of katabasis. While the notion of a katabasis would be as ridiculous to Lucretius as any other myth related to the Underworld, in one fragment Empedocles promises his pupil Pausanias that “you will be able to lead from Hades the life-force of a man who has died,” ἄξεις δ᾽ἐξ Ἅιδαο καταφθιμένου μένος ἀνδρός (15/111.9), which may well allude to the theme of katabasis.

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426 Daedalus also built the portable wooden cow which enabled Pasiphae to be impregnated with the Minotaur in the first place. Therefore, even before fitting himself and Icarus with wings and therefore becoming hybrid bird-men, Daedalus turned Pasiphae into a hybrid cow-woman.
427 As Janka (1997) notes *ad loc.* Styx is often used synecdochically for Tartarus.
428 Janka (1997) *ad loc.*
Daedalus’ Underworld reference is in fact part of a subtle remythologization of a passage in Lucretius. As Janka points out in his commentary, the collocation *remigium volucrum* (*Ars* 2.45), which occurs just a few lines after Daedalus’ reference to the Underworld, is adapted from *Aeneid* 6.19, where it also refers to Daedalus’ wings (6.18-19): *redditus his primum terris tibi, Phoebus, sacravit / remigium alarum posuitque immania templae* (“here first returned to land, Phoebus, he dedicated to you the oarage of his wings and built a huge temple”). In Vergil’s version of the story, Daedalus’ flight brings him to Cumae, where Aeneas will enter the Underworld in book 6. It may be that Ovid’s placement of the Daedalus myth at the beginning of book 2 of the *Ars* — the midpoint of the poem — is related to Daedalus’ appearance near the mid-point of the *Aeneid*, the beginning of book 6. If this is in fact the case, it suggests that Ovid adapts not only the Vergilian phrase *remigium alarum*, but also the katabasis theme from *Aen.* 6.

Be that as it may, Lucretius too uses the metaphor of oars for wings — like Vergil, in the sixth book of his poem — in his description of the fatal effects that “mephitic exhalations” from places like Lake Avernus near Cumae have on birds flying over them (6.743): *remigii oblitae pennarum vela remittunt* (“they let down their sails, forgetful of the oarage of their wings”). Lucretius, of course, uses the traditional associations between Lake Avernus and the Underworld as another opportunity to criticize such myths (6.762-63). Vergil seems to be echoing Lucretius’ *remigii...pennarum* (*DRN* 6.743) in his *remigium alarum* (6.19), especially in light of the fact that Daedalus dedicates these at Cumae, one of the places Lucretius mentions in his

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430 This is the only occurrence of *remex* in the *DRN*. The felicitous expression “mephitic exhalations” is taken from Rouse’s (1924 = Smith (1975)) note on his translation of this passage.
treatment of deadly subterranean exhalations (DRN 6.747). Ovid, in turn, alludes to both Lucretius and Vergil by his juxtaposition of the Underworld and the phrase
remigium volucrum (Ars 2.45). Indeed, the recollection of Aen. 6.19, where Icarus has already died, and DRN 6.743, where the birds flying over the Avernian regions fall from the sky into the water (6.744-46) in a prefiguration of Icarus’ fall, adds to the irony of the passage in the Ars.

Ovid also uses remigium for wings in the Daedalus story at Met. 8.228:

remigioque carens non ullas percipit auras. Here Hoefmans has noted the Lucretian parallel.\(^{431}\) Strangely, she says that in contrast to the birds in the Lucretian passage, Icarus is not ruined by his forgetfulness. Although, in an obvious sense, Icarus either “forgets” or ignores his father’s instructions to keep to a middle course; therefore, the Lucretian passage also anticipates the theme of forgetfulness in the Daedalus story in the Ars. In any case, both Vergil and Ovid in their allusions to the Lucretian passage in DRN 6 remythologize Lucretius’ rational explanation of the Underworld exhalations and their deadly effect on birds by making them part of the myth of the “bird-men” Daedalus and Icarus.\(^{432}\)

Further related to Daedalus’ piety and adherence to traditional religious views — and therefore anti-Lucretian — is his distancing of his flight from any gigantomachic associations. He is compelled to take a path through the sky (2.37), but he does not aim at reaching the abodes of the gods (2.39): non ego sidereas adfecto tangere sedes (“I am not

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\(^{432}\) Ovid also remythologizes Lucretian material at Ars 2.85, where the wax of Icarus’ wings melts because it is too close to the god, i.e. the Sun: \textit{cera deo propriore liquescit}. Cera...liquescit is Lucretian (DRN 6.515-6), quasi igni / \textit{cera super calido tabescens muta liquescat}, but in the preceding lines Lucretius reduces the sun to its physical qualities. See also Ecl. 8.80-1.
aiming to reach your starry seats”). This is imagery taken from conventional
descriptions of gigantomachy.\textsuperscript{433} In her metapoetic reading of the myth, Sharrock sees
this statement as a \textit{recusatio} of gigantomachic epic.\textsuperscript{434} However, Daedalus’ status as a
didactic “poet” encourages us to see this also as a specific distancing of Daedalus from
the didactic poet Lucretius’ extensive use of gigantomachy as a positive metaphor for
scientific inquiry, which is part of his inversion of traditional religious values.\textsuperscript{435} As
Hardie says, in Lucretius “the scientific attempt to understand the universe is assimilated
to the physical conquest of the heavens.”\textsuperscript{436} This theme of scientific inquiry is
programmatically established in Lucretius’ initial praise of Epicurus in book 1 (62-79),
where Epicurus’ “flight” is figured as a kind of gigantomachic assault on the sky.
Moreover, Lucretius suggests that Empedocles too, like Epicurus, is one of these
scientific giants through assimilation of Empedocles to the sky-threatening Aetna of his
native Sicily.\textsuperscript{437}

However, the more restrained, pious Daedalus of the \textit{Ars} appears to be a counter-
image of the sky-threatening Epicurus and Empedocles of the \textit{DRN}. His path to the sky is
modest, perhaps reflecting his restraint of the Empedoclean monster Minotaur inside the
labyrinth. Icarus, on the other hand, can represent the unrestrained Lucretian and
Empedoclean poets. Icarus’ flight and fiery end is a negative image of Epicurus’
“procession beyond the flaming ramparts of our world” (\textit{extra \ processit longe}

\textsuperscript{433} See Janka (2007) \textit{ad loc.}
\textsuperscript{434} Sharrock (1994b) 137-8.
\textsuperscript{435} Hardie (1986) 209ff.
\textsuperscript{436} Hardie (1986) 210.
\textsuperscript{437} Hardie (1986) 212. Traditionally, Daedalus’ flight ended in Sicily (home of Empedocles!), as it does in
the \textit{Metamorphoses}. 

flammantia moenia mundi, 1.72-3) and the ascent of Empedocles up (and then into) the heights of the fiery Mt. Aetna.438 Ironically, Icarus’ bird’s eye view of the sea from the apex of his flight (2.87) — territus a summo despexit in aequora caelo (“terrified he gazed down upon the sea from the height of the sky”) — resembles the perspective of the Epicurean sage, who calmly gazes upon the troubled sea (2.1-2) and looks down from a lofty height (despicere, 2.9), although Icarus’ terror (territus, 2.87) is the opposite of the Epicurean ideal of ataraxia.

Therefore, I have suggested that Ovid begins to distance his didactic poetry in Ars 2 from that of Lucretius, whereas in Ars 1 Ovid’s address to Venus and rejection of traditional sources of inspiration had aligned him with his Latin predecessor. This change reflects the shift in Lucretius’ depiction of Venus in DRN 4, the beginning of the second half of the DRN, just as Ars 2 begins the second half of its poem. While Lucretian material can be found in all three books of the Ars, in many ways book 2 is the most Lucretian book in the entire poem. As we will see, it contains a Lucretian-style cosmogony and Kulturentstehung; it also features the lovers Mars and Venus, who appear at the beginning of the DRN. Once again, however, these become opportunities for Ovid to distance his eroto-didaxis from certain views of Venus in the De Rerum Natura. As part of this thoroughly elegiac project, Ovid can also appeal in some instances to Lucretius’ predecessor Empedocles, since he had also composed a didactic poem on love (and strife) in which Aphrodite/Venus seems to have had a primarily beneficent role. Moreover, Ovid can playfully claim affinity in some respects between his poetics and Empedoclean cosmology.

438 Horace, AP 463-6; Ovid, Ibis 597-8.
3.4 Ovid’s Elegiac Cosmology (Ars 2.425-92)

While the Lucretian background of the Daedalus story is somewhat oblique, this is not the case for the cosmogony and *Kulturrentstehung* at *Ars* 2.467-92, the most transparently “Lucretian” passage in the entire *Ars*. This philosophizing passage appears in a clearly demarcated section around the midpoint of the second book (425-92). The beginning of the section is announced by an "internal proem," in which the address of the Muse Erato (425) recalls the poet’s address to the goddess in the formal proem at the beginning of the book (16); and the section is closed off by an epiphany of the god Apollo (*manifestus Apollo*, 493). Internally, the section breaks into five distinct parts:

1. Just prior to the address of Erato, there had been instruction on concealing an affair from one's girlfriend (373-420) and a short digression on magic (421-4); the address to the Muse represents a radical change of direction, both from magic (425, *docta, quid ad magicas, Erato, deverteris artes?*, “Why, learned Erato, do you resort to the arts of magic?”) and from concealing one's affair — the poet is now going to instruct his pupil to publish the affair instead (427-8). The remainder of this "proem" underscores the change of direction by several journey metaphors (429-34).
2. Next come the instructions to incite jealousy and, indeed, fury in the girlfriend by open displays or artfully fashioned hints of infidelity (435-54).
3. Once the lover has his girlfriend sufficiently impassioned by jealousy, it is time, the poet says, to take her to bed, the remedy for her anger (455-66).
4. Quite abruptly, it seems, the poet makes the transition to a cosmogony and doctrine of the pacifying and civilizing power of sex (467-88).
5. This section is rounded off by a

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statement that the power of sex is a greater medicine than even the elixirs of Machaon (489-92).

The address to Erato in this “internal proem” reminds us of the context of the first address to the goddess, namely that the poet prayed to Venus, Amor and Erato as he set out upon magna (2.17-8), that is, his attempt to rein in the globe-trotting Amor or the cosmic principle of love from the didactic tradition. Indeed, we might remember the mock-philosophical associations of the Daedalus story, where Ovid playfully takes up both Empedoclean and Lucretian themes. It is an appropriate moment in the poem to recall that “philosophical” opening because in less than fifty lines the poet narrates a brief Lucretian-style cosmogony and history of culture featuring the civilizing power of Venus, which Janka has suggested is indebted to the Empedoclean principle of Philia.441 Moreover, as we will see shortly, the eroto-didaxis (2.435-66) appearing between the second address to Erato and the cosmogony features the subject of strife and love, appropriately Lucretian and Empedoclean subjects translated into the sphere of erotic relationships.

Much of the scholarship on this section (425-92) has concerned the relationship of the eroto-didaxis (435-466) to the "quasi-philosophical digression" (467-88) and Ovid's models for the latter.442 Concerning the first question, scholars agree that in lines 473-88, the poet justifies his statement that sex is able to quell the anger of a girlfriend (460, hoc uno solvitur ira modo, “anger is soothed in this way alone”) by demonstrating its

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442 So Watson (1984) 390, n. 3.
pacifying and civilizing power in the natural and human worlds. In this way the doctrine of the omnipotence of sex unites the two passages. The cosmogony, however, is still chiefly considered a digression in the strict sense, that is, it has no relationship to its surrounding context and only functions as an introduction to the doctrine of the civilizing power of sex "by setting an appropriately philosophical mood,“ Janka has made an important correction to this view in his recent commentary on the second book by noting that the genesis theme of the cosmogony is anticipated by the metaphorical birth of Gratia at line 464: *illo, crede mihi, Gratia nata loco est* (“there, trust me, Grace was born”). Regarding the second question of Ovid's models for the passage, Lucretius, and to a lesser extent, Hesiod and Vergil, have been identified as models, although, once again, the possible influence of Empedocles has been suggested.

As in most of the “philosophical” passages in Ovid’s poetry, the cosmogony (*Ars* 2.467-72) is highly eclectic: it looks back to Hesiod’s *Theogony* (114-20), the cosmogony of Orpheus in *Argonautica* 1 (496-8), and of Lucretius in *DRN* 5 (432-48). In this respect, it is much like the equally brief cosmogony in the reported song of the satyr Silenus in *Eclogues* 6 (6.31-40). Empedoclean features are visibly present in many of these poetic cosmogonies, indicating the prominence of Empedocles in the tradition of philosophical poetry. However, there are no patently Empedoclean features in the

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445 Stewart (1959) 186, in his discussion of the Song of Silenus in *Eclogues* 6, says that "in both [sc. *Ars* 2.467-72 and *Met.* 1.5-88], as in Apollonius, there are strong echoes of Empedocles.” Cf. Janka (1997) *ad Ars* 2.467-88.
446 See Janka (1997) *ad Ars* 2.467-72 for the parallels.
cosmogony of the *Ars* and in this respect it is unlike subsequent poetic cosmogonies in the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*. Instead, Empedoclean Neikos and Philia seem to be displaced, as I will suggest, from the cosmogony onto the surrounding eroto-didaxis, where these weighty principles comically manifest themselves in erotic relationships.

In the erotic instruction preceding the cosmogony discord yields literally to Concordia (2.463): *illic depositis habitat Concordia telis* (“After weapons have been set aside there resides Concordia”).\(^{448}\) In this passage the poet instructs his pupil to foment discord (cf. *laesa puella*, 448; *laniet furiosa*, 451; *petat ungue genas*, 453; *ira*, 460; *saevierit*, 461; *hostis*, 461; *telis*, 463; *pugnarunt*, 465) by leading his girlfriend to think that she has a competitor for his affection.\(^{449}\) After the girlfriend has worked herself into this impassioned fury, the poet instructs his pupil to take her to bed, where discord yields to love and concord (*Veneris...gaudia*, 459; *pax*, 460; *foedera*, 462; *Concordia*, 463; *Gratia*, 464). While such a situation could not seem farther from the following cosmogony, Janka, once again, has perceptively noted that certain themes, like the “birth” of Gratia in the eroto-didaxis (*Gratia nata loco est*, 464), create a bridge between the eroto-didaxis and cosmogony.\(^{450}\)

Specifically, the birth of Gratia prefigures the genesis theme of the cosmogony. As we know, among the models for the cosmogony is Hesiod, since in the *Theogony* the cosmos begins from Chaos (116) as it does in the *Ars* cosmogony (2.470): *inqua suas*

\(^{448}\) Cf. the cosmogony in *Met*. 1 where *discordia* (1.7) also yields to *concordia* (1.25). As Nelis (2009) 251 says, “commentators usually note the presence of Empedoclean Strife and Love behind these terms.”

\(^{449}\) That the girl is “full of furor” (*furiosa*, 451) is perhaps significant, since, although Ovid does not use the familiar Empedoclean term *discordia*, Vergil had already used Furor as a version of Ennian Discordia (= Empedoclean Neikos) at *Aen*. 1.294.

\(^{450}\) Janka (1997) *ad loc.*
partes cessit inane chaos (“and empty chaos separated into its own part”). But Hesiod also recounts the birth of the Charites (= Gratia) at Theog. 907-11, so that not only the cosmogony, but also the preceding eroto-didaxis, alludes to the abstract deities that make up Hesiod’s cosmos in the Theogony. Concordia, in addition to Gratia, is usually capitalized by editors, since she, like Gratia, is a deified abstraction in Roman culture. Therefore the appearance of these abstract concepts in the erotic instruction can be seen as a witty Ovidian imitation of Hesiodic theogony. We might also remember that in Hesiod Eros is one of the very oldest gods (Theog. 120). In much the same way that the birth of Gratia anticipates the genesis theme in the cosmogony, the abstractions in the Ars passage related to amor such as Pax, Concordia and Gratia ought to be seen from a Hesiodic perspective as prefigurations of the cosmic principle of Venus articulated in the cosmogony and origin of culture in lines 467-88. Indeed, the jealous girlfriend acts in a savage and even feral manner in the erotic instruction (cf. 2.451-2, 461), just as human beings are animal-like (2.474) and fierce (truces animos, 477) before their natures are softened by Venus. Concordia in the eroto-didaxis therefore prefigures the Empedoclean Venus of the history of civilization, concordia being one of the terms frequently used by authors for Empedoclean Philia/Aphrodite.

Foedus too, although not a god or goddess in Roman culture like Pax, Concordia and Gratia, has a Hesiodic equivalent, Horkos, which, like foedus, means a “sworn compact.” The context for the birth of Horkos in Hesiod may be especially relevant to our passage. In Hesiod Eris (Theog. 226) gives birth to Horkos (231). Horkos is also

451 As in Kenney’s (1961) edition of the Ars Amatoria.
453 See LSJ s.v. ὡρκος (2); OLD s.v. foedus (2).
referred to in the Works and Days, where the Erinyes are said to attend upon this birth of Horkos from Eris (803-4): ἐν πέμπτῃ γάρ φασιν Ἐρινύας ὄμψυπολεύειν / Ὄρκον γεινόμενον, τὸν Ἐρικ τέκε πὴμ ἑπιόρκος “for on the fifth, they say, the Erinyes attended at the birth of Horkos, whom Eris bore as a bane upon oath-breakers”). Vergil imitated this passage in the Georgics in his section on lucky and unlucky days, turning the Hesiodic Horkos into Latin Orcus and making the Furies, rather than attending Orcus’ birth, be born on the same (fifth) day (G. 1.277-8, pallidus Orcus / Eumenidesque satae).  

Vergil also incorporates allusion to the theme of Gigantomachy from the Theogony into this allusion to the birth of Horkos from the Works and Days by connecting the birth of Orcus and the Eumenides to the Giants’ assault on Olympus (G. 1.278-80). Is Ovid deftly alluding to these passages in the eroto-didaxis? First, compare the Hesiodic birth of Horkos from Eris in the Theogony and Works and Days to the Ars passage, where strife leads to foederacy.  

The connection of Hesiodic Horkos or Vergilian Orcus to the Erinyes/Furies is also interesting, since the girlfriend in the Ovidian eroto-didaxis becomes a vengeful Fury (ille ego sim, cuius laniet furiosa capillos, Ars 2.451) once she thinks her lover has cheated on her, although the magister amoris, unlike the Georgics poet, for whom the Eumenides and Furies are infelix, says that the lover over whom an injured girlfriend grieves should consider himself infinitely

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456 Foedera is also another theme connecting the eroto-didaxis and the cosmogony/anthropology, since in the latter section Ovid alludes to Lucretius’ own anthropology in DRN 5, where foedera (5.1025) describe the developing social compact among early human beings. Ovid, however, rather than emphasizing the role of such social relationships in the emergence of civilization, attributes civilization merely to sex. By his use of foedera to describe sex in the eroto-didaxis, he anticipates this argument. Cf. Miller (1997) 389. Obviously relevant here too is Catullus’ foedus amicitiae (see Miller (2004) 64).
lucky (Ars 2.447-8): o quater et quotiens numero comprehendere non est / felicem, de quo laesa puella dolet ("o four and innumerable times lucky is he for whom an injured girl grieves").

Horkos, however, has not only a Hesiodic, but also an Empedoclean genealogy. Indeed, it is one of a number of Hesiodic concepts adapted by Empedocles for his cosmological system. Empedocles uses horkos for the “compact” that regulates the cosmic cycle of Neikos and Philia, once again themes (strife and love) that are treated in the Ovidian eroto-didaxis. The cosmic cycle has been established according to a “broad oath” (fr. 35/30.3, πλατέος...ὁρκοῖς). Indeed, in the passage from the Theogony on Eris’ children (226-32) Eris produces Horkos, but also Empedoclean Neikos (229). The girlfriend’s furious anger (furiosa, Ars 2.451) is again perhaps relevant, since it makes her not only like a Fury, but also full of furor, the term Vergil had used for Empedoclean Neikos/Discordia in Aeneid 1 (Furor impius, 294).

Once again, this suggests that certain cosmogonic/theogonic themes are displaced from the philosophizing passage at Ars 2.467-88 onto the preceding eroto-didaxis. In particular, the theme of discord or strife, which features prominently in a number of the models for the Ars cosmogony — notably Apollonius’ song of Orpheus and the Lucretian cosmogony — appears not in the Ars cosmogony but instead in the erotic scene surrounding the cosmogony in an example of allusive variatio. We might compare this to Vergil’s own imitation of the Apollonian song of Orpheus in Iopas’ song in Aen. 1 (740-6), where the theme of “deadly strife” from the song of Orpheus appears in the love affair

of Dido and Aeneas rather than in Iopas’ cosmological song.\textsuperscript{459} Ovid reduces such grand, cosmic principles as discord, \textit{concordia} and \textit{foedus} to a lover’s spat and reconciliation.

While the eroto-didaxis (\textit{Ars} 2.435-66) is obliquely connected to the ensuing cosmogony (467-72) by Ovid’s witty use of Hesiodic and Empedoclean cosmogonic/theogonic themes to describe a lover’s quarrel, the \textit{Kulturentstehung} (473-88) is more obviously integrated into the preceding eroto-didaxis. It is in this section after the cosmogony that Ovid alludes to the Lucretian and Vergilian representations of Venus and \textit{amor}. As we will see, Ovid is “correcting” their depiction of sex in \textit{DRN} 4 and \textit{Georgics} 3. In regard to Lucretius, Ovid accomplishes this in part by using Lucretius against himself, appealing to the “Empedoclean” Venus hymn of the proem to \textit{DRN} 1 against the largely negative depiction of sex in \textit{DRN} 4.\textsuperscript{460} We will also see that there is good reason to think that the Empedoclean Aphrodite is a model for Ovid’s presentation of Venus as a civilizing force in this section and elsewhere in the \textit{Ars}. Finally, I will argue that Ovid alludes to the allegorical interpretation of the myth of Mars and Venus as Empedoclean Neikos and Philia in a passage closely connected to the philosophizing passage at 2.467-88, although Ovid essentially restores the figures of Mars and Venus to their mythological, Homeric context.

The main thread of lines 473-88 is the pacifying and civilizing power of sex (referred to by the Lucretian \textit{blanda voluptas}, 477; \textit{Venus}, 480; \textit{gaudia}, 481; \textit{adulterium}, 484), but it breaks into two distinct parts, lines 473-80 and 481-8, which I will consider

\textsuperscript{459} Hunter (1993) 176-7.
\textsuperscript{460} For this point, I am indebted to Miller (1997) 390, especially n. 10.
separately before making some observations about the implications of the entire passage. The first section (473-80) is a brief account of human prehistory that itself has two basic components, lines 473-6, which describe the primitive state of mankind and 477-80, the first experience of sex and its civilizing effect on mankind. Although human prehistories are a commonplace of didactic poetry in antiquity, the numerous parallels between 473-80 and the Lucretian prehistory in DRN 5 have led scholars to see it as the principal model for the account in the Ars. After the description of the primitive state of mankind, the poet moves on to describe their first experience of sex (477-80); commentators typically compare these lines to DRN 5.1011-27, which also describe the beginnings of civilization, but Patricia Watson has argued that “whereas Ovid attributes the civilizing of man simply to sexual intercourse, Lucretius is primarily concerned with the beginnings of family life, not merely sexual experience.” Watson further develops this claim by arguing that Ovid’s description of primitive sex is actually much closer to an earlier passage in the DRN, 5.962-5, in which Lucretius describes how early men and women copulated randomly in the forest. This is an extension of the uncivilized behavior described in the preceding verses, in which mankind is depicted as selfish and anti-social (5.958-61). As Watson writes, “The Venus of 962 (= sexual passion) stands,

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461 In what follows I will use Venus and amor more or less interchangeably in the discussion of the philosophical digression, since both seem to mean primarily “physical lust” in this context, although it would be wrong to completely rule out other connotations as well; in general, the semantic range of the two is wide. The use of the two terms by Lucretius and Vergil is similarly problematic, so I will always try to make it clear in any given instance how I think the two authors are using either Venus or amor. Miles (1975) 186 has written that “The semantic range of amor within the Georgics is broad and vague, but that of Venus is throughout limited to simple, physical lust.” I am skeptical that the latter statement is strictly true, but if it is, it means that in the Ars passage Ovid is directly confronting Vergil’s view of Venus when he presents her as “physical lust.”.
463 Watson (1984) 390-1. I am indebted to Watson’s article in my analysis.
464 Leach (1964) 145, n. 2 also noticed the parallel between 477-80 and DRN 5.962-5.
then, in sharp contrast to that of 1017 which is viewed primarily as the act of procreation forming the basis of marriage and the new civilized, community-minded way of life.” Watson concludes that Ovid’s account of mankind’s first experience of Venus or sex (477-80) alludes verbally to Lucretius 5.1011-27, but that conceptually Ovid’s description is not of sex in the context of family life (nor would one expect it to be in the *Ars Amatoria*), but instead of mere sexual passion similar to *DRN* 5.962-5; and whereas sexual passion in Lucretius is characteristic of primitive mankind, in Ovid it is the impulse that civilized them.

For the moment, I will simply note this apparent departure from the Lucretian prehistory and consider the second distinct section (481-8) in the philosophical digression. The Lucretian intertext continues in this section, although now it is Lucretius’ diatribe against sexual passion in book 4, and added to this is allusion to Vergil’s own digression on sex in *Georgics* 3. This combinatory allusion, among other things, shows Ovid’s awareness of the affiliation between his Lucretian and Vergilian source passages. As Watson has observed, in Lucretius and Vergil sexual passion is destructive and should be avoided, but “For Ovid…Venus, far from being destructive, is the very agent through

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466 Ibid. 392. One additional point that further supports Watson’s account is that *Ars* 2.477-80 clearly describes mankind’s first sexual experience (cf. 476, *iamque diu nulli cognitus alter erat*) and it is this that begins the civilizing process. In Lucretius, however, primitive humans had been having sex while still in their state of savagery. This clearly implies that sex alone did not lead to civilization in Lucretius. Cf. Miller (1997) 389: “In place of marriage—in place of everything, really—Ovid puts sex as the civilizing agent.”  
467 Ibid. 393 for a list of the parallels between the *Ars* 2.481-8 and *DRN* 4.  
468 *Ars* 2.487-8 is constructed out of vocabulary and images from several different places in Vergil’s treatment of *amor* (or Venus, e.g. at 3.267) at *Georgics* 3.209-83. See Watson (1984) 393-4 for a list of the parallels.
which Concordia is to be achieved."\textsuperscript{469} Miller adds too that for this argument Ovid playfully uses Lucretius against himself by referring to the civilizing power of sex as the Lucretian \textit{blanda voluptas} \textit{(Ars 2.477)}.\textsuperscript{470}

Watson’s basic argument is that, superficially, the digression is a serious presentation of scientific doctrine meant to support the notion that sex is able to bring about concord. The two arguments used to make this point, love as a civilizer of primitive man and love as a feeling universal to females of every species, are presented in language that recalls passages from Lucretius and Vergil. Yet, “the effect of his [sc. Ovid’s] argument is undermined by the inappropriateness of alluding, in order to demonstrate its use as a pacifying agent, to passages where love is represented as either a symbol of uncivilized crudity or a destructive force.”\textsuperscript{471} As perhaps her prime example of the way that Ovid undermines his own argument, she observes that the digression reaches its climax in the Vergilian description of mares, the most libidinous creatures of all, and that following this couplet “we are asked to believe that the very cause of the mares’ \textit{furiae} \textit{(i.e. sex)} may be employed as the cure for anger and as the producer of \textit{requies}!”\textsuperscript{472} While this may seem incredible in isolation, the poet has already made a related — and also humorously paradoxical — argument in \textit{Ars} 1, namely that the furious libido of the female sex \textit{(1.342, acrior est nostra, plusque furoris habet, “female lust is more piercing...”)}.\textsuperscript{473}

\textsuperscript{469} Watson (1984) 394. Contrast Miles’ (1975) 180 characterization of the result of \textit{amor} in \textit{Georgics} 3: “…the narrative has emphasized the way in which the violent, uncontrolled energies released by \textit{amor} may be self-perpetuating rather than fulfilling. The final result of the battle of the bulls, as Virgil presents it, is not consummation, but injury, anguish, and continued violence.” As we will see later in the chapter, this is opposed to Ovid’s presentation of a fight between two human lovers, which does in fact lead to fulfillment or consummation, i.e. \textit{concordia}.

\textsuperscript{470} Miller (1997) 390. See Miller for the appearances of this phrase in Lucretius.

\textsuperscript{471} Watson (1984) 395.

\textsuperscript{472} Ibid.
than ours, and has more of madness”) can be used to the lover’s advantage (1.269-350), where the poet mischievously turns negative imagery from Vergil’s discussion of animal lust in *Georgics* 3 into encouragement for the human lover (*Ars* 1.279-80, *mollibus in pratis admugit femina tauro, / femina cornipedi semper adhinnit equo*, “in gentle fields the heifer moos to the bull, the mare always whinnies to the horn-footed stallion”). As in this passage in *Ars* 1, instead of seeing the allusions to Lucretius and Vergil in *Ars* 2 as simply undermining the poet’s argument, the passage is better taken as a tendentious “correction” of the Lucretian and Vergilian representations of Venus and amor in *DRN* 4 and *Georgics* 3.

Let us look first at the poet’s argument about the civilizing power of sex in which he alludes to a passage in Lucretius where, in Watson’s words, “love is represented as...a symbol of uncivilized crudity.” Although Watson argues that this deflates the poet’s argument, it is possible to see this more positively as a correction of the Lucretian treatment of sex in a primitive setting and the role of sex in the prehistory of mankind. In other words, by means of the allusion Ovid points to the difference between his own treatment of the topic and the Lucretian treatment (*oppositio in imitando*). One observation that supports this is that Ovid’s depiction of Venus as a civilizing force is not

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473 See Hollis (1977) *ad Ars* 1.279ff. on the allusion to the *Georgics*.
474 This is close to Miller’s (1997) 387-91 interpretation of the passage, since he emphasizes much more than Watson the aspect of *aemulatio* or playful “critique” of Lucretius in the history of culture in the *Ars*. But, like Watson, Miller (1997) 391 also thinks — citing Kenney’s (1958) article — that “Ovid does not so much mean to ridicule them [i.e. Vergil or Lucretius] as to mock his own pretensions to be a Hesiod or a Virgil or a Lucretius.” He marshals support for this from the abrupt transition to and clumsy departure from the cosmogony and anthropology, in addition to the reworking of the *recusatio* motif in the Apolline ephiphany after imitation of Lucretian epic. Miller (1997) 393 says of the appearance of Apollo that “playfully evoking the *recusatio*, the god subtly hints that the elegiac teacher of love should abandon such epic pretensions.” As I demonstrate later in the chapter, however, the poet cleverly returns via allegory to the “epic pretensions” of the cosmogony and anthropology in the myth of Mars and Venus and thereby comically frustrates Apollo’s attempt to deflate his “epic pretensions.” Therefore, unlike Watson and Miller, I do not think that the passage is primarily self-mocking.
confined simply to this passage in the *Ars*, but appears elsewhere in Ovid’s poetry, notably in Ovid’s so-called Venus hymn at the beginning of *Fasti* 4. This is the single most extensive treatment of the goddess in Ovid’s poetry and she is depicted, as in the philosophizing passage in the *Ars*, as a cosmic principle responsible for humanity’s transition from a primitive state to civilization. Ovid clearly had a poetic stake in this position.

Several commentators have already noted the close parallels between the two passages. We can compare the cosmology of the *Ars* in its entirety and especially lines 477-80 to *Fasti* 4.97-114. The sentiment expressed at *Ars* 2.477-8 (*blanda truces animos fertur mollisse voluptas: / constiterant uno femina virque loco, “they say that soothing pleasure softened their fierce hearts: man and woman had stopped together in one spot”), the effect of man’s first sexual experience, is close to that described at *Fasti* 4.97-8 (*illa [sc. Venus] rudes animos hominum contraxit in unum / et docuit iungi cum pare quemque sua, “she brought the crude hearts of mankind into one and taught each person to be joined with their mate”). The two contexts share the use of animal *exempla* to illustrate Venus’ power. The *Fasti* passage gives half the space to the description of primitive man and its domestication (4 lines) that one finds in the *Ars* (8 lines). Ovid has likely condensed the description in the *Fasti* precisely because he had already given it a relatively full treatment in the *Ars*. Elaborated in the *Fasti*, however, is Venus’ influence on human civilization (this is merely implied in the *Ars*): not only does she tame *rudes*

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475 Janka (1997) *ad* 2.477-80. Miller (1997) treats both passages at length as “Lucretian moments” in Ovid’s elegiac works. Whereas Miller thinks that the effect of the Lucretian material in the *Ars* is chiefly “dissonance,” he suggests at p. 394 that the use of similar material in the *Fasti* functions as part of Ovid’s expansion of the “range of this ambitious elegy.”
animos (97), as she does in the Ars passage, but she is responsible for the creation of
erotic elegy (primus amans, 109),\(^{476}\) of forensic oratory (111-2), indeed thousands of arts
(mille artes, 113) and multa reperta (114). Compare this to the relatively spare treatment
in the Ars: before Venus humanity was merae vires and rude corpus, lived in the forest,
ate grass, slept on leaves, and was antisocial; but this all changed as blanda truces animos
fertur mollisse voluptas (2.477). Presumably this same voluptas/Venus is responsible for
the cultivated alternatives to the primitive state of mankind described at Ars 2.473-6. The
gaps are filled in the Fasti, most obviously at 4.107-8:

prima feros habitus homini detraxit: ab illa
venerunt cultus mundaque cura sui.

She first stripped mankind of their wild dress: from her came culture and an elegant
concern for one’s appearance.

Venus has civilized mankind, given them cultus and culture.\(^{477}\) It is this point that is the
most remarkable and, according to Elaine Fantham, unique about the complementary
passages in the Ars and Fasti. In her introduction to Fasti 4.85-132 Fantham says that
“…neither Lucretius’ hymn to Venus, nor Virgil’s adaptation in Georgics III go so far as
to include among her powers and their praises the responsibility for civilization itself:
rather they imply a contrast between her role in Nature, and the world of Culture. Thus
O.’s only precedent for his praise of Venus’ bland uoluptas as a civilizing force here is

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\(^{476}\) In terms of poetic aetiologies, compare this to the primus amor Phoebi (1.452) in the Metamorphoses.

\(^{477}\) Cultus has a wide range of meanings, including, but not limited to, “the cultivation of plants or animals,”
“education,” “personal adornment,” and tellingly “civilization,” the field under which most of its
meanings fall, since the word often refers to the trappings or adornments that Romans conventionally
associated with civilization. See OLD s.v. cultus. The agricultural sense of cultus as “the tilling of the
ground” shows how paradoxical is Ovid’s idea of cultus as the defining feature of a new “golden age,”
since conventional accounts of the golden age defined it in part by how the earth gave its produce freely
without cultivation.
his own condensed prehistory in AA 2.467-88 (emphasis mine). But is this notion really unique to Ovid? Janka in his introduction to the philosophical digression in the *Ars* has suggested another possible influence for Ovid’s depiction of sex (i.e. Venus) as a civilizing principle:

Seinem Argument “Körperliche Liebe gebietet ungestümer Wildheit Einhalt” verleiht Ovid kosmische Dimension, indem er, vielleicht unter Rückgriff auf die Φιλία des Empedokles, die (von ihm allerdings nur physisch verstandene) Liebe zum Zivilisationsprinzip im Welt- und Kulturentstehungsprozeß schlechthin stilisiert.

Building on Janka, I will suggest some further similarities between the Venus of the *Ars* and the Empedoclean Aphrodite.

As we saw in both the *Ars* and *Fasti* passages, one of the important markers of civilization for Ovid is *cultus*; and Venus is responsible for *cultus*. In the *Ars* this civilizing process begun by Venus has led to its culmination in contemporary Rome. As is most clearly expressed at *Ars* 3.101-14, Rome is experiencing a kind of Golden Age (3.113, *nunc aurea Roma est*, “now Rome is golden”) because of the development of *cultus* (101, *cultu* and *passim*). The drift of the passage is that Venus rules over this Golden Age. Before Venus a lack of *cultus* characterized human society. Here again is the description of primitive human beings in the *Ars* prehistory (2.473-4): *tum genus humanum solis errabat in agris, / idque merae vires et rude corpus*. Compare this to the distinction made between the past and present at 3.113-4: *simplicitas rudis ante fuit; nunc aurea Roma est /et domiti magnas possidet orbis opes* (“Crude simplicity existed before: now Rome is golden and it possesses the enormous wealth of the conquered world”). Characteristically of Ovid’s poetry, however, this military imperialism culminates in the

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reign of Venus. *Cultus* (*passim*) and *cura* (3.104) are the characteristics of the current age; it is made even clearer in the *Fasti* that Venus is responsible for these: *prima feros habitus homini detraxit: ab illa [sc. Venus] / venerunt cultus mundaque cura sui* (4.107-8).

In fact, the poet had made a programmatic statement about Venus’ ascension in contemporary Rome early in the *Ars*. The passage suggests that she presides over a Golden Age for lovers and that her rule extends over the entire world (1.55-60):

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tot tibi tamque dabit formosas Roma puellas,         55
‘haec habet’ ut dicas ‘quicquid in orbe fuit.’
Gargara quot segetes, quot habet Methymna racemos,
aequare quot pisces, fronde teguntur aves,
quod caelum stellas, tot habet tua Roma puellas:
mater in Aeneae constitit urbe sui.          60
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Rome will offer so many and such beautiful girls to you that you will say, “this city holds whatever has existed in the world.” As many crops as Gargara, as many clusters of grapes as Methymna has, as many fish as are in the sea, and birds hidden in the leaves, as many stars as the sky has, so many girls does your Rome hold. The mother has settled in the city of her Aeneas.

The Golden Age *topos* is cleverly treated here, as it is in *Ars* 3. Rome abounds in *puellae*, just as Gargara abounds in crops and Methymna in grapes, the Golden Age commonplace of the fertility of the earth.\(^{479}\) This is because Venus — called by her Lucretian/Vergilian title “mother of Aeneas” — has settled (*constitit*, 60) in Rome, the city of her son. My translation of *constitit* as “has settled” comes from Hollis’ commentary on *Ars* 1 where he maintains that it is used “with the suggestion of alighting from heavenly regions.”\(^{480}\) This is significant, since the presence of gods on earth is one of the characteristic features of the Golden Age (and its end usually marked by the departure of one,

\(^{479}\) Cf. Vergil, *G*. 1.103.
\(^{480}\) Hollis (1977) ad *Ars* 1.60.
Dike/Iustit/a virgo...Astraea).\textsuperscript{481} Whereas in \textit{Eclogues} 4 the chaste Virgo marks the return of \textit{Saturnia regna} (4.6), in the \textit{Ars} the settlement in Rome of Venus inaugurates a Golden Age for lovers. This passage not only contributes to the idea that Venus presides over a Golden Age, but it also suggests that Venus reigns in the world as well. \textit{Ars} 1.56 is a “universal expression”: Rome, the poet says, has “whatever has existed in the world \textit{(quicquid in orbe fuit}, 56),” and he proceeds to outline the four great regions of the world:

(i) land: \textit{Gargara} (57), \textit{Methymna} (57)
(ii) sea: \textit{aequore} (58)
(iii) lower sky or air: \textit{aves} (58)\textsuperscript{482}
(iv) upper sky or heavens: \textit{caelum} (59)

Next, there is the climactic statement (appropriately falling in the pentameter) of Venus’ “settlement” in Rome: \textit{mater in Aeneae constitit urbe sui} (1.60).\textsuperscript{483} \textit{Urbs} occurs in the same metrical \textit{sedes} as \textit{orbis} had just a few verses earlier (‘\textit{haec habet} ut dicas ‘quicquid in orbe fuit’, 56). This suggests the familiar Ovidian play on the equivalency between \textit{urbs/orbis}: Venus reigns not only in Rome, but in the cosmos as well.\textsuperscript{484} Of course, this expression of Venus’ cosmic ascendancy at the beginning of a didactic poem recalls Lucretius’ hymn to the Empedoclean Venus at the beginning of the book 1 of the \textit{DRN},

\textsuperscript{481} E.g., Vergil, \textit{G.} 2.473-4; Ovid, \textit{Met.} 1.150.
\textsuperscript{482} “Birds” is not parallel to the other regions listed, but to the characteristic features of the regions, such as fish in the sea, etc. I use it because it is more immediately intelligible as a metonym of “air” than the leaves (\textit{fronde}, 1.58) of the trees that cover the birds, although there is a precedent for associating the “fruit” (comparable to “leaves”) of trees with the region and element of air. See Empedocles fr. 78/77-8: \textit{καρπῶν ἀφθονίῃ καὶ ἱέρα πάντ᾽ ἐνιαυτόν.}
\textsuperscript{483} The fact that Venus “settles” in the pentameter is appropriate since Ovid characterizes the elegiac couplet as “rising” in the hexameter and “settling” or “falling” in the pentameter, as at \textit{Am.} 1.1.27: \textit{sex mihi surgat opus numeris, in quinque residat.} Cf. \textit{Am.} 1.9.29-30. As Morgan (2010) has demonstrated, the pentameter, although not existing independently of the hexameter, nevertheless becomes the focus for the generic definition of elegy. In this respect, Venus’ position in the pentameter reflects her status as the patroness of erotic elegy.
\textsuperscript{484} Cf. \textit{Ars} 1.173-4: \textit{nempe ab utroque mari iuvenes, ab utroque puellae / venere atque ingens orbis in Urbe fuit; Fasti} 2.684: \textit{Romanae spatium est Urbs et orbis idem.}
where her role as a cosmic principle is also expressed in part through allusion to the
four regions or elements of the cosmos.

Although Venus’ rule is relatively muted in the *Ars* passage, there is an explicit
statement of it in *Amores* 1.8, a poem whose eroto-didaxis, among other things, looks
forward to the *Ars*. As we saw, the instruction is put into the mouth of the *lena* Dipsas,
who tells her young mistress and pupil that current conditions in Rome are favorable for
lovers (1.8.41-2)

$nunc \ Mars \ externis \ animos \ exercet \ in \ armis,$
$at \ Venus \ Aeneae \ regnat \ in \ urbe \ sui.$

Now Mars tries souls in foreign wars, but Venus reigns in the city of her Aeneas.

Compare this to *Ars* 1.60:

$mater \ in \ Aeneae \ constitit \ urbe \ sui.$

The mother has settled in the city of her Aeneas.

*Ars* 1.60 is a virtual repetition of *Amores* 1.8.42 and the latter more clearly expresses the
idea that Venus “rules” in the city of Rome. The dialogue between the two contexts is
important, since *Am*. 1.8, as I discussed in chapter 2, is an example of mock-
Empedoclean poetry in Ovid’s elegiac works. As we saw, Dipsas’ description of the
relative positions of Mars and Venus ingeniously reproduces the spatio-temporal
dynamics of Neikos/Ares and Philia/Aphrodite in Empedocles’ cosmology. The quotation
of this passage at *Ars* 1.60 in a programmatic passage nods to the Empedoclean
background of this poem’s expression of a cosmic Venus.

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485 Hollis (1977) *ad Ars* 1.60 notes the parallel.
Moreover, the idea of a Golden Age under the rule of Venus, which is suggested by the goddess’ role in the development of *cultus* and her “residence” at Rome (*constitit*, 1.60) — a reversal of the departure of Dike/Iustitia — has a precedent in Empedocles. Fr. 122/128 describes a Golden Age ruled by Aphrodite:486

οὐδὲ τις ἦν κείνοισιν Ἠρης θεός οὐδὲ Κυδομός
οὐδὲ Ζεὺς βασιλεῖς οὐδὲ Κρόνος οὐδὲ Ποσειδῶν,
ἀλλὰ Κύπρις βασίλεια...

They had no god Ares nor Battle-Din, nor king Zeus nor Cronus nor Poseidon, but queen Kypris...487

Does Ovid update the Empedoclean concept of Venus as queen of the Golden Age by having her “settle” in Rome under the rule of her descendant Augustus? The concept of Venus as the ruler of the Golden Age is part of a complex of passages spanning the *Amores*, the *Ars* and the *Fasti* that present a coherent picture of Venus as a cosmic force having a beneficent and civilizing effect on the world. Our discussion started from the prehistory at *Ars* 2.473-80, in which Venus or sex is uniquely presented as the impetus for human civilization, in contrast, according to Watson, to the treatment of sexual passion in Lucretius. Watson interprets this as Ovid’s “undermining” of his own argument, but it is better taken as a humorous correction of the Lucretian criticism of sex in *DRN* 4 and therefore a positive statement of Ovid’s own “philosophy” concerning the effects of Venus and sex, which are aligned not only with elegiac values, but also with the view of Aphrodite/Venus in Lucretius’ great predecessor, Empedocles.

486 On the connection of this fragment to the Golden Age *topos* see Bignone (1963) ad fr. 128 (= fr. 122/128 Inwood). See also O’Brien (1969) 76-7 and, more recently, Nelis (2004).
487 This translation is taken from Inwood (2001) with only slight modification.
So far I have focused on the prehistory at *Ars* 2.473-80 and its relationship to ideas elsewhere in Ovid’s poetry, but Watson comes to a similar conclusion about the final section of Ovid’s philosophical digression in *Ars* 2 (481-8). Once again, this section treats the universality of sexual desire through animal *exempla* and alludes both to Lucretius’ diatribe against sexual passion in *DRN* 4 and Vergil’s similarly negative treatment of it in *Georgics* 3. According to Watson, these allusions undermine Ovid’s use of these *exempla* as part of his overall argument about the pacifying power of sex. However, these allusions too are best taken in a slightly different manner, once again as an assertion of Ovid’s own position in regard to that taken by Lucretius and Vergil. Watson is incredulous at the idea that Ovid could be seriously arguing that the same cause of the mares’ *furiae* (i.e. sex) can be employed as the cure for anger and producer of *requies* (490). But this is similar to the poet’s instruction in the erotodidaxis leading up to the philosophical digression, i.e. that it is possible (indeed desirable) that furious anger (*furiosa*, 451) set the stage for reconciliation or Concordia (463).

The idea that the *furor* of sex can produce *quies* and *concordia* is not an isolated “non-sequitur,” as Watson calls it, but can in fact appeal once again to Lucretius, specifically the Empedoclean Mars and Venus of the *DRN* proem. While Watson has argued that Ovid wittily misapplies Lucretian language from his diatribe against *amor* in *DRN* 4 to his argument about the pacifying power of sex in the philosophical digression, there is a different representation of the effects of sexual passion in the *DRN* proem,

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where Lucretius asks Venus to seduce her lover Mars and bring peace to the Roman world (1.29-37):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{effice ut interea fera moenera militiae} \\
\text{per maria ac terras omnis sopita quiescant.} & \quad 30 \\
\text{nam tu sola potes tranquilla pace iuvare} \\
\text{mortalis, quoniam belli fera moenera Mavors} \\
\text{armipotens regit, in gremium qui saepe tuum se} \\
\text{reieicit aeterno devictus vulnere amoris,} & \quad 35 \\
\text{atque ita suspiciens tereti cervice reposta} \\
\text{pascit amore avidos inhians in te, dea, visus} \\
\text{eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore.}
\end{align*}
\]

Make it so that in the meantime the wild works of war may fall into a quiet sleep throughout all the seas and lands. For you alone can aid mortals with calm peace, since Mars powerful-in-arms rules the wild works of war, and often he has hurled himself back into your lap conquered by the eternal wound of love, and thus while his smooth neck is laid upon you, he looks up and feeds his greedy eyes by love gazing eagerly upon you, goddess, and his breath as he lies back hangs upon your lips.

Lucretius represents the image of Mars conquered by the “wound of love” (vulnere amoris, 34). However, it is this sexual passion, expressed similarly in the language of erotic poetry, that both Lucretius and Vergil use in their descriptions of the negative effects of sex in DRN 4 and Georgics 3, respectively, where sexual furor and the vulnus amoris are intimately linked (cf. DRN 4.1069-70, furor...volnera; DRN 4.1117-20, furor...volnere; G. 3.244, in furias; G.257, vulnera; G. 265-8, proelia...furor...Venus ipsa). In both diatribes against amor the topos of the vulnus amoris is tied to the turbulence and destruction of furor, whereas the vulnus amoris (34) of the proem had been Venus’ means of bringing quies to the world (effice ut interea fera moenera militiae...
Compare this to the beneficial effect of Venus in the *Ars* passage (*illa feri requiem sola doloris habent*, 2.490). Bolstering this argument is Miller’s contention that the hymn to Venus in the *DRN* proem is the primary model for Ovid’s catalogue of Venus’ effects on the animal world in *Ars* 2.481-8. Moreover, there could be a common inspiration for both passages, that is the *Ars* passage on the civilizing power of sex and the Venus hymn in Lucretius, since not only is Venus modeled on the Empedoclean Aphrodite, but the erotic tableau of Mars and Venus alludes to Empedoclean Neikos/Ares and Philia/Aphrodite, part of Lucretius’ strategy in the proem of positing Empedocles as an important model for his didactic poetry. Therefore, in connecting the image of Venus as a civilizing force to *furor* Ovid playfully highlights Lucretius’ inconsistent treatment of Venus and emphasizes the paradoxically positive image of the *vulnus amoris* or *furor* of sex.\(^{492}\)

3.4.1 *Fabula narratur toto notissima caelo*

Immediately after the philosophizing cosmogony and origin of culture (2.467-88) the poet says that the god Apollo appeared to him (2.493-4); *haec ego cum canerem, subito manifestus Apollo / movit inauratae pollice fila lyrae* (“While I was singing of these subjects, suddenly Apollo appeared and plucked with his thumb the string of his gilded lyre”). This is a complicated reworking of the *re cusatio* motif in Augustan poetry.\(^{493}\) The closest model is the *re cusatio* in *Eclogues* 6, although this is rather an instance of

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\(^{490}\) As scholars have recognized, Vergil combines allusion to the Venus hymn of the *DRN* proem and Lucretius’ diatribe against sex in *DRN* 4. He does this, according to Hardie (1986) 163, in order to point to Lucretius’ inconsistent depiction of Venus in the poem. See recently O’Hara (2007) 64-5.

\(^{491}\) Miller (1997) 390 and n. 10. Miller rightly suggests that Ovid is once again using Lucretius against himself.

\(^{492}\) Ibid.

oppositio in imitando, since in that poem, after Apollo objects to Tityrus singing of reges et proelia (6.3), Tityrus goes on to report the (partly) cosmological song of the satyr Silenus, whereas Apollo in the Ars seems to object to the poet treating just such “philosophical” themes. Instead, the poet is called to “nearer matters,” that is, ars amatoria (2.511-2): ad propiora vocor; quisquis sapienter amabit, / vincet et e nostra, quod petet, arte feret (“I am called to nearer matters; whoever will love wisely will conquer and win what he seeks by my art”). As I will argue, however, the clever poet finds a way around this Apolline interruption by narrating a myth that is both related to his mission of teaching the amatory art and to the tradition of natural philosophical poetry represented in the cosmogony and anthropology.

The poet’s commitment to the Callimachean Apollo’s propiora (2.511) does not last long before he rhetorically asks why he is lingering over such small matters (2.535, quid moror in parvis?); he humorously trivializes the Apolline themes of the preceding

494 Ars 2.493, haec ego cum canerem, subito manifestus Apollo ~ Ecl. 6.3, cum canerem rege et proelia, Cynthius aurem. Cf. Sharrock (1994b) 234. Miller (1997) 392-3 thinks that Apollo subtly turns the poet from the lofty subject matter of the cosmogony and anthropology. Casali (1997), however, argues that the Callimachean Apollo appearing in the Ars would hardly have disapproved of the poet’s cosmology in Ars 2.467-88, since it is not necessarily an “epic” subject. For this view, he appeals to the presence of Lucretian material in the “Callimachean” song of Silenus in Eclogues 6. His comments are very similar to — and indeed he cites — those of Knox (1986) 12 on the cosmogony in the Metamorphoses. As Casali (1997) 22 says, “A nice cosmogony and a nice history of the world were just what a Callimachean Apollo, far from disapproving of them, would have recommended.” Casali suggests that Apollo’s polemical target is not the cosmogony but rather his own appearance in the poem, since Ovid had rejected the aid of Apollo at Ars 1.25-30. In other words, if Ovid had “known himself,” Apollo’s advice, he would not have had Apollo appear in his poem. This is a compelling argument, but, as I hope to demonstrate, the poet’s resumption of an Empedoclean/Lucretian persona at the same time that he adopts a polemical attitude towards Apollo suggests that the god had at least in part criticized the poet’s subject matter in the cosmology.

495 Contra Miller (1997) 391-3. Miller thinks that the poet truly abandons the Lucretian themes of the preceding section after Apollo’s protest against Lucretian didactic epic.
lines and instead grandly proclaims that his “spirit ventures greater themes” and that he will sing of “great matters” (2.535-8):\

\[
\text{quid moror in parvis? animus maioribus instat;}
\]

\[
\text{magna canam: toto pectore, vulgus, ades.}
\]

\[
\text{ardua molimur, sed nulla, nisi ardua, virtus;}
\]

\[
\text{difficilis nostra poscitur arte labor.}
\]

Why am I lingering upon small themes? My mind urges me on to greater ones; I will sing of grand themes: give me all your mind, people. I undertake a lofty ascent, but there is no virtue, unless it is lofty; difficult work is demanded by my art.

These lines look back to the proem of the book where the poet had called on Erato for aid in his difficult task (cf. \textit{magna paro}, 2.17; \textit{difficile est illis imposuisse modum}, 2.20).

Remember that this proem had dramatized the difficulty of containing such lofty didactic themes as the cosmic principle of Amor in elegiac poetry. Ovid continued to explore this theme in the Daedalus story. There he began to establish his own approach to “philosophical” or “scientific poetry,” especially in relation to Lucretius, defining Daedalus to a large degree as an “anti-Lucretius” and at the same time suggesting that he possessed certain “Empedoclean” features.

The allusion to the proem and its address to Erato in lines 2.535-8 also directs us to the cosmogony and its surrounding context, since Erato had been addressed a second time — in an internal proem — at the beginning of the section containing the cosmogony and origin of culture (2.425). In other words, in the proem to \textit{Ars} 2 the poet announces he is going to sing of great themes (\textit{magna}, 2.17) and asks Erato to aid him; he then addresses Erato again at line 425, indicating that the ensuing section is going to include the “great themes” promised in the proem and the subject is at least superficially lofty.

\footnote{Häussler (1999) 213 sees this pronouncement as a parody of \textit{paolo maiora canamus} in \textit{Ecl.} 4 and subsequent similar statements in Latin poetry.}
pastiche of Hesiodic, Empedoclean and Lucretian cosmological poetry; Apollo then
interrupts the poet and directs him to *propiora* (2.511), but the poet soon dismisses these
as *parva* (2.535) and returns once again to the great themes promised in the proem and
carried out at 2.467-88.

The poet’s grandiose claims at *Ars* 2.535-8 are underlined by the poet’s
assumption of an oracular persona, usurping for himself the role of prophet in a Lucretian
manner (2.541-2):

> haec tibi non hominem, sed quercus crede Pelasgas
dicere; nil istis ars mea maius habet.

> Trust that no man, but rather the Pelasgian oak speaks these [precepts] to you; my
art has no instruction more important than this.

Both Sharrock and Janka compare this pose to Lucretius’ claim of oracular truth for
himself instead of traditional sources of knowledge, as famously at *DRN* 5.110-3:

> qua prius adgrediar quam de re fundere fata
sanctius et multo certa ratione magis quam
Pythia quae tripodi a Phoebi lauroque profatur,
multa tibi expediam doctis solacia dictis;

> And before I proceed to proclaim the immutable law of nature on this subject in a
manner more holy and with reasoning much more sure than the Pythia who utters
prophecy from the tripod and laurel of Apollo, I will unfold many comforts to you
in learned speech.

This pronouncement made by Lucretius is an example of his “snatching the high ground
from the enemy,” since he rejects conventional prophecy and the lies of *vates*, but
nevertheless assumes the role of prophet-poet for himself, taking, as it seems,
Empedocles as the main model for the construction of this vatic persona, since lines 511-

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2 are repeated verbatim from his praise of the discoveries made by early philosophers, notably Empedocles (*DRN* 1.736-9):498

quamquam multa bene ac divinitus invenientes
ex adyto tamquam cordis responsa dedere
*sanctius et multo certa ratione magis quam*
*Pythia quae tripodi a Phoebi lauroque profatur*

Although discovering much in a fine, indeed god-like way they offered answers as if from the inner sanctum of their heart in a manner more holy and with reasoning much more sure than the Pythia who utters prophecy from the tripod and laurel of Apollo.

This comes immediately after Lucretius’ striking praise of Empedocles. As Hardie has recognized, “it is the Empeclean connection that is important,” and “Lucretius accepts Empedocles’ own claims to divinity (*sanctum*, 1.730; *diuini*, 731), and adopts himself...the Empedoclean stance of the prophet-poet.”499 Indeed, Empedocles, most likely in the proem to the *Peri Phuseos*, announces to the citizens of his native Acragas that “I, to you an everlasting god, no longer mortal, go among all in honor” (fr. 1/112):

ἐγὼ δ᾿ θεὸς ἁμβροτος οὐκέτι θνητός / πωλεῦμαι μετὰ πᾶσι τετιμένος. Compare this to the *Ars* poet’s address to his audience to “think that no man, but an oracle, speaks these things to you” (2.540-1): *haec tibi non hominem, sed quercus crede Pelasgas / dicere.*

Sharrock is right to connect this usurpation of oracular knowledge to Apollo’s “poetic challenge” to the poet in the previous section. Sharrock paraphrases Ovid’s claim “I am the Apollo of this work; it is I who hold the keys of wisdom, poetic and erotic.”500 But remember that Apollo seems to specifically censure the poet for singing of “great themes” in the cosmogony and origin of culture. The poet’s assumption of an

499 Ibid.
500 Sharrock (1994b) 229.
Empedoclean/Lucretian vatic persona therefore specifically militates against this and suggests a return to such themes. But what actually issues from the poet’s oracular mouth? “Suffer a rival patiently” (2.539): *rivalem patienter habe*. This is his “great” theme? Of course, the comic incongruity between the poet’s grandiose statements and the lowly erotic subject matter of his instruction is largely the point, but the clever poet takes it further.

The Apollinean *recusatio* ending the cosmological excursus had looked back to *Eclogues* 6 and the song of Silenus, where the satyr is said to have sung a cosmogony and then a series of largely erotic myths. Joseph Farrell has suggested that this juxtaposition could point to the allegorical interpretation of myth, and, moreover, that the theme of love could be connected to the Empedoclean features of the cosmogony. Indeed, Vergil himself alludes in *Georgics* 4 to the allegorical interpretation of such an erotic myth, the adultery of Mars and Venus (*G*. 4.345-7):

> inter quas curam Clymene narrabat inanem  
> *Volcani, Martisque dolos* et dulcia furta,  
> aque Chao densos divum numerabat amores.

> In the midst of these [nymphs] Clymene narrated the unrequited love of Vulcan, the wiles and stolen pleasures of Mars, and beginning from Chaos she was recounting the frequent amours of the gods.

This song — also reported, although more briefly — is similar to the song of Silenus, both in terms of the allusion to cosmogony (*aque Chao*, 4.347) and catalogue of erotic myths (*densos divum numerabat amores*, 4.437). The juxtaposition of cosmogonic chaos

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502 This translation of *curam...inanem* as “unrequited love” follows Hardie’s (1986) 83 interpretation of the passage, in which he takes *curam* in its amatory sense: “Vulcan’s love is then *inanis* in the sense that it is unrequited or made futile by deception.”
and the myth of Mars and Venus probably alludes to the latter as an allegory for Empedoclean Neikos and Philia. Empedocles himself exploited the allegorical potential of Ares and Aphrodite by using these names for his cosmic principles; and Lucretius too famously used an erotic tableau of the gods to allude to Empedoclean Neikos and Philia at the beginning of the DRN.

As it turns out, Ovid uses this same myth as the exemplum for his doctrine of enduring a rival patiently, which had been introduced by his grand pronouncements and assumption of an Empedoclean and Lucretian vatic persona. In fact, in introducing the myth he alludes to the Vergilian song of Clymene (561-2):

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  fabula narratur toto notissima caelo,
  Mulciberis capti Marsque Venusque dolis.
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A story, one notorious through all of heaven, is told, Mars and Venus caught in the snares of Mulciber.

We can compare G. 4.346: Volcani, Martisque dolos et dulcia furta. In a sense, in this long middle section of the Ars the poet recapitulates the subjects of Clymene’s song, in as much as he relates a cosmogony beginning from chaos (G. 4.347, aque Chao ~ Ars 2.470, chaos) and then, after the Apolline interlude (= Ecl. 6.1-5!), starts in on the adultery of Mars and Venus (G. 4.346 ~ Ars 2.562). What I suggest is that the grand Empedoclean/Lucretian gestures leading up to this myth allude to the fact that this shameful erotic myth had been interpreted as an allegory of natural philosophy, the most august theme in ancient poetry. Ovid, however, returns it to its transgressive, ludic

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503 See Häussler (1999) 205-36 for the extensive bibliography on this episode.
504 Häussler (1999) 219 observes that Vulcan’s vain attempt in the Ars to put an end to the affair is anticipated in the Georgics passage (cf. curam...inanem, G. 4.345).
505 On the place of natural philosophy in the hierarchy of poetic subject matter, see Innes (1979).
origins by using it to make the outrageously provocative argument that husbands — like Vulcan — ought to let their wives commit adultery because trying to catch them only makes them cheat openly rather than in secret! As numerous scholars have noted, such an argument is especially outrageous in light of Augustus’ marriage laws.506

While the wider context of the myth in the structure of the Ars clearly suggests that Ovid alludes to the allegorical interpretation of the myth, there are several internal signals that indicate this, as well. Apollo, we might remember, had directed the poet from cosmological themes (2.493-4) to “nearer matters” (2.509-11). In the myth of Mars and Venus, the Sun, — frequently an avatar of Apollo — spoils the adulterous (and on an allegorical reading, cosmological) fun by alerting Vulcan of the affair (2.573-74). Therefore, Ovid creates an ingenious parallel between the cosmology and the myth by having Apollo/Sol play an antagonistic role in each.507

The arranged meeting between Mars and Venus is called a foedus (2.579): fingit iter Lemnon; veniunt ad foedus amantes (“[Vulcan] pretends to make his way to Lemnos; the lovers meet according to their compact”). While foedus had been a basic part of the erotic poet’s lexicon since Catullus, it can take on an additional sense in an allegorical context.508 As we saw in our discussion of the eroto-didaxis appearing before the Ars cosmogony, for Empedocles an horkos or a “sworn compact” regulates the cosmic cycle of Neikos and Philia (fr. 35/30.3). Therefore, a “compact” defines the relationship

507 Häussler (1999) 215 notes that Phoebus Apollo and Sol can be equated, but he does not make the connection between Apollo’s earlier appearance in the book and the Sun’s role in the myth. See Häussler ibid., n. 24 for bibliography on the equation between Apollo and Sol; see Wheeler (2000) 66-8 specifically on the conflation of Apollo and Sol in the Metamorphoses, contra Fontenrose (1940).
508 On the Catullan origin of the erotic foedus, see Miller (2004) 64.
between Neikos/Ares and Philia/Aphrodite, much like a “compact” or foedus is made between Mars and Venus.  

Finally, the allegorical interpretation of the myth may be glossed by the mention of the physical elements of fire and water (2.597-8): *ista viri captent, si iam captanda putabunt, / quos faciet iustos ignis et uma viros* (“Let men seize such [secret notes], if they think them deserving seizure, men whom fire and water will make lawful husbands”). This closes the poet’s instruction in this section, as he says not to lay traps, like Vulcan, for the rival, nor try to intercept secret letters from the rival to the mistress. Leave such tactics, he says, to the man whom fire and water — the symbols of marriage in Roman wedding ritual — have made a lawful husband. This is significant, since these elements are often used synecdochically for the four Empedoclean elements. A passage in Varro offers some support for a conceptual link between the physica ratio of fire and water and their symbolism in Roman marriage ritual; it comes from a section in *De Lingua Latina* that Deschamps has argued is based on Empedoclean cosmology (LL 6.61-2).  

igitur causa nascendi duplex: *ignis et aqua*. ideo ea nuptiis in limine adhibentur, quod coniungit hic, et ma[r]s ignis, quod ibi semen, aqua femina, quod fetus ab eius humore, et *horum vincionis vis Venus.*

Thus the cause of birth is two-fold: fire and water. Therefore these elements are present at marriages, because there is union here, and fire is male, because the seed is there, and water female, because the fetus develops from the moisture of that one, and the force binding these together is Venus.

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509 Fabre-Serris (2011) in a paper on Empedocles and the elegiac poets has suggested that the occurrences of *foedera* in Propertius 3.20 may be an allusion to the Empedoclean metaphor of *horkos*. She makes no mention of Ovid, however, where the case for Empedoclean allusion is much stronger than the Propertian poem. In order for Fabre-Serris to be right about Prop. 3.20, one has to assume that Gallus, to whose poetry Propertius is referring in 3.20, also connected Empedoclean cosmology to elegiac themes.


511 Deschamps (1986).
Here Varro not only explains the *physica ratio* of Venus as the force joining together fire and water, but he offers in support of this explanation the use of the two elements in marriage ritual, precisely the context of their mention in the *Ars*.

Therefore, while Ovid emphasizes the essentially ludic and erotic nature of the myth, he can also playfully claim that he is continuing the Empedoclean and Lucretian themes from earlier in the book through allusion to the myth’s grand history in philosophical discourse. As we will see in the next section, however, the myth’s relationship to natural philosophy and the origins of the cosmos is not entirely unrelated to Ovid’s poetic program, since the myth, besides alluding to philosophical origins, also alludes to Ovid’s *poetic* origins in *Amores* 1.1, where love and strife dynamically interact. In the final section of the chapter, we will see briefly that Ovid returns to the Empedoclean and Lucretian Ares/Mars and Aphrodite/Venus once more at the end of *Ars* 3 and thus closes off his didactic poem where the Latin didactic tradition had in one sense begun, Mars and Venus.

**3.4.2 Mars, Venus and Metapoetics**

As I discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the Empedoclean Minotaur can be seen as an embodiment of the “hybrid” elegiac couplet and, moreover, the *discors concordia* that produces such hybrids as the Minotaur can describe the interaction of hexameter and pentameter lines in elegiac poetry. Of course, there are other, more familiar, ways by which Ovid exploits the elegiac couplet's capacity for self-representation. One of the more famous comes in *Amores* 3.1, where a personified Elegy appears to the poet (3.1.7-9):
venit odoratos Elegia nexa capillos,
et, puto, pes illi longior alter erat.
forma decens, vestis tenuissima, vultus amantis,
et pedibus vitium causa decoris erat.

Elegy came, her fragrant hair bound, and, I think one of her feet was longer than the other. She had beautiful figure, a dress of thinnest fabric, the countenance of a lover, and the deformity of her feet was a source of elegance.

We see the common Latin pun on pes/pedes, meaning both bodily and metrical "feet."^512

Naturally, then, one of Elegy's feet is longer than the other (pes illi longior alter erat, 3.1.8), in a representation of the unequal lengths of the hexameter and pentameter verses in the elegiac couplet. This fault, however, does not detract from her elegant beauty (forma decens); it is in fact the cause of it (et pedibus vitium causa decoris erat, 3.1.10).

The metrical punning and play in this case is transparent and it is passages like this, in addition to the highly developed tradition of such word-play in Latin poetry, that enables Ovid to engage in less direct forms of it and still reasonably expect it to be recognized by his learned readers.^513

I argue that one such example, which has been all but ignored, comes in Ovid's retelling of the adultery of Mars and Venus in the second book of the Ars (2.561-92);^514 and, moreover, that this helps to strengthen my suggestion that the elegiac couplet is in some sense an "Empedoclean verse form.” Before their affair is betrayed by the Sun, Venus is described entertaining her lover Mars (2.567-70):

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^512 Cf. Hinds (1987) 16 in his discussion of Metamorphoses 5.264: "Few word-plays are more familiar in Latin poetry than the one between the bodily and metrical sense of the word pes." He also mentions Am. 3.1.8 in this context, among several other passages in Latin poetry that exploit the punning potential of pes (e.g. Catullus 14.21-3; Horace A.P. 80; Trist. 1.1.15-6). For additional examples see Ferriss (2009) 377-8, nn. 7 and 8.

^513 See Morgan (2011) for an excellent treatment of metrical play in Latin poetry and the way that meter can “mean.”

^514 Jolivet (2005) 3 notes that Venus’ imitation of Vulcan’s limp is “subtilement élégiaque.”
a, quotiens lasciva pedes risisse mariti
dicitur, et duras igne vel arte manus.
Marte palam simul est Vulcanum imitata, decebat,
multaque cum forma gratia mixta fuit.

Ah, they say that often wanton Venus laughed at the feet of her husband, and his hands made hard either by fire or art. She imitated Vulcan in front of Mars (it became her) and considerable grace mingled with her beauty.

Not every occurrence of pes/pedes in Ovid contains a reference to metrical feet, but there is good reason to think that this one does. To start, these lines are introduced by a scenario that resembles Ovid's programmatic initiation into elegy in Amores 1.1. In that poem the metrical playfulness is explicit. In Am. 1.1 the poet is setting out to sing arma gravi numero violentaque bella (1.1) until they say that Cupid laughed (risisse Cupido / dicitur, 3-4) and then stole a single foot from the second line (unum surripuisse pedem, 4). Not only the poem, but also the poet is transformed: he becomes an elegiac poeta and amator (Am. 1.1.26, uror, et in vacuo pectore regnat Amor, “I burn and Amor reigns in my empty heart”). In the myth of the adultery of Mars and Venus in the Ars, Mars, the god of war and of martial hexameter poetry, undergoes a similar transformation (2.563-4):

Mars pater, insano Veneris turbatus amore,
deu de duce terribili factus amator erat.

Father Mars, unsettled by mad love for Venus, transformed from a fierce general to a lover.

Considering Ovid's penchant for metapoetic reflection, the notion that the interaction of the genres of epic (Mars) and elegy (Venus) is at play in these lines is hard to ignore. It is tempting, therefore, to take pedes at line 567 as an oblique reference to metrical feet. This
inference is in effect confirmed by an allusion to Am. 1.1 and Cupid's famous theft of
a foot from Ovid's hexameter.515

I earlier pointed to the expression risisse Cupido / dicitur (1.1.3-4). In our passage
in the Ars the "feet" (pedes, 567) referred to are Vulcan's and they often make Venus
laugh. Compare Ars 2.567-8,

a, quotiens lasciva pedes risisse mariti
dicitur, et duras igne vel arte manus.

Ah, they say that often wanton Venus laughed at the feet of her husband, and his
hands made hard either by fire or art.

to Am. 1.1.3-4:

par erat inferior versus; risisse Cupido
dicitur atque unum surripuisse pedem.

The second verse was equal [to the first]; they say that Cupid laughed and stole a
single foot.

Therefore, risisse and dicitur occupy the same metrical sedes in the Ars as they do in Am.
1.3-4; and the two contexts share the occurrence of pes/pedes. By reinforcing the allusion
metrically Ovid suggests that both passages concern meter. In Am. 1.1 pes explicitly
refers to a metrical foot and thus points to the metrical sense of pedes at Ars 2.567. Nor is
this the first time that Vulcan's feet are made to represent meter in Latin poetry.516 While
Vulcan's famously limping gait inspires only laughter and mockery in Venus, her

515 While other scholars before me, including Holzberg (1990) 147 and Baldo et al. (1991) ad loc., have
commented upon the elegiac motifs in this episode, no one, as far as I know, has recognized the verbal
allusions to Am. 1.1.
516 Jolivet (2005) n. 33 compares Vulcan's limping gait to the “limping” verse of elegy at Tristia 3.1.11-2.
See Ferriss (2009) 378 on Catullus Poem 36 for a metrical interpretation of tardipes deus, i.e. Vulcan. See
also Ovid Am. 2.17.19-22 in which Vulcan's limp is described in similar terms to the “limping” elegiac
couplet.
imitation of it has a different effect, as we saw (2.569-70).\footnote{Imitor is of course often used of poetic imitation. Cf. Jolivet (2005) n. 33.} \textit{Marte palam simul est Vulcânum imitata, decebat, / multaque cum forma gratia mixta fuit.} This imitation (imitata, 569) of Vulcan, the poet says, became Venus (decebat, 569) and lent gratia to her beauty (multaque cum forma gratia mixta fuit, 570). This description, in turn, alludes to the passage from \textit{Am.} 3.1 where Elegy's unequal feet and gait had similarly embellished her beauty and elegance (3.1.9-10): \textit{forma decens, vestis tenuissima, vultus amantis, / et pedibus vitium causa decoris erat.} Both Venus and Elegy are noted for their beauty (forma, 2.570; 3.1.9) and in both a foot-fault, so to speak, is a cause of elegance (decebat, 2.569; causa decoris, 3.1.10). Venus' similarities to the figure of Elegy in \textit{Am.} 3.1 suggest that in imitating Vulcan's gait, she represents the unequal "gait" of the elegiac couplet; and, as goddess of love and patroness of elegiac poets, the gait naturally becomes her, whereas it is a source of mockery for Vulcan.

If Venus and her gait are a representation of elegy and the elegiac couplet, then one might reasonably suggest that Mars is likewise a representation of the epic genre and hexameter verse. In fact, Mars' title Gradivus (2.566) may contribute to the metapoetic play in the passage. In this passage obsessed with feet, in which Vulcan's lame feet (pedes, 567) are a source of laughter and Venus' imitation of Vulcan's gait becomes her as the goddess of elegy, whose "gait" is also uneven, can Mars' title of "marching God" (Gradivus), which comes from \textit{gradus}, a "step, pace" and a "unit of length," be entirely innocent?\footnote{See \textit{OLD} s.v. \textit{gradus.}} Venus' mockery of her husband Vulcan's lame feet (pedes risisse mariti / dicitur, 2.567-8) encourages comparison of his feet to those of her lover, whose feet work
perfectly well; hence he is able to "march" (Gradivus). And if both Vulcan's feet (and gait) and Venus' have metapoetic implications, it is tempting to conclude that this sly reference to Mars' marching feet likewise has a metapoetic reference; and naturally this is to the hexameter verse since Mars is conventionally the god of martial epic composed in hexameters. Mars' hexameter marches off to war. Or at least until Vulcan catches Mars in his net and betrays him to the gods as Venus’ lover.

This densely metapoetic passage in which Mars is a representation of the hexameter and Venus of the elegiac couplet (distinguished from epic meter by the pentameter) can support my initial suggestion that Ovid characterizes the elegiac couplet, in its alternation of the hexameter and pentameter, as being, in one sense, an “Empedoclean verse form.” As we know, ancient allegorists interpreted the myth of Mars and Venus as a prefiguration of Empedocles' cosmological theory of the alternation of Neikos (Mars) and Philia (Venus). We also saw that Ovid alludes to the allegorical interpretation of the myth. Therefore the metrical identification between Mars/hexameter and Venus/elegiac couplet operating in the passage suggests that the elegiac couplet is "Empedoclean" in the sense that Mars functions as an allegory of Empedoclean Neikos and Venus of Empedoclean Philia. We saw earlier that Ovid’s characterization of the elegiac couplet as the alternation (and interaction) of the hexameter and pentameter readily lends itself to an Empedoclean interpretation, as does the notion of the elegiac couplet as a double or hybrid verse form created out of the discors concordia of the hexameter and pentameter.

In this sense, elegy and its meter can be seen as a microcosm of the Empedoclean

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519 See Morgan (2010) 353: “…the pentameter, as the characteristic element of the elegiac couplet (insofar as the pentameter is what differentiates the elegiacs from epic metre), can function as the focus of generic definition.”
cosmos, one characterized by the interaction of the opposed forces of Mars and Venus, strife and love.

3.5 Lucretius, Empedocles and the end of the *Ars Amatoria*

The proem to the final book of the *Ars Amatoria* alludes to the proems of both previous books. This is appropriate since it purports to do for the female sex in a single book what books 1 and 2 had done for the male (3.1-4):

arma dedi Danais in Amazonas; arma supersunt quae tibi dem et turmae, Penthesilea, tuae. ite in bella pares; vincent, quibus **alma Dione** faverit et **toto qui volat orbe puer**.

I have given arms to the Danai against the Amazons; arms remain which I should give to you and your army, Penthesilea. Go into battle equally equipped; let them conquer whom nourishing Dione favors and the boy who flies over the vast globe.

Ovid gives Venus (*Dione*, 3) the epithet **alma** (3), which recalls the beginning of the *DRN* (*alma Venus*, 1.2), just as in the proem to *Ars* 1 he had asked the “motherly” Lucretian Venus to aid his work (*coeps, mater Amoris, ades*, 1.30) and, like Lucretius, had dismissed the usefulness of prophetic knowledge (1.25-9). However, the reference to the globe-trotting Amor (*toto qui volat orbe puer*, 3.4) also looks back to the proem of *Ars* 2, where the poet had set himself the challenge of restraining the cosmic wanderings of the flighty god (*tam vasto pervagus orbe puer*, 2.19).

As we saw in our discussion of *Ars* 2, the poet’s task of reining in the cosmic flight of Amor foregrounds Ovid’s own project in the book of including Lucretian and Empedoclean subject matter in his didactic elegy. The book features not only a cosmogony and anthropology, in which the civilizing power of Venus may owe

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something to Empedoclean Philia, but also a reworking of the Homeric adultery of Ares and Aphrodite, which had been interpreted as an allegory anticipating Empedocles’ cosmological principles of Neikos and Philia. Ovid puts the focus back on the myth’s erotic character, but he also cleverly alludes to the allegorical background of the myth in several ways. One of these is to assume a mock-Empedoclean and Lucretian vatic persona and grandiosely introduce the teaching that the myth is supposed to exemplify as magna, wittily pointing to his lascivious erotic myth’s more august history in philosophical discourse.

While the proem to Ars 3 clearly recalls the proem to the previous book, this is not the only structural parallel between the two books. Whereas Ovid had recounted the adultery of Mars and Venus in the latter half of Ars 2 (561-92), among whose literary antecedents are the Empedoclean and Lucretian Ares/Mars and Aphrodite/Venus, he closes Ars 3 and therefore the entire poem by alluding to the Lucretian tableau of the lovers Mars and Venus in his description of different sexual positions (Ars 3.771-808). The Lucretian passage offers a striking description of the positions of Mars and Venus; the scene is so visually evocative that scholars have long suspected that a painting or sculpture lies behind the description. In a sense, then, Ovid alludes to a highly marked description of two lovers in sexual congress, and perhaps to the earliest such description in Latin didactic poetry, in his own, more “technical” treatment of sexual positions.

\[522\] Ars 3.773, resupina ~ DRN 1.37, resupini; Ars 3.779-80, cervix reflexa...consipienda ~ DRN 1.35, suspiciens...cervix reposta (cf. also Ars 3.784, colla reflecte); Ars 3.782, fusa ~ DRN 1.39, circumfusa. Gibson (2003) ad Ars 3.779-80 has noted the parallel for cervix reflexa at Verg. Aen. 8.633 and its source at DRN 1.35. Gibson says that “in context the latter authors are either describing a work of art or clearly drawing on one, and it is appropriate that Ovid should allude to them in a passage where the emphasis falls on the act of viewing.”

\[523\] See Bailey (1947) ad DRN 1.33.
Moreover, the passage in the *Ars* also alludes to Lucretius’ diatribe against sexual passion in *DRN* 4 so that, once again, as he had done in *Ars* 2, Ovid points out Lucretius’ inconsistent treatment of Venus and sexual passion in the *DRN* by combining allusion to the positive depiction of Venus in book 1 and the largely negative one in book 4.\(^{524}\)

While the lexical parallels are considerable, Ovid signals the Lucretian background of the passage in other ways, as well. He introduces this closing section of the poem by once again addressing Venus with the Lucretian epithet *alma* (*Ars* 3.769-70):

ulteriora pudet docuisse, sed **alma Dione**
‘præcipue nostrum est, quod pudet,’ inquit ‘opus.’

It shames me to teach this last lesson, but nourishing Dione says “What is immodest is principally my work.”

Of course, this also looks back to the address of the same **alma Dione** at *Ars* 3.3, thus creating a ring composition for the book. Ovid further indicates the Lucretian context of the passage by having the poet once again claim for himself, in a Lucretian manner, knowledge more reliable than that of oracles, although at the same time as he rejects these traditional sources of knowledge, he appeals to the most conventional source of poetic knowledge, the Muse (*Ars* 3.789-90):

sed neque **Phoebei tripodes** nec corniger Ammon
vera magis vobis, quam *mea Musa*, canet;

But neither the tripods of Phoebus nor hornbearing Ammon will sing things to you more true than my Muse.

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\(^{524}\) O’Rourke (2013) has noted the parallels: *Ars* 3.797-80 ~ *DRN* 4.1192, 1195-6; *Ars* 3.771, *modos* ~ *DRN* 4.1263, *modis*. In fact, Lucretius himself discusses sexual positions at *DRN* 4.1263-77, remarking that these are of no use to wives (1268).
This looks back to a similar statement made by Lucretius at the beginning of *DRN 5* (110-2): 525

```latex
   quae prius adgrediar quam de re fundere fata
   sanctius et suto certa racione magis quam
   Pythia quae tripode a Phoebi lauroque profatur,
   multa tibi expediam doctis solacia dictis;
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And before I proceed to proclaim the immutable law of nature on this subject in a manner more holy and with reasoning much more sure than the Pythia who utters prophecy from the tripod and laurel of Apollo, I will unfold many comforts to you in learned speech.

As Hardie has said, the Lucretian passage is not simply a rejection of conventional sources of knowledge: “it is not just that they are in error, but that they occupy a place as leaders and manipulators of society that Lucretius wishes to appropriate for himself, as the high priest of Epicurean rationalism.” 526 As we saw earlier, Lucretius has a model in mind for his assumption of the role of prophet-poet. For lines 111-2 are repeated verbatim from a passage in book 1 praising the discoveries of Empedocles and other early philosophers (1.736-9). As we saw, Empedocles should be singled out among these early philosophers since he more than any other figure embodied the role of poet-prophet that Lucretius is assuming for himself.

It is an apt moment for the *Ars* poet to take on this grandiose Empedoclean/Lucretian persona because he is adapting the Empedoclean/Lucretian figures of Mars and Venus from *DRN 1* in his description of sexual positions. 527 The Empedoclean background of the passage can be seen by the fact that Ovid alludes not

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527 I should note that two compound words occur at *Ars* 3.789, *sed neque Phoebi tripodes nec corniger* Ammon. As we saw in the discussion of *Ars* 2.24 earlier in the chapter, compound words are a means of signalling allusion to Empedocles, although these typically occur in the form of adjectives like *corniger* rather than nouns like *tripodes*. We should be cautious, then, in asserting that the collocation of these two compounds allude to Empedocles.
only to the Lucretian Mars and Venus, but also to Vergil’s imitation of this passage in the *Aeneid* in still another Empedoclean context, the Shield of Aeneas. As we know, ancient allegorists interpreted the Shield, like the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite from *Odyssey* 8, in Empedoclean terms. Therefore, it is significant that *cervice reflexa* (*Ars* 3.779) is an allusion to Vergil’s description of the she-wolf on the Shield of Aeneas (*tereti cervice reflexa*, *Aen.* 8.633), in addition to the Lucretian model at *DRN* 1.35 (*atque suspiciens tereti cervice reposta*) describing Mars in the lap of Venus.\(^{528}\) Yet, whereas Vergil’s allusions to the Lucretian tableau of Mars and Venus in his description of the Shield of Aeneas are part of a meditation on the two deities as parents of the Roman race and the themes of peace and war in Roman history, Ovid reduces the Lucretian tableau to part of his description of sexual positions — a typically Ovidian *reductio ad amorem*.\(^{529}\)

Therefore, at the end of *Ars* 3, as in the myth of Mars and Venus in *Ars* 2, Ovid once again uses the philosophical background of Mars and Venus to humorous effect, assuming the vatic persona of Empedocles and Lucretius for his titillating excursus on

\(^{528}\) Gibson (2003) *ad Ars* 3.779-80. As Gibson notes, *cervice re-* is common hexameter ending. Nevertheless, both Lucretius and Vergil may be thinking specifically of Ennius *Ann.* fr. 483 Sk., *caput a cervice revolsum*.

\(^{529}\) On the relation of Mars and Venus to the larger themes of the Shield of Aeneas, see Hardie (1986) 360-1. This allusion at the end of *Ars* 3 to Vergil’s *ecphrasis* of the Shield of Aeneas, whose primary model is the Homeric Shield of Achilles, should perhaps remind us that at the end of the previous book the poet had compared his instruction in the first two books of the *Ars* to Vulcan’s gift of arms to Achilles (2.741-2): *arma dedi vobis: dederat Vulcanus Achilli; / vincite munerebus, vicit ut ille, datis.* In light of the Empedoclean background of the Mars and Venus myth in the *Ars*, this analogy between the poet and Vulcan may have additional resonance. Allegorists interpreted the Shield, foremost among the arms made for Achilles, as an *imago mundi* and more specifically, the description of a city at war and a city at peace as prefigurations of Empedoclean Neikos and Philia. In the sphragis at the end of *Ars* 2 Ovid’s witty comparison of himself to Vulcan is based on the elegiac conceit of *militia amoris*, which, as we know, alludes to the fundamental elegiac opposition of peace or love and war, the same dichotomous principles represented on the Shield of Achilles. The poet can claim, in composing the *Ars*, to have fashioned another such representation of the Empedoclean principles of love and strife in the adultery of Mars and Venus appearing in *Ars* 2.
sexual positions. Also as in *Ars* 2, he largely strips the myth of its philosophical associations and emphasizes its essentially erotic character. Therefore, Ovid ends his didactic poem *Ars Amatoria* where Lucretius had begun his didactic poem, with the Empedoclean figures of Mars and Venus, underscoring the importance of Empedocles in this tradition. Ovid stakes his claim for a place in this tradition by playfully pointing out that his poem too, like the poems of Empedocles and Lucretius, is a didactic poem about love (and strife).

**Conclusion**

While philosophical themes appear throughout the *Ars* I have focused my discussion primarily on *Ars* 2 because it is there that Ovid engages Lucretian themes most extensively, such as: hybridity, the didactic poet and his pupil (Daedalus and Icarus), cosmogony, anthropology and, not least, Mars and Venus. I argue that Ovid’s attitude towards Lucretius in the book is chiefly polemical. He is in effect correcting the view of sex in Lucretius’ famous diatribe against Venus and sex in *DRN* 4, which, as the opening book of the second half of the poem, occupies an analogous position in the structure of the *DRN* to that of *Ars* 2 in the two-book edition of the *Ars Amatoria*.

As I argue, Ovid begins to distance his didactic persona from that of Lucretius in the Daedalus story, the first mythological exemplum in the book, where Daedalus is simultaneously a model for the didactic poet of the *Ars* in several respects and also an “anti-Lucretius.” At the same time, Ovid suggests that certain aspects of the figure of

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530 As we saw in our discussion of *Amores* 1.8, the *positioning* of Ares and Aphrodite or Neikos and Philia in relation to one another during the cosmic cycle is an important part of Empedocles’ cosmology. In this sense, Ovid’s allusion to the Empedoclean and Lucretian Mars and Venus in his discussion of sexual positions is a *reductio ad amorem* of Empedocles’ philosophy.
Daedalus are more Empedoclean than Lucretian and therefore appeals to Lucretius’ own model against Lucretius. This use of Lucretius against himself continues to be a strategy in the most thoroughly Lucretian section in all of the Ars, the section extending from the cosmogony and anthropology to the adultery of Mars and Venus. In Ovid’s anthropology he combines allusion to both the Lucretian hymn to Venus and diatribe in book 4 in an implicit criticism of Lucretius’ views of Venus in the latter passage, once again using Lucretius against himself by appealing to Lucretius’ own hymn to the goddess as part of his argument for the civilizing power of sex. The representation of Venus as a cosmic deity and ruler over a contemporary Golden Age for lovers, as well as a pacifying and civilizing power, may owe something to Empedocles. Ovid continues to promote the Empedoclean/Lucretian Venus from the DRN 1 proem in Ars 2 as he recounts the love affair of the two gods; he signals the Empedoclean/Lucretian context by the ironically assuming the role of poet-prophet and by connecting the myth to the earlier cosmology.

While polemically engaging Lucretius, Ovid also ingeniously suggests that certain features of the poetics of the Ars Amatoria and elegy more generally can be considered “Empedoclean,” such as the “hybrid” form of the elegiac couplet and the didactic elegy of the Ars Amatoria, in addition to the alternation of the (warlike, martial, epic) hexameter and the (amorous, peaceful, elegiac) pentameter. In the Ars Amatoria, however, Ovid constructs a much more playful, restrained didactic persona than the portentous, sky-threatening Empedocles presented in DRN 1. Through his handling of myth Ovid offers examples of this poetic “restraint.” While the point of the poet’s
teaching concerning Mars and Venus myth is *not* to try to trap your girlfriend and her lover, there is perhaps a different lesson for the poet. Vulcan, like Daedalus, is a quintessential artist-figure in ancient literature. While the basic plots of their respective myths seem dissimilar (Daedalus seeking release from his prison, Vulcan to keep Mars and Venus in theirs) it is worth remembering that Daedalus had also built the intricately designed labyrinth to constrain the Minotaur, an Empedoclean monster. Vulcan builds his equally intricate trap for the Empedoclean Mars and Venus. We might compare this to the way that the poet of the *Ars* subtly incorporates Empedoclean themes inside the intricate design of his own didactic poem about love. As I have suggested, this idea is programmatically established in the *Ars* 2 proem, where the poet dramatizes the difficulty of putting the cosmic principle of love into elegy. Ovid, unlike the overreaching Icarus, takes a restrained and playful (cf. the gods’ laughter at the ensnared Mars and Venus at *Ars* 2.585) approach to Empedoclean and Lucretian themes in the *Ars*. 
CHAPTER 4
Empedoclean Physics and Ethics in Fasti 1

Introduction

In the previous chapters we saw that part of Ovid’s program of situating his elegiac Amores and Ars Amatoria in relation to the epic tradition featured his humorous assimilation of natural philosophical themes and images, especially those of Empedocles and the Empedoclean tradition, to some of the concerns of his elegiac poetry, such as the cyclical alternation of the hexameter and pentameter in the elegiac couplet, poetic hybridity, militia amoris and the organization of his poetic “cosmos” around the figures of Mars and Venus. In the Fasti, his self-consciously, if ambivalently, “elevated” aetiological elegy, Ovid takes on themes from the tradition of didactic natural philosophy in a much more sustained, although still often playful, manner. In this first of three chapters on the Fasti I focus on book 1 of the poem in order to demonstrate its programmatic use of Empedoclean material.\textsuperscript{531} I also begin to flesh out the themes and ideas in the poem that can be illuminated by an understanding of Ovid’s use of natural philosophical material.

I start out by considering the philosophy of the Janus episode and its programmatic nature: I focus specifically on its establishment of love and strife as organizing principles in the cosmos and on the episode’s implications for the poem’s view of time and history. I argue that the Janus episode insistently suggests a cyclical (and Empedoclean) model of time that is appropriate for a poem on the Roman year, but

\textsuperscript{531} I am deeply indebted in this chapter to Myrto Garani, who very generously showed me some of her unpublished work on Empedocles in the Fasti and with whom I had several stimulating conversations on the poem.
that also perhaps sits uncomfortably beside the teleological view of time and history
which the poem identifies with the ruling family. The presence in the Janus episode both
of a cyclical pattern of creation and destruction and especially the prominence of the
principles of love and strife lends the Janus episode a strongly Empedoclean character.

In the first part of book 1 Janus is figured as a didactic poet and his discourse
looks back to earlier didactic poets like Empedocles in establishing some of the principal
thematic concerns of the *Fasti*. In the poet’s praise of the *felices animae* (1.295-310), he
continues to emphasize the status of the *Fasti* as a successor to earlier didactic poems; as
becomes clear from my analysis Empedocles is a crucially important figure in this
tradition and the poet’s praise of the *felices animae* can ultimately be traced back to
Empedocles’ praise of Pythagoras. The *Fasti* poet’s praise also looks back to *Aeneid* 6
and the scene immediately preceding Anchises’ momentous speech to Aeneas. Much as
the Sybil’s address to *felices animae* such as Orpheus and Musaeus in this section of the
*Aeneid* sets the scene for Anchises’ speech, which features a Pythagorean/Empedoclean
eschatology, Ovid’s makarismos of the *felices animae* in the *Fasti* functions as a
programmatic introduction to his ensuing treatment of similarly natural philosophical and
eschatological topics in the *Agonalia*.

In the latter episode Ovid’s protests against animal sacrifice and his connection of
sacrifice to the decline from the Golden Age lend him a strongly Pythagorean persona.
Through connections with Vergilian and Aratean intertexts the Empedoclean background
of these themes becomes more apparent — here it is important to remember Hardie’s
argument that Empedocles lies behind the figure of Pythagoras in *Met*. 15. In his history
of sacrifice Ovid establishes a Pythagorean/Empedoclean ethical framework for judging animal sacrifice and therefore suggests that such sacrifice is deeply problematic. The Myth of the Ages in the Agonalia is also informed by Ovid’s elaborate account of this myth in book 1 of the *Metamorphoses*. I look at this section of the *Met.* in considerable detail in order to demonstrate that this episode, corresponding structurally and thematically to the Agonalia in *Fasti* 1, engages Empedoclean material extensively. This helps to reinforce the presence of Empedocles in the parallel episode in the *Fasti* and demonstrates that in treating certain motifs such as the Golden Age, elemental purgation, cosmic creation and destruction or cosmic transition, Ovid frequently turns to Empedoclean themes and imagery. In both *Met.* 1 and *Fasti* 1 natural philosophy is intimately tied to ethics, as they seem to have been in Empedocles’ system, and this important connection can help us to read some of the key natural philosophical moments in the *Fasti*, such as Aristaeus’ capture of Proteus, as an allegory for cosmogony. As we will see, by connecting Aristaeus’ bugonia to Empedocles’ period of increasing strife in the cosmic cycle, Ovid raises questions about the ethics of Aristaeus’ act and perhaps about Augustus’ role in the “rebirth” of the Roman state.

### 4.1 Janus, Chaos and the Empedoclean Cosmos

The first important piece in the natural philosophical architecture of the poem is the Janus episode (1.89-288). As the first and also the longest episode in the entire poem, it takes on a special prominence. Accordingly, it has gained considerable attention from scholars, who have shown that the god Janus is both a poetological figure and in many ways a
reflection of the *Fasti* itself. For example, Janus echoes the opening couplet of the poem in the beginning of his first answer to the poet and his actions are described in language often used of the composition of poetry. He speaks in elegiac couplets (1.162), assumes a didactic persona (cf. *disce*, 1.101), and reflects the privileging of peace over war in the *Fasti* (e.g., *nil mihi cum bello*, 1.253). Green, the author of the most recent commentary on *Fasti* 1, also suggests, following others, that the double form of Janus anticipates the style of the *Fasti*, its “polyphony” and “fusion of the serious and the humorous, the panegyric and the subversive.” For our purposes, the cosmological opening of Janus’ speech conforms to its programmatic character, in as much as it anticipates the presence of natural philosophical motifs in the rest of the poem. Many of the aspects of Ovid’s use of cosmology in the Janus episode are representative: its appearance alongside more mythological interpretations of the world; juxtaposition with “low” or comic subject matter; connection to Roman history, culture and institutions; and relationship to the generic concerns of the poem. My brief discussion focuses on two aspects of the cosmology of the Janus episode: its establishment of love and strife as cosmic principles; and its view of time and history.

As the poet tells us, Janus appears to him while he has his writing tablets in his hands and the poet, after getting over the shock, asks the god an appropriately bipartite question: how shall he refer to him and what is the reason for his peculiar shape (1.89-

Janus, a god of beginnings, starts his answer from the very beginning, the emergence of the cosmos from chaos. In fact, in a surprising twist, Janus says that the men of old (antiqui, 1.103) used to call him Chaos (1.101-12):

‘disce metu posito, vates operose dierum,
quod petis, et voces percipe mente meas.
me Chaos antiqui (nam sum res pr\'\'isca) vocabant:
aspirce quam longi temporis acta canam.
lucidus hic aer et quae tria corpora restant,
ignis, aquae, tellus, unus acervus erat.
\begin{verbatim}
\[\text{ut semel haec rerum secessit lite suarum inque novas abiit massa soluta domos,}
flamma petit altum, propior locus aera cepit, sederunt medio terra fretumque solo.}
tune ego, qui fueram globus et sine imagine moles, in faciem redii dignaque membra deo.’
\end{verbatim}

‘Set aside your fear and learn, laborious poet of the days, what you seek, and grasp my speech with your mind. The men of old (for I am an ancient being) used to call me Chaos: observe how I shall sing of the deeds of a long span of time. This bright air and the remaining three elements, fire, water, earth were a single heap. When once this mass separated due to the strife of its own elements, and having been dissolved departed into new homes, fire sought the height, the nearer place accepted the air, the earth and sea settled in the middle. At that time, I, who had been a sphere and a shapeless mass, reverted to the appearance and limbs worthy of a god.’

While this passage, like most of the other examples of natural philosophy in Ovid’s works, is eclectic, Empedoclean and Lucretian features have a certain prominence as models in the passage.\textsuperscript{536} Commentators usually acknowledge that the cosmogony in book 5 (432-48) of the \textit{DRN} is one of its principal sources, although Ovid ironically puts

\textsuperscript{535} Of course, Janus’ epiphany to the poet is an allusion to Apollo’s appearance before Callimachus (1.21ff. Pf.). See Miller (1983) 166 and n. 30; Barchiesi (1991) 15.
\textsuperscript{536} Bömer (1957-8) \textit{ad Fasti} 1.103 calls the cosmogony basically Stoic, but acknowledges that it has Lucretian and Empedoclean features.
this Lucretian material into the mouth of a god. In Lucretius, as in the *Fasti* cosmogony, the pre-cosmic state is defined by a confused mass (*DRN* 5.436, *moles*) of elements that are in conflict (cf. *tempestas*, 436; *discordia*; 437; *proelia*; 439).

Eventually, the parts separate into the masses of earth, sea and sky (445-8), although in the *DRN* it is not made explicit that this separation is caused by the strife of the elements, as it is in the *Fasti*. However, we also know that the beginning of the cosmogony in the *DRN*, where Lucretius describes the non-existence of parts of the universe, is modeled directly on a passage in Empedocles. Moreover, Denis O’Brien has argued persuasively that Lucretius’ description of the discordant elements at the beginning of the universe as a *tempestas* and *proelia* is taken from the storm and battle of the elements in strife’s cosmogony in the cosmic cycle, after the unification of the elements into a sphere under Philia. Therefore, Ovid alludes in the *Fasti* cosmogony to both Lucretius and Empedocles. In fact, several features of the cosmogony are more Empedoclean than Lucretian, a fact that leads Pfligersdorffer to refer to the cosmology of the Janus episode as *Ovidius Empedocleus*.

I refer the reader to his article for a comprehensive discussion, but I note here a couple of the more striking Empedoclean features. Strife is explicitly the agent of

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538 For a comprehensive list of the parallels between the two cosmogonies, see Green (2004) *ad Fasti* 1.105-10 and Garani (2007) 244, n. 168.
540 O’Brien (1969) 153-4. See also 287ff., in which O’Brien argues that the separation of the elements in the Lucretian cosmogony is also “peculiarly Empedoclean.”
541 Recently, Garani (2007) 77.
cosmogony in the *Fasti*, as it would have been in Empedocles. Moreover, there is an emphasis on the articulation of the world into the four elements that is more Empedoclean than Lucretian (the quartet appears no less than three times in the passage). Finally, Janus/Chaos says that before strife separated the elements, he was a sphere (111-2): *tunc ego, qui fueram globus et sine imagine moles, / in faciem redii dignaque membra deo* (“then I, who had been a sphere and a shapeless mass, reverted to the appearance and limbs worthy of a god”). Nowhere in Lucretius is chaos described as spherical, but in Empedocles the pre-cosmic state under the complete dominance of Philia is that of a sphere (cf. 33/27 and 34/29&28). Therefore, the Ovidian cosmogony, in which strife (*lis*, 107) breaks apart a sphere (*globus*, 111) and separates the four elements, is probably a close approximation of strife’s cosmogony in the cosmic cycle of Empedocles.

Scholars have suggested that Empedoclean features are present elsewhere in the passage, as well, which helps to make a case for Empedocles as an important model. Hardie, in light of Janus’ two faces, has observed that “the monstrous *Mischwesen* that come into being at certain stages in the Empedoclean cosmic cycle includes creatures ‘with two faces and two breasts’ (DK B 61 = Inwood 66).” Moreover, Janus translates his role as keeper of the Gates of War of the Janus Geminus temple onto a cosmic plane following the cosmogony. In discussing his role as the *vasti custodia mundi* (119) and the keeper of the gates of the Sky (*foribus caeli*, 125), he says that he also regulates the

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543 1.105-6, 109-10, 117.
544 Hardie (1991) 50. The repeated use of compound adjectives to describe Janus reflects his double form: *lane biceps* (1.65); *lane biformis* (1.89); *clavigerum verbis adloquor ipse deum* (1.228); *sed cur navalis in aere / altera signata est, altera forma biceps* (1.229-30). As we know, Sedley (2003) has identified the clustering of compound adjectives as an Empedoclean “fingerprint.”
release of Peace and War in an allusion to his earthly role as keeper of the Gates of War (121-4):

cum libuit Pacem placidis emittere tectis,
libera perpetuas ambulat illa vias:
sanguine letifero totus miscit orbis,
ni teneant rigidae condita Bella serae.

When I wish to send Peace out of her tranquil walls, she freely walks unhindered paths: The entire world would be embroiled in death-bringing slaughter were unyielding bolts not to hold imprisoned War.

As Janus makes clear, the threat of world-wide war (\textit{totus orbis}, 123) is at stake in his guardianship.\footnote{Hardie (1991) 50, n. 4.} In light of the cosmic implications of Peace and War in this passage, Hardie is right to suggest that they can be seen as a version of the Empedoclean cosmic principles of Neikos and Philia.\footnote{Ibid. 50.} Indeed, as we saw in chapter 2, Ennius seems to have connected the Janus Geminus temple to Empedoclean cosmology. There Discordia, a version of Empedoclean Neikos, had burst open the Gates of War, whereas Janus seems to be aligned with the opposing principle of Concordia, since he suggests that he keeps Bella inside the Gates. We will see in a moment that Ovid returns to the temple of Janus Geminus at the end of the Janus episode; this peculiarly Empedoclean monument therefore brackets the entire episode.

However, Janus and his temple are also connected to the \textit{pax Augusta} and the view of history reflected in Jupiter’s prophecy early in the \textit{Aeneid}, where he promises Venus that the Romans will have an eternal empire (\textit{his ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono; / imperium sine fine dedi}, 1.278-9) and that Augustus will inaugurate a new age, more civilized and free from war (\textit{aspera tum positis mitescent saecula bellis}, \textit{\ldots})
This “halt to the endless transformations of history” finds its symbol in the closing of the Gates of War of the Janus Geminus (1.293-6), in which *impius Furor*, which perhaps refers especially to civil war, will be kept fast. The significance of the temple is underscored by Augustus’ boast in the *Res Gestae* of having closed it and has a prominent place in Augustus’ list of his achievements. Therefore, while Janus does not seem to have been an especially important Augustan deity in other respects, his temple was an important part of the discourse surrounding the *pax Augusta* and the *urbs aeterna* or the immutability of Rome. This is certainly part of Janus and his temple’s associations in the *Fasti*. At the end of his episode Janus once again alludes to his temple and says that his Gates will be closed for a long time under the *numen* of Caesar (*Caesareoque diu numine clausus ero*, 282). The striking image of Janus looking upon a scene of universal peace and the poet’s prayer that this peace and its ministers, i.e. the imperial family, endure forever, brings the episode to a resounding close (283-8).

He spoke and lifting up his eyes that see in both directions he surveyed the entire world. Peace held and the Rhine had already handed over its waters as slaves to you Germanicus, the reason for your triumph. Janus, make it that this peace and its ministers be eternal, and ensure that the author may never abandon his work.

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547 Hardie (1992) 72.
548 For the argument that these lines allude to civil war, see recently DeBrohun (2007) 263-9.
551 Compare the sentiment expressed in this prayer to a similar one at *Fasti* 4.407-8: *et vos orate, coloni, / perpetuam pacem pacificumque ducem*. The poet’s description of Janus surveying the globe (1.283-4) assimilates him to Jupiter. Cf. *Fasti* 1.85-6: *Iuppiter arce suo totum cum spectat in orbem, / nil nisi Romanum, quod tueatur, habet.*
As we will see next, this association between Janus and the *pax Augusta* may be implicated in Golden Age rhetoric, as well. The Myth of the Ages will be a focal point in my analysis of the Agonalia in the next section, but it also makes a brief and important appearance at the end of the Janus episode.\(^{552}\)

Before asking Janus about the origin of his temple, the poet inquires as to the reason why a Roman coin, the *as*, has a ship stamped on one side and a two-headed figure on the other (1.229-30). We should note that the poet, before posing his question, says he has already learned many things from Janus (*multa quidem didici*, 1.229), suggesting once again, as Janus’ opening word (*disce*, 1.101) had, that Janus is a figure for the didactic poet and therefore one should not be surprised that earlier didactic poetry is an important frame of reference for the Janus episode.\(^{553}\) In response to the poet’s question, Janus explains that he is the two-headed figured on the *as* and that the image on the other side of the coin refers to the ship that bore Saturn to Latium after he had been expelled from Olympus by Jupiter (231-240). In this sense, Janus and Saturn are two sides of the same coin! In fact, Janus goes on to claim that he himself ruled Latium during a time when gods still mixed with men and human crime had not yet put the goddess Iustitia to flight (1.247-54).\(^{554}\) This makes it clear that Janus’ reign represents a kind of Golden Age (sometimes called the *Saturnian* Age), since the departure of Iustitia (or Dike) from the earth is one of the markers of the decline from the Golden Age in

\(^{552}\) My analysis here builds upon Garani (2011a) and (2011b).


\(^{554}\) As Green (2004) *ad Fasti* 1.233-40 notes, Vergil in book 8 of the *Aeneid* (8.314ff.) first tells of Saturn’s coming to Italy. In Vergil’s version Saturn and Janus are co-regents (8.357-8), but in the *Fasti* Janus (perhaps unsurprisingly!) refers only to himself as ruler (*tunc ego regnabam, Fasti* 1.247).
other authors and elsewhere in Ovid. While Empedocles may not immediately come to mind in relation to the Golden Age topos he in fact gave an influential and idiosyncratic account of the myth in which Aphrodite rather than Cronus/Saturn ruled during the Golden Age (fr. 122/128). As we will see in the next section, Empedoclean themes feature prominently in Ovid’s treatment of the Golden Age during the Agonalia.

Here too, however, the influence of Empedocles can be seen. As we saw in chapter 3, the clustering of compound adjectives is often a strong indicator of an Empedoclean context in Ovid, since such adjectives are a notable feature of Empedocles’ own style and they had similarly been used by Lucretius as a marker of Empedoclean imitation. Therefore, note that three such adjectives appear in the lines leading up to Janus’ mention of his own reign during a “Golden Age” in Latium (clavigerum, 1.228; biceps, 1.230; falcifer, 1.234). As Myrto Garani has suggested, Ovid may be substituting Janus for the ruler of Empedocles’ Golden Age, Aphrodite. Note, for example, that Janus emphasizes his antipathy to war (nil mihi cum bello, 1.253); he instead safeguards peace (pacem...tuebar, 253). Such characteristics implicitly align him with Aphrodite/Venus. However, the notion that Janus is a surrogate for the Empedoclean Aphrodite is more or less confirmed in the aetion that immediately succeeds Janus’ mention of his rulership during a kind of Golden Age in Latium. Janus tells the story of his repulsion of Titus Tatius from the gates of Rome; he creates a torrent of boiling water that keeps Tatius and his army from entering the city (Fasti 1.259-74). This story of

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555 Aratus, Phaenomena 113; Virgil Georgics 2.474; Ovid, Met. 1.149-50.
556 Garani (forthcoming a) first noticed Ovid’s use in the Fasti of the Empedoclean “fingerprint” of compound adjectives in Ovid’s account of Aristaeus and the bugonia in book 1.
557 Garani (2011b).
Tatius’ attack on the city is also told in the *Metamorphoses* (*Met.* 14.772-804), but there it is *Venus* rather than Janus blocking Tatius’ path and rescuing the city. The Venusian associations of Janus are further reinforced by his mixture of fire (via sulphur) and water to create the boiling stream that stops Tatius and his army; this mixture of fire and water elsewhere in Ovid symbolizes the Empedoclean principle of Philia/Aphrodite or *Venus*.\(^558\)

The story of Janus’ repulsion of Tatius is in fact the *aetion* for the Janus Geminus temple, that quintessentially Empedoclean monument. In chapter 2 we saw its strong Empedoclean associations in both Ennius and Vergil. In the *Fasti* Janus tells the poet that Juno had opened the gates of the city to Tatius and his army (265-6); this constitutes a double allusion to both the bursting open of the Gates of War by Empedoclean Discordia in the *Annales* and by Juno herself in *Aeneid* 7.\(^559\) Whereas Juno is a surrogate for Empedoclean Discordia, Janus, as we know, seems to represent Empedoclean Philia or in Latin terms, Concordia. Indeed, with reference to the Ennian source for this scene in the *Fasti*, Barchiesi has brilliantly suggested that Janus’ use of a sulphurous spring to block Tatius’s path (*ante tamen madidis subieci sulpura venis*, *Fasti* 1.271) “may well represent a propitious and pacific adaptation of the sinister sulphurous waters in which Ennius’ infernal Discordia dwelt — cf. fr. 222 Sk. *sulpureas...Naris ad undas*: Discordia

\(^{558}\) Garani (2011a).
and Janus are without any doubt poles apart in the divine order." Janus therefore appears as the antitype of Discordia from the *Annales*.

As we saw earlier, Janus connects the closure of the temple to contemporary politics, saying that it will be closed for a long time under Caesar (1.281-2), to which the poet adds a prayer that the peace and its ministers, i.e. the imperial family, be everlasting (1.287). This implicitly connects Augustus and his line of Caesars (cf. *Germanice*, 1.285) to the Empedoclean principle of Philia/Concordia and, indeed, perhaps to the return of the peaceful Golden Age described by Janus as existing in Latium during his rule. As we will see, however, this view is complicated later in book 1 by the story of Aristaeus, whose bugonia has often been taken as an allegory for the rebirth of Rome after the civil wars under Augustus. This, rather than being connected to the period of increasing Philia in Empedocles, is instead compared to the beginning of strife’s reign in the cosmic cycle. Here too at the end of the Janus episode, however, the notion of an eternal *pax* articulated in the poet’s prayer is complicated by the Empedoclean subtext of the passage, since Empedocles’ cosmology emphasized change and the ceaseless cycle of creation and destruction. Indeed, Hardie has pointed out the irony of the poet’s prayer, namely that its “fulfilment would, in fact, negate the essential duality of the god [Janus].” Along these same lines, Janus’ insistence on his exclusively peaceful associations (*nil mihi cum bello:*

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560 Barchiesi (1991) 16, cited by Garani (2011a) 16. We might also add that one of the possible interpretations of Ennius’ description of the *paluda virago* (fr. 220-21 Sk.) or Discordia is that she is comprised of the four elements. If ancient readers interpreted Ennius’ line in this way, this could be another point of contact between Discordia and Janus, since it is implied in the cosmogony in *Fasti* 1 that Janus, as an embodiment of the cosmos, has the four elements as his *membra*.

*pacem postesque tuebar*, 1.253) may be a disingenuous statement coming from the keeper of the Gates of War.\(^{562}\)

If we circle back — in Empedoclean fashion — to the cosmogony, tension between the nature of Janus and what might be called the Augustan view of history is present there, as well. At least one commentator has suggested that the cosmogony admits of a political reading, seeing in the conflict or *lis* between the elements that orders the world a reflection of the “particular ideology of the late-Augustan period which emphasized stability and concord, but was underlain with tensions both civil and familial.”\(^{563}\) The late Augustan period was also a time of transition, in which anxiety surrounded Augustus’ succession, making the question of continuity and stability especially acute. Therefore, it is worth asking whether or not the cosmogony represents a process in which the universe has emerged out of chaos into a lasting *concordia* of the elements.\(^{564}\)

We saw that the cosmogony is rife with Lucretian and Empedoclean elements, both of whose cosmology emphasized process and change rather than cosmic stability. We can perhaps especially see a cyclic, rather than end-stopped version, of time in Janus’ statement that he had been a sphere and a mass *sine imagine* but has “reverted” to the appearance and limbs worthy of a god (111-2): *tunc ego, qui fueram globus et sine imagine moles, in faciem redii dignaque membra deo*. Green *ad loc.* says that *redii* is “a curious choice of verb, given that Janus appears not to be *reverting* to a (former) shape, ...

\(^{562}\) Cf. Green (2004) *ad Fasti* 1.253-54. He rightly suggests that “this difficulty in banishing arms completely is also apparent in the poem itself.” See also DeBrohun (2007) 274.

\(^{563}\) Pasco-Pranger (2006) 22.

\(^{564}\) Cf. O’Hara (2007) on the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*: “...what are the political implications in the Augustan context of a discussion of order and disorder.”
but taking on a new shape.” He goes on to note that scholars usually translate the word as if the prefix was redundant, but that this contradicts the way in which Ovid normally uses the verb in this context.\textsuperscript{565} Green offers a strained solution, but it seems much simpler to see this cosmogony as part of a series or perhaps a cycle rather than the first and only cosmogony.\textsuperscript{566} Indeed, just before this Janus had characterized his pre-cosmic state as a sphere like the Empedoclean sphere before strife’s cosmogony. Just as the Empedoclean cycle calls for an apparently endless pattern of creation and destruction, Janus, an embodiment of the universe, should be taken as referring to his return to a state he had occupied earlier, in the previous cycle, part of the longi temporis acta (1.104) he is relating. The fact that Janus presides over the beginning of the new year on a cyclical basis may be telling, as well.\textsuperscript{567} This must remain in the realm of speculation, but it seems highly plausible in light of the numerous Empedoclean features of the passage.

This brief discussion of the Janus episode has demonstrated that its use of natural philosophy informs important aspects of the Fasti such as its view of time and history. The episode itself is structurally framed by the Janus Geminus temple, a monument that has strong cosmological associations, while in respect to the larger structure of the poem, the Janus episode is the first piece in the natural philosophical “architecture” of the Fasti. At the same time, the Janus Geminus — a strongly Empedoclean monument — is appropriated as a symbol of the Pax Augusta and its view of history. However, the dual nature of the temple — and its god — militates against the idea of an everlasting pax. The

\textsuperscript{565} See Green (2004) \textit{ad} 1.112 for parallels.  
\textsuperscript{566} Green (2004) \textit{ad} Fasti 1.112: “Does he mean that he was first a solid (albeit faceless) mass, then in a state of flux while the elements were separating and resettling, and now \textit{reverting} to a solid shape again, albeit different.”  
\textsuperscript{567} I owe this point to Joseph Farrell.
cosmology too of the Janus episode, indebted in large part to Empedocles, seems to posit a cyclical rather than teleological view of time, in which Janus, an embodiment of the universe, is involved in a cycle of transformations (creation and destruction) that may be repeated endlessly. Rather than choosing one or the other of these worldviews, the opening of the *Fasti*, in this respect much like the opening of the *Metamorphoses*, presents both as the beginning of a dialogue that extends over the course of the entire poem.  

4.2 Felices Animae and the Didactic Tradition

The Janus episode is succeeded by a short passage where the poet self-consciously addresses the inclusion of astronomical material in the poem and praises an anonymous group of *felices animae*, whose high-minded contemplation of the heavens serves as an example for the poet’s own project (1.295-310):

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quid vetat et stellas, ut quaeque oriturque caditque,
dicere? promissi pars sit et ista mei.
felices animae, quibus haec cognoscere primis
inque domus superas scandere cura fuit!
credibile est illos pariter vitiiisque locisque
altius humanis exseruisse caput.
non Venus et vinum sublimia pectora fregit
officiumque fori militiaeve labor;
nec levis ambitio perfusaque gloria fuco
magnarumque fames sollicitavit opum.
admovere oculis distantia sidera mentis
aetheraque ingenio subposuere suo.
sic petitur caelum, non ut ferat Ossan Olympus
summaque Peliacus sidera tangat apex.
nos quoque sub ducibus caelum metabimur illis,
ponemusque suos ad vaga signa dies.
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568 On the *Metamorphoses*, see Wheeler (1995b). See also O’Hara (2007) on Ovid’s “philosophy” and ambiguity or indeterminacy.
What stops me from also telling of the stars, how each rises and falls? Let that also be part of my promise. Happy souls, who first took care to understand such matters and to ascend into the heavenly abodes! It is plausible that they raised their heads high above both human failings and regions. Neither Venus nor wine disturbed their lofty hearts, nor the obligation of the forum or the toil of war; nor did trifling ambition, fame steeped in purple and the hunger of great wealth seduce them. With their mind’s eye they brought the distant stars near and subjected the sky to their intellect. Thus heaven is sought, not so that Olympus may feel the weight of Ossa and the summit of Pelion touch the highest stars. I too under such leaders will measure the sky and affix their own days to the wandering signs.

As Green rightly notes of oriturque caditque in line 295 “the sentiment picks up the second line of the poem...and recalls the original pledge.”569 The “pledge” to which Green refers is the poet’s promise to sing of the rising and setting of the celestial signa (1.2): lapsaque sub terras ortaque signa canam (“I will sing of the signs setting beneath the earth and their rising”). In a sense, then, this section on the felices animae is an elaboration of the announcement made in that second line of the poem. The opening line(s) of ancient poems often include considerable information about the author’s literary program.570 In terms of the opening couplet of the Fasti, the third word of the first line has garnered most of the attention: tempora cum causis Latium digesta per annum (“[I will sing of] the times distributed throughout the Latin year and their causes”) It is a critical commonplace to see this as a gloss on the title of Callimachus’ Aetia or “Causes.”571 This interpretation fits neatly into the prevailing picture of the Fasti as a supremely Callimachean poem and arguably the closest Latin equivalent to Callimachus’ Aetia. There is a great deal of truth to this. Miller and others have extensively

570 The most famous example of this is perhaps the first line of the Aeneid, which is taken as an announcement of the poet’s intention to emulate both Homer’s Iliad (arma) and the Odyssey (virum). Cf. Barchiesi (1997a) 51 on the first few lines of the Fasti: “The initial proem of the Fasti defines the work’s literary affiliations with an almost meticulous precision that has few parallels in the proemial tradition.”
documented Ovid’s debt to Callimachus in the *Fasti*.\(^{572}\) Less attention, however, has been paid to an important Latin literary predecessor, to whom Ovid also seems to allude in the opening couplet of the poem. Compare *Fasti* 1.2 and the opening lines of Lucretius’ *DRN*, in particular 1.2 (cf. *DRN* 1.2, *subter labentia signa* and *Fasti* 1.2, *lapsaque sub terras ortaque signa canam*).\(^{573}\) This allusion should be taken, like that to Callimachus in the opening line, as another indication of the literary affiliation of the *Fasti*. But it is less immediately clear how the *Fasti* is related to Lucretius’ *DRN*. For example, the allusion to the second line of Lucretius’ poem comes as part of the poet’s announcement that he is going to sing of astronomical material in his poem. While Lucretius does not entirely ignore such material, the *DRN* is in no real sense an “astronomical” poem. Ovid’s point in the second line therefore seems to concern more than simply astronomical material. Instead, in respect to Lucretius, the “rising and setting of the stars” represents the natural-philosophical material more generally that is the subject of the *DRN*.\(^{574}\) Therefore, Ovid’s allusion to Lucretius in the second line hints at the position of the *Fasti* as a successor in some sense to Lucretius and didactic poetry on natural philosophy.\(^{575}\) At the same time, the allusion to the opening lines of the *DRN* perhaps also points to the absence of Venus from the corresponding place in the *Fasti*, whereas she has initial position in the first two lines of Lucretius’ poem (*Aeneadum generetrix*, 1.1; *alma Venus*, 1.2). As Matthew Robinson has recently put it, “On one

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\(^{573}\) As far as I am aware, the only commentator to note this parallel is Robinson (2011) 4 in the introduction to his recent commentary on book 2 of the *Fasti*.

\(^{574}\) Cf. Tibullus 2.4.17-8, in which the movements of the heavenly bodies represent the genre of natural philosophical didactic.

\(^{575}\) As Robinson (2011) 4 suggests, the placement of the allusion to Lucretius in the pentameter rather than hexameter could be significant: Ovid is putting Lucretian didactic natural philosophy into the pentameter, i.e., into elegy.
reading, this illustrates how in incorporating didactic epic into elegiac couplets, Ovid has had to turn his back on his patron goddess (and on love elegy as a whole); on another, it reminds us of her continued presence, albeit under erasure.”

As we will see in just a moment, the *felices animae* passage constructs a similarly ambivalent relationship to Venus.

It may seem a little strange that Ovid’s announcement in the second line of the poem that he is going to sing of stellar material alludes to Lucretius instead of Vergil, who was a more recent predecessor in Latin didactic poetry, and whose *Georgics* is better suited to be considered a predecessor in astronomical poetry. It turns out, however, that an announcement of literary affiliation with the *Georgics* is simply deferred. After Ovid’s glance back to the second line of the poem in *oriturque caditque* he offers a *makarismos* of his predecessors in astronomical poetry (1.297-8): *felices animae, quibus haec cognoscere primis / inque domos superas scandere cura fuit!* (“Happy souls, who first took care to understand such matters and to ascend into the heavenly abodes!”). As commentators recognize, the opening line of this couplet is modeled on Vergil’s *makarismos* at *G. 2.490-2*:

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felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas
atque metus omnis et inexorabile fatum
subiecit pedibus strepitumque Acherontis avari:
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Happy is he who understood the causes of nature and, moreover, subjected all fear, inexorable death and the din of bitter Acheron underneath his feet.

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577 Other examples of this trope in Ovid’s works: *Am.* 2.5.9, 2.10.29, 2.11.30; *Ars* 2.447-8.
Causas rerum refers, at least ostensibly, to the “workings of the universe” and, in literary terms, poetry on natural philosophy: Vergil had just finished listing a series of subjects from natural philosophy in lines 477-82. The formula felix qui is taken from mystery religion, but eventually came to be used to praise philosophers and scientists. In light of the fact that just before alluding to G. 2.490 Ovid also looks back to the beginning of his own poem, where he had announced causae as his subject, the Vergilian causae adds another layer to the programmatic significance of that term in the opening line of the Fasti: that is, it alludes to not only Callimachean aetiological elegy, but also to the “causes” or workings of the universe. Indeed, as we saw, the first major episode of the poem includes an account of the origin of the cosmos (1.101-10).

Some, however, see Vergil’s makarismos as not simply a praise of philosophy and philosophical poetry in general, but a more specific allusion to Lucretius. Whether the qui of line 490 should be identified specifically with Lucretius is arguable, but scholars generally agree that the DRN is an important intertext for this passage. The primary models are the criticism of the fear of death in the DRN 3 proem and Lucretius’ initial praise of Epicurus at 1.62-79. As is often the case, Ovid alludes to not only the Vergilian passage, but also one of its Lucretian models. The praise of the felices animae

579 Thomas (1988) ad loc.
581 Although it is important to note that “Callimachean” and natural philosophical poetry are not mutually exclusive categories. We know, for example, that in the Aetia Callimachus mentions the genesis of the universe out of Chaos (fr. 4 Pf.).
583 For example, Thomas (1988) ad loc. rejects the idea that the qui refers specifically to Lucretius, although he does still acknowledge that the lines contain several allusions to the DRN.
584 See Hardie (1986) 40: “lines 490-2 are a tissue of Lucretian reminiscences.”
585 Hardie (1986) 40. H. notes in particular the parallel between G. 2.492, subiecit pedibus and DRN 1.78, religio pedibus subiecta.
in the *Fasti* includes several of the themes from Lucretius’ praise of Epicurus.\(^{586}\)

Therefore, Ovid alludes in this section to both Vergil and Lucretius and thereby positions the *Fasti* as a successor to the *De Rerum Natura* and *Georgics* in the tradition of didactic poetry.\(^{587}\) The fact that these allusions come in Ovid’s preface to his astronomical material also suggests that the *Fasti* is specifically an inheritor of the natural philosophical component of both earlier poems. Indeed the context of the Vergilian *makarismos* ought to suggest, once again, that this section in the *Fasti* (295-310) refers to more than the poem’s astronomical notices and star myths, since the Vergilian passage concerns natural philosophical poetry in general rather than simply astronomy.

One other notable feature of the *makarismos* in the *Fasti* is the rejection of Venus by the *felices animae*, in addition to their rejection of political and military careers (1.301-2): *non Venus et vinum sublimia pectora fregit / officiumque fori militiaeve labor* ("Neither Venus nor wine disturbed their lofty hearts, nor the obligation of the forum or the toil of war; nor did trifling ambition, fame steeped in purple and the hunger of great wealth seduce them"). As often, Venus here stands in for sexual passion and is paired with *vinum*, which was thought to encourage such passion.\(^{588}\) *Venus et vinum* probably has a metapoetic significance: it can stand in for love poetry, creating the unusual situation — at least from the perspective of an erotic elegist — that erotic poetry and its conventional opposites, political and military life, are both rejected in favor of a third

\(^{586}\) Compare the “flight of the mind” at *DRN* 1.72-4 to *Fasti* 1.298-300, on which see Green (2004) *ad loc*. Bömer (1957-8) *ad loc.* compares *Fasti* 1.305-6 to *DRN* 1.66. *Fasti* 1.305 (*aetheraque...subposuere*) assimilates the activity of philosophers and scientists to gigantomachy, with which compare *DRN* 1.69-70, 78-9. Bömer (1957-8) *ad loc.* sees 305 as a reworking of *G.* 2.492 (*subiecit pedibus*), itself an allusion to Lucretius. Each of the three texts therefore share the motif of “vertical dominance,” on which see Hardie (1986) 40.


way of life. This third way is the intellectual pursuit of astronomy. In this context, *sublimis* (*sublimia pectora*, 1.302) likely has a literary-critical significance, as well.\(^{589}\)

Therefore, the statement that *non Venus et vinum sublimia pectora fregit* can also mean that the *felices animae* have chosen the elevated poetry of natural philosophy over love poetry.\(^{590}\)

This rejection of Venus is part of the Vergilian and Lucretian fabric of the passage, since both the *DRN* and the *Georgics* contain famous diatribes against Venus and sexual passion;\(^{591}\) for Lucretius, both sex and wine are opposed to philosophical activity.\(^{592}\) Yet, this rejection of Venus is not as straightforward as it seems, since Venus and *amor* had a more positive role in the poetry of Lucretius and Vergil, as well, most notably in Lucretius’ hymn to Venus in the proem of the *DRN*. It is also the case that Vergil’s meditation on philosophical poetry, which is the primary source for Ovid’s praise of the *felices animae*, is prefaced by the poet’s claim that he is “struck by a great passion” (*ingenti percussus amore* *G*. 2.476). We can compare the metaphor of *percutio* to that of *frango* in the *Fasti* passage. This too has a Lucretian model, the end of book 1, where the poet says that sweet love of the Muses is struck into his chest (924-5).\(^{593}\)

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\(^{589}\) The adjective has this sense in at least two places in Ovid. Elegy uses it to refer to tragic poetry at *Am*. 3.1.39: *non ego contulerim sublimia carmina nostris*. More germane to our passage in *Fasti* 1 is *Am*. 1.15.23-4, in which Ovid refers to the poetry of the “sublime Lucretius” and therefore identifies natural philosophical poetry as *sublimis*: *carmina sublimis tunc sunt peritura Lucreti, /exitio terras cum dabit una dies*.

\(^{590}\) Ovid elsewhere uses the *makarismos* to praise the lover ruined by Venus (*Am*. 2.10.29). Cf. the similar sentiment at *Ars* 2.447-8. Also see Newlands (1995) 38-9; Green (2004) *ad Fasti* 1.301.

\(^{591}\) *DRN* 4.1058-1287; *G*. 3.209-94.


\(^{593}\) In the larger context, Lucretius says that a “great hope has smote my heart with the sharp goad of fame” (*sed acer / percussit thyrsō laudis spes magna meum cor, 922-23*) at the same time as it has struck a love of the Muses into his chest (924-5). Interestingly, the Dionysiac imagery of the thyrsus and the erotic metaphor applied to the relationship to the Muses corresponds to the *Venus et vinum of Fasti* 1.301, even though the latter are said not to influence the philosopher/scientist in the *Fasti*. 
The poet’s amor in the *Georgics* and *DRN* does not seem to be of the same type represented by Venus in the *Fasti* passage, but the important role played by amor in the poet’s hope for access to the “mysteries” of nature suggests that there is a place for amor even in the *sublimia carmina* of Vergil and Lucretius. The exclusion of Venus from the *sublimia pectora* of the *felices animae* is further complicated by the presence of Empedocles as an important figure in the tradition of natural philosophical didactic to which Ovid is alluding in this passage. As we will see, Ovid restores Venus to prominence, even in the more elevated elegy of the *Fasti*, in the proem to book 4, for which he draws upon the Empedoclean Aphrodite and the Lucretian Venus.

It has become increasingly clear that Empedocles lies behind both the Vergilian makarismoi and Lucretius’ praise of Epicurus. We have already encountered the idea that the proem of the *DRN* contains extensive imitation of Empedocles, perhaps even of the corresponding proem of Empedocles’ *Peri Phuseos*.\(^594\) Scholars see Lucretius’ praise of Epicurus as part of this, arguing that it is modeled on Empedocles’ own praise of a figure usually taken to be Pythagoras.\(^595\) Like Lucretius, Empedocles focuses on the accomplishments of one particular unnamed man and describes his “flight of the mind” (fr. 6/129):

\[\text{ἦν δὲ τὶς ἐν κείνοισιν ἀνὴρ περιώσια εἰδώς,}\\ \text{ὁς δὴ μήκιστον πραπίδων ἐκτήσατο πλούτον,}\\ \text{ἄνθρωπον τε μάλιστα σοφὸν ἐπιήρανος ἔργων·}\\ \text{ὁπότε γὰρ πάσησιν ὅρέξατο πραπίδεσσιν,}\\ \text{ῥεῖ ὦ γε τῶν ὄντων πάντων λεύσσεσκεν ἐκαστὸν,}\\ \text{καὶ τε δὲκ’ ἀνθρώποιν καὶ τ’ εἰκοσιν αἰώνεσσιν.}\]

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\(^{594}\) Furley (1970), repr. in Furley (1989), is the seminal article. See also Sedley (1998).

There was among them a man of rare knowledge, who indeed acquired the greatest wealth of understanding. He was a lord of all kinds of particularly wise works; for whenever he reached out with his entire mind, he easily saw each of all the things in existence in ten or twenty lifetimes of men.

This fragment is probably closely related to 4/132, which is reflected in most editors’ ordering of the fragments.\textsuperscript{596} ὁ δὲ πλοῦτος τῶν θείων πραπίδων ἐκτήσατο πλοῦτον, / δειλὸς δ᾽ ὁ σκοτώσας θεῶν πέρι δόξα μέμηλεν (“Fortunate is he who has acquired a wealth of divine understanding, and miserable is he to whom there is a dark opinion about the gods”). Moreover, it has been suggested that these fragments of Empedocles are one of the models for Vergil’s double *makarismos* at the end of book 2 of the *Georgics*.\textsuperscript{597} This is plausible, especially given the more secure allusion to Empedocles just a few lines earlier in the passage, where Vergil describes the ability to understand natural philosophy in terms of the Empedoclean theory that intellect is blood around the heart.\textsuperscript{598} Nelis, building upon the suggestions of earlier scholars, has argued persuasively that “Empedocles in an important model for the whole closing section of *Georgics* 2.”\textsuperscript{599}

I will consider Nelis’ argument in some detail in the next section, but here it is sufficient to say that Vergil’s double *makarismos*, in which he praises his predecessor(s), is a double allusion to passages where both Lucretius and Empedocles had praised their own predecessors, Epicurus and Pythagoras respectively.\textsuperscript{600} Vergil, then, not only praises

\textsuperscript{596} In Diels-Kranz, the fragments are 129B and 132B, respectively; in Wright, 99 and 95; in Inwood, 6 and 4.
\textsuperscript{598} G. 2.484 ~ fr. 96/105. See Nelis (2004) 6 with bibliography.
\textsuperscript{599} Nelis (2004). Quote is from p. 2.
\textsuperscript{600} Nelis (2004) 4. This does not exclude other models for the *makarismos*, such as Hesiod *Works and Days* 826–7, as Nelis acknowledges. Thomas (1988) ad G. 2.490 has objected to the notion that the *qui* of line 490 refers specifically to Lucretius; Lucretius is an example of the kind of man Vergil thinks is blessed, but T. thinks that the praise is truly general, that is, of any man understanding nature. As Nelis suggests, his argument that both Lucretius and Empedocles are important models for the passage (in addition to Hesiod),
his predecessors in the makarismos but basically acknowledges that the act of doing so is part of the tradition in which he is writing, namely didactic poetry on natural philosophy.\textsuperscript{601} Therefore, Ovid’s praise of the felices animae is not simply a preface to the first astronomical notice in the poem; instead, it positions the Fasti in a line of didactic poems that treat subjects, like astronomy, from natural philosophy, going back to Empedocles’ Peri Phuseos and his anonymous praise of Pythagoras.

Indeed, one of the interesting features of Ovid’s passage in comparison to the others under discussion is that it praises felices animae plural, whereas Empedocles (ὀλβιος ὃς, 4/132.1; ἦν δέ τις ἐν κείνοισιν ἄνηρ, 6/129.1), Lucretius (Graius homo, 1.66) and Vergil (felix qui, 2.490; fortunatus et ille, 2.493) all either refer or can be taken to be referring to a single unnamed individual. As we will see in a moment, Ovid’s plural felices animae quotes another Vergilian passage, this time from Aeneid 6, but Ovid’s use of the plural can also be taken here as a comment on just how many predecessors there are at this point in the tradition; in light of the debate over whether Vergil’s felix qui has a single or multiple referents, Ovid can be seen as offering his own interpretation of the Vergilian makarismos, favoring an inclusive, rather than exclusive, view of the literary tradition.

While Nelis and others rely primarily on a functional equivalence between the Vergilian makarismos and its Empedoclean source passage rather than on specific verbal

\textsuperscript{601} One author not yet mentioned, but whom I will discuss in the next section, is Aratus.
parallels, Nelis does suggest that Vergil’s *fortunatus et ille deos qui novit agrestis* (G. 2.493) is an “inversion” of Empedocles fr. 4/132.2: δειλός δ’ ὃ σκοτόεσσα θεόν πέρι δόξα μέμηλεν.⁶⁰² Although it is possible that there is a verbal parallel between this fragment and *Fasti* 1.297-8, even in the absence of any specific textual markers, the main point still stands:⁶⁰³ Ovid’s *makařísmos* is in a long line of such passages in didactic poetry, including the Empedoclean *makařísmos* at 4/132 and the accompanying praise of Pythagoras.

Naturally, then, one further passage that needs to be taken into account in this discussion is the praise of Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses* 15. This functions as a preface to Pythagoras’ lengthy speech on his doctrines of vegetarianism and universal change (1.60-72). I can treat this passage summarily because Hardie has already discussed it as part of his larger argument that the speech should be considered “Empedoclean *epos*,” but his observation about the literary genealogy of the praise demonstrates that it is a good *comparandum* for the way that Ovid’s praise of the *felices animae* in the *Fasti* is operating: “Ovid frequently imitates Lucretius in the *Metamorphoses* and Lucretian influence is overwhelming at a number of points in the Speech of Pythagoras...the result is a good example of ‘double’ allusion’, as Ovid simultaneously imitates both Empedocles and his imitator Lucretius. This double allusion is signalled right at the beginning of the episode, in the description of Pythagoras at 15.60-72, where the

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⁶⁰³ Compare *Fasti* 1.297-8, *felices animae, quibus haec cognoscere primis / inque domos superas scandere cura fuit*, to fr. 4/132 of Empedocles, ὀλίβως ὃς θείων πραπίδων ἐκτήσατο πλοῦτον, / δειλός δ’ ὃ σκοτόεσσα θεόν πέρι δόξα μέμηλεν. If line 298 does allude to fr. 4/132, it is, like Vergil’s line 2.493, an inversion of Empedocles’ statement, since it is part of the beatitude introduced by *felices animae* in the previous line. The line ending *cura fuit*, however, could be a rather precise rendering of μέμηλεν at the line ending of 4/132.2.
language echoes the praise of Epicurus at Lucretius 1.62-79, but the object of praise, Pythagoras, is the same as that in Lucretius’ own model in Empedocles (B 129). As we will see in the next section, the praise of the felices animae in the Fasti functions in a similar manner as a preface to Ovid’s ensuing treatment of the Agonalia. That is to say, the multiple tiers of allusion in the praise of the felices animae — to Vergil, Lucretius, Empedocles and others — anticipate the extensive intertextual dialogue with these authors in the Agonalia episode. Indeed, the structure of this section of the Fasti is based closely on the end of Georgics 2, where the double makarismoś leads into a celebration of the Golden Age (532-40). In the Fasti the poet’s praise of the felices animae similarly leads into the commemoration of the Agonalia, a feature of which is the topos of the Golden Age.

Both Hardie and Nelis have demonstrated that the closing section of the Georgics, including the double makarismoś, is interested in the relationship between harmony or concordia and knowledge (notably of natural philosophy), as well as in the threats to this intellectual concordia by forms of strife or discordia. Ovid’s praise of the felices animae participates in this by self-consciously distancing the intellectual pursuits of scientists or philosophers from Gigantomachy, a paradigmatic example of strife or discordia. This is a specific instance of a fundamental contrast in the Fasti between intellectual and martial pursuits, emblematized, as Hinds has demonstrated, in the opposition between Numa — according to tradition, a Pythagorean — and the martial

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605 Hardie (2002); Nelis (2004).
The praise of the *felices animae* and its Vergilian context signals that this interest in *concordia* and *discordia* is connected to philosophy and more specifically Empedoclean Neikos and Philia.

It should be clear by now just how densely allusive is the poet’s praise of the *felices animae* at *Fasti* 1.295-310. Nevertheless, there is still one further intertext to consider that puts a finer point on the prefatory or scene-setting nature of the *Fasti* passage in relation to the succeeding material in the Agonalia. While commentators, as we saw, realize that *Fasti* 1.297, *felices animae, quibus haec cognoscere primis*, alludes to the *makarismos* at *G*. 2.490, it has seemed to escape their notice that the collocation *felices animae* (1.297) also occurs in book 6 of the *Aeneid*. It occurs, in fact, in the scene immediately before Aeneas’ climactic meeting with his father, Anchises, during which Anchises remarkably expounds on philosophical and eschatological themes before proceeding to the famous catalogue of future Roman heroes. First, however, Aeneas, guided by the Sybil, comes to Elysium and encounters its denizens; among these are the poets Orpheus (*Threicius...sacerdos*, 6.645) and Musaeus (*Musaeum*, 6.667). The Sybil asks these *felices animae* and specifically Musaeus for the location of Anchises (6.669-70): *'dicite, felices animae tuque optime vates [Musaeus], / quae regio Anchisen, quis*

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606 Hinds (1992a) and (1992b).

607 Neither Bömer (1957-8) nor Green (2004) mention it. In fact, I myself missed it! I am grateful to James Ker for alerting me to the parallel. He also informed me that Seneca (through the mouth of Cremutius Cordus) uses the same expression in the *Consolatio ad Marciam* (6.26.7.2), at the end of an extended cosmological and eschatological discourse. As Dunn (1989) suggests, Seneca is alluding here to *Aen*. 6.669, although Dunn does not note the parallel in the *Fasti*. The same *iunctura* also appears at *ad Marciam* 6.25.1, noted by Austin (1977) *ad Aen*. 6.669. *Aeneid* 6 is clearly in Seneca’s mind in this section of the *Consolatio*, although he may be thinking of the passage in the *Fasti*, as well. As Dunn ibid. 490 points out, the same line from the *ad Marciam* that alludes to *Aen*. 6.669 also alludes to the speech of Pythagoras in *Met.* 15 (456-8) concerning the doctrine of metempsychosis, also a subject of Anchises’ speech in the *Aeneid*. This Senecan reading may help confirm Philip Hardie’s (1995) argument that the speech of Pythagoras is inserting itself into the same poetic tradition as the speech of Anchises in *Aen*. 6.
"habet locus?" ("Tell me, happy souls and you best of poets, which region, which place, holds Anchises?"). As scholars recognize, the legendary poets Orpheus and Musaeus have a certain prominence in Vergil’s depiction of Elysium. \(^\text{608}\) It is no coincidence that these two figures appear in proximity here since they are frequently associated in ancient poetry. \(^\text{609}\) As often in Vergil’s references to early poet-figures like Orpheus and Musaeus, he can be taken as implicitly inserting himself into a poetic tradition that goes back to such legendary poets. \(^\text{610}\) Therefore, the Sybil’s use of *felices animae* comes in the context of an exploration of poetic tradition, much like Ovid’s imitation of the expression in *Fasti* 1.

Importantly, scholars have also recognized that the presence of Orpheus and Musaeus looks ahead to the opening subjects of Anchises’ speech, natural philosophy and eschatology, \(^\text{611}\) since these figures — especially Orpheus — came to be seen as early philosophical and religious innovators. \(^\text{612}\) Therefore the Sybil’s address to the *felices animae* functions as a scene-setting or prelude to Anchises’ speech combining natural-philosophical/eschatological doctrine (6.724-51) and Roman history (6.756-853). Several of the theories expounded by Anchises are of interest to us in light of our earlier discussion of Ovid’s praise of the *felices animae* and its relation to Empedocles’ own praise of Pythagoras. Anchises teaches Aeneas the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, as well as the theory that after death the soul, polluted from its time on earth, has to undergo an elemental purgation either by air, water or fire (6.739-51). This latter doctrine

\(^{608}\) Hardie (1986) 60.  
\(^{609}\) Austin (1977) *ad* 6.667.  
\(^{610}\) Hardie (1986) 17.  
\(^{611}\) Austin (1977) *ad* 6.637-78.  
made Norden think of of Empedocles’ description of the elemental wandering undergone by the daimon after a crime involving the spilling of blood (fr. 11/115). Indeed, both the speech of Anchises and its Ennian model (the dream of Homer) feature prominently in Hardie’s argument that the speech of Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses* 15 recasts the Latin epic tradition as “Empedoclean *epos*.”

However, Ovid’s allusion in his praise of the *felices animae* at *Fasti* 1.297-8 to both *Georgics* 2 and *Aeneid* 6 and the accompanying poetic traditions outlined in those passages suggests that the elegiac *Fasti*, as much as the epic *Metamorphoses*, inserts itself into this complex Orphic-Pythagorean-Empedoclean tradition of poetry on natural philosophy and eschatology. Indeed, much like the Sybil’s address to the *felices animae* (specifically the poets Orpheus and Musaeus) prefaces Anchises’ speech in *Aeneid* 6 incorporating Pythagorean/Empedoclean elements and Roman historical themes, so Ovid’s praise of the *felices animae* in *Fasti* 1 functions as a programmatic statement of the natural philosophical, eschatological and historical elements in the succeeding Agonalia. Indeed, the *Aeneid* 6 intertext encourages us to see Roman history as implicated in Ovid’s ensuing discussion of the Agonalia, even though it does not specifically treat such topics. As we will see, however, it does include a myth, the story of Aristaeus and the bugonia, that has often been taken (on the basis of its Vergilian version in *Georgics* 4) to be an allegory of the rebirth of Rome after the civil wars under the leadership of Augustus. Strikingly, Ovid relates the Aristaeus story to the Myth of the Ages and specifically the decline from the Golden Age. Ovid’s treatment of the Myth of

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the Ages during the Agonalia can therefore be seen as a response to not only Vergil’s treatment of this topic in *Georgics* 2, but also to the historical component of Anchises’ speech in the *Aeneid*, since in the culmination of the parade of Roman heroes Anchises says that Augustus will once again establish a Golden Age amid fields once ruled by Saturn (6.791-4). As we will see, Ovid’s treatment of these themes in the Agonalia complicates Anchises’ picture of the march of history in *Aeneid* 6.

### 4.3 Aristaeus, Sacrifice and Empedoclean Ethics

Ovid’s celebration of the *felices animae* (1.295-314) positions the *Fasti* in the genre of didactic poetry on natural philosophy. More specifically, his *makarismos* of these anonymous *felices animae* can be traced back to Empedocles’ anonymous praise of Pythagoras (fr. 6/129),⁶¹⁵ which had already been imitated by Lucretius (1.62-79) and Vergil (*G*. 2.490-4), and also to the Sybil’s address to the *felices animae* in *Aeneid* 6, which serves, among other things, as a prelude to the speech of Anchises combining natural philosophical/eschatological doctrine and Roman history.⁶¹⁶ Moreover, this praise of the *felices animae* and declaration of the natural philosophical background of the *Fasti* is strategically positioned in between the Janus episode (1.63-294), which opened with an example of natural philosophical poetry featuring love, strife and the four elements (cf. especially lines 101-24), and Ovid’s treatment of the Agonalia on the 9th of January (1.317-458). In this section we will see that the first mythological episode narrated during the Agonalia — Aristaeus’ binding of Proteus — picks up on many of the natural philosophical elements from the Janus episode. We will also see that the philosophical —

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⁶¹⁵ As we saw, fr. 4/132 (ὄλβηος δς...) is involved in this, as well.
and perhaps political — associations of the myth in Vergil’s *Georgics* are an important part of Ovid’s reworking of it in the *Fasti*.

The reader is reminded of Janus at the outset of the Agonalia (1.318): *Ianus Agonali luce piandus erit* (“Janus must be propitiated on the Agonal day”). This sets the stage for the later allusion to the Janus episode and specifically to the chaos-cosmogony in the first mythological story of the Agonalia, Aristaeus’ binding of Proteus. In our earlier discussion of the Janus episode we saw that much of the material in the cosmology is adapted from Empedocles. In particular, *lis* (1.107) or strife, had separated the four Empedoclean elements out of their initial chaos and into an ordered cosmos (1.105-10). This theme of strife is picked up once again on the Agonalia. Characteristically, Ovid entertains multiple aetiologies for the Agonalia, one of which is from the games or contests (*agones*) that the Greeks used to hold (1.329-30). 617 While the poet ostensibly prefers another etymology — Agonalia from *agonia*, an archaic word for sheep — he readily admits this is not certain (*utque ea non certa est*, 1.333) and goes on to emphasize the agonistic relationship of the sacrifice performed on the Agonalia, so that in spite of the multiple aetiologies, one gets the impression that the Agonalia, true to the etymology from *agon*, is defined by conflict or strife (1.335-6): *victima, quae dextra cecidit victrice, vocatur; / hostibus a domitis hostia nomen habet* (“the victim gets its name because it dies by a victorious right hand”). 618

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617 Note that in the Maffeian and Praenestine calendars (Degrassi 72, 112), the festival is marked by the initials AGON, and so appears in these calendars as a transliteration of the Greek ἀγώνια.

618 Although even the etymology of Agonalia from agonia could point to conflict and strife, since those of Ovid’s readers familiar with Greek might have seen *agonia* as a transliteration of ἀγωνία, a contest or struggle for victory (see *LSJ* s.v. ἀγωνία).
As Green suggests, Ovid’s tentative preference for the etymology of Agonalia from *agonia* (“sheep”) can be seen as a “thematic signpost” that enables Ovid to “progress easily to his discourse on the sacrificial fate of a wide variety of animals in 337ff.”\(^{619}\) The violence characterizing the act of sacrifice — the etymologies of *victima* and *hostia* both have martial connotations — anticipates the poet’s explicit condemnation of some instances of animal sacrifice in the ensuing passage (337-91). This position can be compared to Pythagoras’ attack on animal sacrifice and meat-eating in *Metamorphoses* 15. Pythagoras is not explicitly mentioned in the *Fasti* passage, but, as Green observes, the “numerous verbal and thematic similarities between the two sections are striking, and encourage us to view this section with the Pythagorean episode in mind.”\(^{620}\) As we will see, this section in the *Fasti* reproduces the twin aspects of Pythagoras’ discourse, religious and natural philosophical doctrine. Once again, in this respect both the Agonalia in the *Fasti* and the speech of Pythagoras in the *Met.* reflect the content of the speech of Anchises in the *Aeneid*.

### 4.3.1 Animal Sacrifice and the Golden Age

One important part of the Agonalia episode’s relationship to the speech of Pythagoras in *Metamorphoses* 15 is the Myth of the Ages. In both accounts animal sacrifice is connected to the moral decline after the Golden Age. Ovid locates the description in the *Fasti* temporally by the adverbs *ante* (337) and *nondum* (339) and alludes to the Golden Age.\(^{619}\) Green (2004) *ad Fasti* 1.332.\(^{620}\) Green (2004) 165. Cf. Hardie (1997) 185, n. 12. See Green (2004) *ad Fasti* 1.327, 349-52, 350, 351, 353-60, 353, 361, 362, 380, 383-4 for the verbal and thematic parallels. See also Fantham (1992b) 46. She thinks that the Agonalia episode should be dated post-exile. She also suggests that it postdates Pythagoras’ diatribe against meat-eating and animal sacrifice at *Met.* 15.75-142. This could be true, but here, as in other cases of parallel passages in the *Met.* and *Fasti*, there is no reliable means of establishing priority. Scholars generally treat the poems as having been composed more or less contemporaneously and this is the approach I take to all parallel episodes.
Age through one of the basic *topoi* of descriptions of this mythical period, the absence of ships (1.339-40): *nondum pertulerat lacrimatas cortice murras / acta per aequoreas hospita navis aquas* (“not yet had a foreign ship led over the watery seas brought myrrh squeezed from its bark”).\(^{621}\) This can be compared to Ovid’s use of the same adverb in an explicit description of the Golden Age at *Met.* 1.94-5, where, once again, this age is defined by the absence of ships.\(^{622}\) In the *Fasti* the fact that no ship had yet brought myrrh to Italy, nor other foreign goods (341-2), comes in the context of Ovid’s description of the simple sacrificial offerings made in this age that resembles the Golden Age. At that time, humans earned the goodwill of the gods by offerings of spelt and salt (337-8) and altars burnt only Sabine herbs and laurel (343-4). This discussion of sacrificial offerings during the Golden Age is the prelude to his “history” of animal sacrifice. As Green rightly notes, “the implication...is that the use of a live victim emerged subsequently as a sign of moral degeneration after the golden age.”\(^{623}\) This closely connects the *Fasti* passage to the speech of Pythagoras, where the philosopher describes a Golden Age (15.96-110) free from meat-eating and the hunting of animals, an age that is instead “full of peace” (*plenaque pacis*, 103).

Pythagoras also reports the tradition that the sow was the first sacrificial victim, because she had rooted up the seeds and ruined the farmer’s crops (15.111-3); next came the goat because it had eaten the grape vines (114-5). While such sacrifices are capable of rationalization, if not acceptance, in Pythagoras’ mind, he next asks what the cow and

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\(^{621}\) Green (2004) 160. The absence of ships is a characteristic of the Golden Age in Aratus’s *Phaen.* (108-14) and Vergil’s *Eclogues* 4 (38-9).

\(^{622}\) *nondum caesa suis, peregrinum ut viseret orbem, / montibus in liquidas pinus descenderat undas.*

sheep have done to merit being slaughtered (116-26). This is precisely the same sequence as in the *Fasti* passage, in which the poet describes first the crime of the sow against Ceres and then of the goat against Bacchus, before asking what the cow and sheep have done to merit their punishment (1.361-2): *culpa sui nocuit, nocuit quoque culpa capellae: / quid bos, quid placidae commeruistis oves?* ("Guilt precipitated the sow’s punishment, the she goat’s too; but ox and peaceful sheep, what have you done to merit your punishment?") This is followed by Ovid’s account of the capture of Proteus. As we will see, the parallel between *Fasti* 1 and the speech of Pythagoras goes beyond this objection to sacrifice: it includes the story of Aristaeus; this myth has a parallel in Pythagoras’ exposition of his doctrine of metempsychosis, since the bugonia was interpreted as an allegory of the transmigration of souls.

But first a little more needs to be said about Ovid’s use of the Golden Age *topos* in the *Fasti* and its literary antecedents. In the *Fasti* the chronology of events — and particularly the motif of animal sacrifice marking the end of the Golden Age — is similar to that outlined by Pythagoras in the *Metamorphoses*. However, the chronology in the *Fasti* is also broadly similar to two earlier accounts of the Myth of the Ages in Aratus and Vergil.\(^{624}\) Both connect the fall from the Golden Age to the slaughter and consumption of cattle. In Aratus’ description of the Bronze Age, he says: “But when these men also had died and there were born the Bronze age men, more destructive than their predecessors, who were the first to forge the criminal sword for murder on the highways, and the first to taste the flesh of ploughing oxen, then Justice conceiving a hatred for the generation of these men, flew up to the sky and took her abode in that place, where she is still visible to

men by night as the Maiden near conspicuous Bootes (129-36). Likewise, in Vergil’s celebration of the Golden Age in the *Georgics*, the absence of the slaughter and the eating of cattle is a conspicuous feature of this ideal age (2.532-40):

> hanc olim veteres vitam coluere Sabini,
> hanc Remus et frater; sic fortis Etruria crevit
> scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma,
> septemque una sibi muro circumdedit arces.
> ante etiam sceptrum Dictaei regis ante
> impia quam caesis gens est epulata iuvencis,
> aureus hanc vitam in terris Saturnus agebat;
> necdum etiam audierant inflari classica, necdum
> impositos duris crepitare incudibus ensis.

Once the ancient Sabines cultivated this life, as did Remus and his brother; to be sure, in this way hearty Etruria grew and Rome became the most beautiful of all, and enclosed the seven citadels together around herself with a wall. Indeed, before the sceptered reign of the Dictaean king, before a wicked race feasted on slaughtered bulls, golden Saturn led such a life on earth; not yet had they heard the call of the military trumpet, nor had they heard the clang of swords forged on hard anvils.

Vergil’s description of the Golden Age (or Saturnian Age) through a catalogue of features of life that did not exist during that period, including the consumption of cattle (*impia...caesis gens est epulata iuvencis*, 2.537) finds a close parallel in the *Fasti* (1.347-48): *hic, qui nunc aperit percussi viscera tauri, / in sacris nullum habebat opus* (“The knife that now opens the innards of a slaughtered bull had no work in the sacred rites”). Therefore, Aratus, Vergil and Ovid each connect the decline from the Golden Age to the slaughter of cattle.

The Golden Age *topos*, however, is much older than Aratus, stretching back at least to Hesiod’s *Works and Days*. But there is an important intermediary between Hesiod and the later Hellenistic and Roman authors — namely, Empedocles. Scholars have long

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recognized that Aratus’ description of the Golden Age alludes to a passage in Empedocles where he too seems to describe such an age ruled by Aphrodite.\(^\text{626}\)

Moreover, Nelis has convincingly argued that Vergil’s description of the Golden Age is a double or “two-tier” allusion to both Aratus and Empedocles.\(^\text{627}\) As Nelis says, “In all three poets we find linked the fall from a Golden Age, slaughter of oxen and war. And all three have in mind Hesiod, *Works and Days* 140-55.”\(^\text{628}\) Ovid alludes to this tradition by connecting the decline from the Golden Age to the slaughter of bulls. We might note too that Ovid’s description of sacrificial ritual closely connects the act of sacrifice to war (1.335-6), so that, like the other poets, Ovid implicitly relates war to the fall from the Golden Age, as well.\(^\text{629}\) In the case of Vergil, Nelis has shown that the Golden Age *topos* is part of a much wider dialogue with Empedocles at the end of *Georgics* 2.\(^\text{630}\)

The objection of Empedocles and other Pythagoreans to sacrifice and the consumption of meat is philosophically grounded in the doctrine of metempsychosis; this creates the grisly possibility that by consuming meat you may be eating one of your relatives.\(^\text{631}\) Empedocles makes this point quite dramatically in fr. 128/137:

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\(^{627}\) Before Nelis (2004), Putnam (1979) 162 and Dyson (1996) 279 had compared the *Georgics* passage to fr. 122/128 of Empedocles.


\(^{629}\) Similar themes crop up at *Fasti* 4.393-416, a passage ostensibly praising Ceres for her benefits to mankind. Fantham (1992b) has analyzed this passage in relation to its models in the *Georgics*. After praising Ceres as benefactor, the poet also connects the earth opened up by the plough to mining; he links bronze and iron to war, but nevertheless distances Ceres from these indirect consequences of agriculture. The poet also touches on right and wrong sacrifice, maintaining that the ox should be spared so it can do Ceres’ work. As Fantham (ibid.), notes, the iron *culter* of the sacrifice connects it to the mining theme. She (ibid.) 46 says that “Greed (for bronze, then for gold), war (with bronze, then iron weapons), and sacrifice (with iron knives) are connected.” We can see that the poet’s anti-sacrifice position (at least in respect to certain animals) during the Agonalia is not a one-off.

\(^{630}\) Nelis (2004).

μορφὴν δ᾽ ἄλλαξαντα πατήρ φίλον υἱὸν ἁείρας
σφάξει ἐπευχήμενος μέγα νήπιος, οἱ δ᾽ ἀπορεῦνται
λισσόμενον θύοντες· ὁ δ᾽ αὐθικουστὸς ὀμολογέων
σφάξει ἐν μεγάροις κακὴν ἐλεγοντο δαίτα.
ὡς δ᾽ αὐτὸς πατέρ’ υἱὸς ἐλὼν καὶ μητέρα παῖδες
θυμὸν ἀπορραίσαντε φίλας κατὰ σάρκας ἔδουσιν.

A father lifting up his dear son who has changed his form prays and slaughters him blindly, and they are ignorant in sacrificing the one praying [for his life]; he, however, deaf to the reproaches slaughtered him in his halls and made ready a wicked feast. Thus in this very manner a son seizing his father and children their mother and depriving them of life eat their kindred flesh.

This pathetic description of a father sacrificing and eating his metensomatized son recalls the intrafamilial murders of Attic tragedy and especially the chorus’ description of Agamemnon’s sacrifice of his daughter Iphigenia in the Agamemnon (218-47).632

Empedocles refers to this disturbing consequence of metempsychosis repeatedly.633 Lucretius’ criticism of a religion that demands the sacrifice of Iphianassa/Iphigenia (1.80-101) is part of Lucretius’ imitation of Empedocles at the beginning of the De rerum natura.634 The Ovidian Pythagoras alludes to both Lucretius and Empedocles in his argument against animal sacrifice in the Metamorphoses; moreover, at the end of his speech Pythagoras returns to the subject of animal sacrifice and the consumption of flesh, alluding, as Empedocles had done, to the gruesome cannibalism of Attic tragedy (15.462): neve Thyesteis cumulum viscera mensis (“and let us not fill our guts with

633 Frr. 124/139.5-6, 126/136. Cf. Wright (1981) on the δυσηχέος of 126/136.1: “the Homeric epithet for war is deliberately recalled, cf. Il. 7.395 and 11.590; killing an animal is comparable to killing a man in battle.” Compare this to the close association that Ovid makes between war and sacrifice at Fasti 1.335-6.
634 Sedley (1998) 30. Sedley also notes that Lucretius’ account does not seem to be imitating any description of Iphigenia’s sacrifice in extant tragedy.
Thyestean meals”). Thyestes’ unwitting consumption of his own children in the myth is very close to the scenario described in fr. 128/137 of Empedocles.635

This sense of identification and sympathy between animals and human beings is also present in the Fasti and Metamorphoses in as much as both texts grant the sacrificial animal human emotions (like fear) and depict the animal in general as a sentient being (see esp. Fasti 1.327 and Met. 15.134-5). Ovid’s section on sacrifice in the Fasti also includes a reference to the story of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, although in the version Ovid tells, the goddess Diana substitutes a deer as sacrificial victim in place of Iphigenia at the last moment (1.387-8). This couplet is part of Ovid’s double allusion to Lucretius and Empedocles in this section of the Fasti.636 As scholars have recognized, the poet’s attitude towards sacrifice is strongly negative in the Agonalia.637 He explicitly condemns the sacrifice of the sheep and ox (1.361-62, 383-84), as he will do elsewhere;638 and though he does not explicitly reject all types of animal sacrifice — such as the pig and goat (1.361) — in this passage, as Elaine Fantham has said, the “bloodthirsty delight” that Ceres takes in pig-sacrifice is “scarcely offset by the description of the killing as merita caede nocentis (350).”639 The poet’s anti-sacrifice stance during the Agonalia is part of his assumption in this episode of a Pythagorean/Empedoclean persona. Importantly, this establishes a Pythagorean/Empedoclean ethical framework for the ensuing aetion of cattle-sacrifice in the myth of Aristaeus and the bugonia.

636 The substitution of a deer for a human may be ironic in light of the Pythagorean context of the passage, given that animal sacrifice is tantamount to human sacrifice in Pythagorean doctrine.
637 See Fantham (1992b) 47.
638 Fasti 4.413-16.
639 Fantham (1992b) 47.
4.3.2 The Myth of the Ages, the Flood and Empedoclean Physics

We saw that the poet’s objection, in Green’s words, to “(at least some instances) of animal sacrifice” in *Fasti* 1.349-62 can be compared to Pythagoras’ diatribe against animal sacrifice in *Metamorphoses* 15. The theme of the Golden Age is also implicated in this: in both the *Fasti* and the *Metamorphoses*, animal sacrifice marks the fall from the Golden Age. A similar correlation is made between the slaughter of cattle and the postlapsarian world in Aratus and Vergil. All of these accounts are indebted to Hesiod *Works and Days* 140-55, but the specific association between the fall from the Golden Age and the slaughter of cattle goes back to Empedocles fr. 122/128, in which the queen Aphrodite reigns in a world free from war (Ares) and the sacrifice of cattle. In Aratus’ imitation at lines 108-14 of Empedocles’ description of the Golden Age, Dike takes the place of the Empedoclean Aphrodite as the queen of this age.641 As Nelis says “For [Empedocles], mankind lives in the time of the gradual waning of Love and of growing Strife, an idea which must have influenced Aratus’ image of the departure of Justice.”642 Vergil makes this a part of his own Golden Age account at the end of *Georgics* 2 by describing the departure of Iustitia from the earth.643

As we saw earlier, Iustitia appears not during the Agonalia, but rather in the Janus episode, where Janus claims that he ruled Latium at a time when Iustitia still resided on earth (1.249-50). This and other features of Janus’ reign assimilate it to the Golden Age. Moreover, the reign of Janus — a strongly Empedoclean deity, as we have seen — is

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642 Nelis (2004) 15. Nelis ibid., n. 43 says that “ Aratus also has in mind of course the departure of *Aidos* and *Nemesis* at Hesiod, *Works and Days* 197-201.”
substituted by Ovid for the reign of the Empedoclean Aphrodite; this is confirmed in
the succeeding episode, the action of the temple of Janus Geminus: Janus performs the
same role in repelling Tatius’ army from the gates as Venus does in the parallel story in
the Metamorphoses.\footnote{Garani (2011a) and (2011b).} Therefore, both in the Janus episode and the Agonalia in book 1, Ovid’s treatment of the Myth of the Ages is deeply informed by Empedocles. In the
Fasti, however, all of Ovid’s references to the Myth of the Ages are either oblique or
quite circumscribed. His most explicit and elaborate account of this myth appears in book
1 of the Metamorphoses. Ovid’s account of the myth there gives us further confirmation
of Empedocles’ privileged status as a model in the Ovidian Myth of the Ages; this will
also lay the groundwork for a brief discussion of the intertextual dialogue between this
section of the Metamorphoses, namely the Myth of the Ages and the flood, and our
section on animal sacrifice in the Fasti. Via the Metamorphoses we will also begin to
weave physics into this story of the Golden Age, sacrifice and Empedoclean ethics.

After speculating about the possible origins of humankind in the Metamorphoses,
Ovid begins his account of the Myth of the Ages (\textit{aurea prima sata est aetas}, 1.90).\footnote{For an introduction to the bibliography on this passage, see Barchiesi (2005) 165-6.} Ovid’s account is in some respects traditional and incorporates elements from a number
of earlier versions of the myth. Prominent among these models are Hesiod, Aratus and
Vergil. However, Empedocles is an important part of this tradition, as well. As in the
brief allusion to the Golden Age in the Fasti, Ovid describes this period in the Met.
primarily by negation (cf. lines 94-9, in which all but one line begins with a negative).\footnote{As in the description of Chaos at the beginning of the poem. See Barchiesi (2005) \textit{ad Met.} 89-112. On “description by negation” see Davies (1987).}
We should note in particular that Ovid’s Golden Age is free from seafaring (94-5) and war (98-100). The absence of war is a notable feature of the Golden Age in several of Ovid’s predecessors, including Empedocles, Aratus and Vergil. In Empedocles and Aratus, not only is strife and war absent, but also specifically κυδοιµός or the “noise of battle.”647 In Vergil and Ovid this “noise of battle” is translated into instruments like the trumpet, tuba and horn of war (G. 2.539-50; Met. 1.98-99). Ovid’s Golden Age is also characterized by positive features, notably an eternal spring (ver erat aeternum, 1.107), which existed before Jupiter came to power and divided the year into the four seasons (1.116-8). While Ovid makes oblique reference to Saturn’s rule during the Golden Age (in this respect the Metamorphoses account differs from the Fasti)648 — he introduces the race of silver by noting Saturn’s banishment to Tartarus (1.113) — the emphasis on spring and then, later, the four seasons, calls to mind the Fasti, where Venus is the goddess of spring.649 In the context of Ovid’s works, then, the absence of war and an aeternum ver in the Golden Age can carry Venusian associations. As we saw, Empedocles’ account of the Golden Age topos had Aphrodite as queen (122/128.3). Nevertheless, as of yet, any Empedoclean themes are in the distant background.

War appears only during the Bronze Age (Met. 1.125-6). As in Empedocles, Aratus and Vergil, war is a symptom of humankind’s degeneration. However, in the Metamorphoses the worst is still to come. In the succeeding Iron Age pudor, verum, and fides flee (129), just as the Hesiodic deities of Aidos and Nemesis had done (Works and

648 Garani (2011b).
649 Cf. Fasti 4.125: nec Veneri tempus quam ver erat aptius ulla. In the same passage Venus is depicted as an Empedoclean/Lucretius cosmic deity (cf. esp. 4.90-6).
Days 197-201). It is also during this age that the virgin Astraea departs the blood-soaked earth (149-50): *et virgo caede madentes / ultima caelestum terras Astraea reliquit* (“the virgin Astraea last of the gods left behind the blood-soaked earth”). This is modeled directly on the departures of Dike in Aratus and Iustitia in Vergil. 650 We can also compare the poet’s apostrophe about Iustitia in *Fasti* 1 (250): *ultima de superis illa reliquit humum* (“she last of the gods left behind the earth”). Iron is the last of the four metallic ages, but to these Ovid adds another race of human beings born from the blood of the Giants defeated in the gigantomachy (151-62). The fact that this race is born from the blood-soaked earth (*perfusam multo natorum sanguine Terram / immaduisse ferunt calidumque animasse cruorem*, 157-8) connects them to the preceding Iron Age, which had drenched the earth with the blood of slaughter (149-50). 651

While Ovid’s description of the degenerate ages is quite detailed, it does not explicitly include the subject of animal slaughter or sacrifice, which had marked the end of the Golden Age in Empedocles, Aratus, Vergil and Ovid’s own account in the *Fasti*. Bloodshed in general, however, is a point of emphasis, and this is something that Empedocles clearly regarded as one of the most egregious sins and a notable feature of the fallen state of human beings (cf. esp. fr. 122/128 and 126/136). More significant, however, is that the act emblematic of human degeneracy, Lycaon’s murder of a hostage and his subsequent attempt to feed Jupiter a meal of human flesh, is related by Ovid to sacrifice. 652 Jupiter’s recollection of Lycaon’s act compels him to call a Council of the Gods to determine the fate of the human race. Describing Jupiter’s recollection of

651 See Lee (1953) *ad Met*. 1.160.
Lycaon’s crime, the poet says that Jupiter (pater...Saturnius, 163) thought back to the “foul banquet of Lycaon’s table” (165): foeda Lycaoniae referens convivia mensae. We should note that mensa can be used specifically of a “sacrificial table.” A very similar expression to “Lycaon’s table” occurs near the end of Pythagoras’ speech in book 15, where the philosopher returns once again to his doctrine of metempsychosis and the concomitant horrors of animal sacrifice (456-64): neve Thyesteis cumulemus viscera mensis (“nor let us fill our guts with a Thyestean feast”). As we know, metempsychosis creates the possibility that the body of an animal holds the soul of a parent, brother, or person joined to us by some other close bond (459-60) and makes the consumption of animal flesh tantamount to cannibalism, as demonstrated by the allusion to Thyestes’ blind consumption of his own sons (Thyesteis...mensis, 462). This expression recalls the description of Lycaon’s (sacrificial) meal of human flesh (Lycaoniae...mensae, 1.165).

Philip Hardie has drawn attention to the passage in book 15 in his discussion of the Empedoclean aspects of the speech of Pythagoras, since one of the fragments of Empedocles, as we saw, describes a father ignorantly sacrificing his metensomatized son (fr. 128/137). Hardie says: “The Empedoclean passage [fr. 128/137] also suggests a feast such as that offered to Thyestes, in an earlier episode from the history of the Pelopids; when the Ovidian Pythagoras returns to his diatribe against meat-eating at the end of his speech, he makes the connection between his injunction and the doctrine of metempsychosis and inveighs against ‘Thyestean tables’...As in the case of the opening

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653 L&S s.v. mensa II. (F).
654 Note in particular that the adjective-noun combination occupies exactly the same metrical sedes in both instances.
description of the power of Pythagoras’ mind, Ovid here reaches back beyond Lucretius to the original context of the Lucretian model in Empedocles...\(^{655}\)

The *Lycaoniae...convivia mensae* (1.165) resembles the Pythagorean/Empedoclean *Thyestis...viscera mensis* (15.462) on more than simply a verbal level, however. Lycaon’s meal is emblematic of the rampant sin of the degenerate ages that causes Astraea to depart the blood-soaked earth. This is modeled on the departures of Dike (daughter of *Astraeus*) in Aratus and Iustitia in Vergil’s *Georgics*. Both of these authors connect the fall from the Golden Age to the consumption of cattle, which can be traced back ultimately to a fragment of Empedocles. What I suggest is that Ovid, who is imitating the earlier accounts of Aratus and Vergil, also looks past them to one of their sources, Empedocles; only instead of making the consumption of cattle one of the principal features of the postlapsarian world, he focuses on Lycaon’s (implied) sacrifice of a human being and his attempt to feed this foul sacrificial meal to Jupiter.\(^{656}\)

In other words, he substitutes a human victim and meal for an animal one and thus demonstrates allusively that eating animal flesh is tantamount to cannibalism in Pythagorean/Empedoclean doctrine. The allusion to Lycaon’s feast in Pythagoras’ diatribe against meat-eating helps to illuminate this. It is likely too that Empedocles’ description of a Golden Age where humans had not yet sacrificed or eaten cattle is


\(^{656}\) Cf. Feldheerr (2010) 133: “Like Prometheus, Lycaon was renowned as the inventor of sacrificial practices. In the precivilized world of Arcadia, a place that in Augustan literature takes on many of the characteristics of the Hesiodic golden age through its absence of agriculture and meat eating, Lycaon founded the first city, Lycosura, and established the important cult of Zeus Lykaios.”
closely connected to his account of a father who unknowingly sacrifices and then consumes his son.\textsuperscript{657}

Moreover, these rather subdued Empedoclean themes are not the only ones at the beginning of the \textit{Metamorphoses}; they increasingly come to the fore after the flood. Lycaon’s sin leads Jupiter to call for its near-total destruction by means of flood, an elemental purgation by water after Jupiter remembers an oracle of the universe’s destruction by fire (1.253-61). The destruction is only near-total because two pious members of the human race, Deucalion and Pyrrha, are miraculously spared. Ovid describes this in two striking, mirrored lines (1.324-9):

\begin{quote}
Iuppiter, ut liquidis stagnare paludibus orbem
et superesse \textit{virum de tot modo milibus unum}
et superesse \textit{videt de tot modo milibus unam,}
inocuos ambo, cultores numinis ambo,
nubila disiecit nimbisque Aquilone remotis
et caelo terras ostendit et aethera terris.
\end{quote}

Jupiter, once he saw the globe covered in watery marshes and one man only remaining from so many thousands and one woman only from so many thousands, both innocent, both worshippers of the gods, he scattered the clouds and once the storm had been carried off by the Aquilo he made the lands visible to the sky and it visible to the lands.

The flood has left “one man only from so many thousands” (\textit{de tot modo milibus unum}, 1.325) and “one woman only from so many thousands” (\textit{de tot modo milibus unam}, 1.326).\textsuperscript{658} This motif of “one from many” has a close parallel in the fragments of

\textsuperscript{657} See, for example, the proximity of the fragments in Inwood’s reconstruction: 122/128 and 128/137. See also Nelis (2004) 10-1. As Anderson (1997) notes \textit{ad Met.} 1.226-7, some scholars think that the idea of Lycaon’s meal of human flesh can be traced back to a prehistoric practice of human sacrifice in Arcadia. Anderson also notes that Lycaon kills one of his own sons in other versions of the myth (in the manner of the Empedoclean father!). Cf. Barkan (1986) 26-7.

\textsuperscript{658} Because of the “sacrificial” context of the Lycaon episode, it is also interesting that the theme of the one and the many relates to the idea of sacrificial substitution promoted especially by Girard (1977), where a single scapegoat stands in for the entire community. For the application of Girard’s ideas, including the
Empedocles. In fact, one of the basic features of the cosmology of Empedocles is an alternation between plurality and unity under the influence of strife and love respectively. Empedocles states this doctrine repeatedly in the important fragment 25/17. The discovery of the Strasbourg papyrus has revealed that this fragment occurred relatively early in the first book of Empedocles’ *Peri Phuseos*. Here are the opening lines of the fragment, in addition to a restatement of the same point later on in the fragment (25/17.1-9, 16-17):

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\text{δίπλ’ ἐρέω· τοτε μὲν γὰρ ἐν ἡμῶν μόνον εἶναι ἐκ πλεόνων, τοτε δ’ αὖ διέφυ πλέον’ ἐξ ἐνὸς εἶναι.} \\
\text{τὴν μὲν γὰρ πάντων σύνοδος τίκτει τ’ ὅλεκει τε,} \\
\text{η δὲ πάλιν διαφορμένων θρεφθεῖσα διέπτη.} \\
\text{kai ταῦτ’ ἀλλάσσοντα διαμπερὲς οὐδαμά λήγει,} \\
\text{ἄλλοτε μὲν φιλότητι συνερχόμεν’ εἰς ἐν ἄπαντα,} \\
\text{ἄλλοτε δ’ αὖ δι’ ἑκαστα φορέυμενα νείκεος ἔχθει.} \\
\text{<οὕτως ἴ μὲν ἐν πλεόνων μεμάθηκε φύεσθαι>}
\]

... δίπλ᾽ἐρέω· τοτε μὲν γὰρ ἐν ἡμῶν μόνον εἶναι ἐκ πλεόνων, τοτε δ’ αὖ διέφυ πλέον’ ἐξ ἐνὸς εἶναι...

I shall tell a double tale. For at one time [they] grew to be one alone from many, and at another, [they] grew apart to be many from one. And there is a double coming to be of mortals and a double waning; for the coming together of [them] all gives birth to and destroys the one, while the other, as [they] again grow apart, was nurtured and flew away. And these things never cease from constantly alternating, at one time all coming together by love into one, and at another time again all being borne apart separately by the hostility of strife. 

<Thus insofar as they have learned to grow as one from many>

... I shall tell a double tale. For at one time [they] grew to be one alone

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substitution of the one for the many, to Latin epic poetry, see Hardie (1993) 27-32 and passim. Of course, as Feldheer (2010) 138 points out, Jupiter does not use the death of Lycaon as a substitute for the punishment of the entire human race; instead “he does the exact opposite by treating him as an *exemplum* whose individual conduct demands the death of many.”


660 This line, supplied from Aristotle *Physics* 250b30, is printed by Diels-Kranz, as well.
from many, and at another, again, [they grew apart to be many from one... The importance of Empedocles’ point, namely that the universe alternates between a plurality and a unity, is demonstrated by the fact that he repeats the first two lines verbatim in lines 16-17 (the repetition is also an arch comment on the “doubleness” of his tale). The expressions in the *Metamorphoses* of “one man only from so many thousands” (1.325) and “one woman only from so many thousands” (1.326) are quite close to Empedocles’ description of the “one alone from many” (µόνον... ἐκ πλεόνων, 1-2; ἐν ἐκ πλεόνων, 9) that takes place under the influence of Philia. We can compare ἐκ πλεόνων to de tot... milibus and µόνον/ ἐν to modo... unum/unam. Nor is this all.

As we know, Damien Nelis has argued that the next section in the poem — the post-flood zoogony — is an example of “Empedoclean *epos*” in the *Metamorphoses*. He argues that the *discors concordia* of fire and water responsible for the rebirth of animals is a gloss on Empedocles’ principles of strife (*discors*) and love (*concordia*), and, moreover, that the monstrous Python, one of the creatures produced by the *discors concordia*, is in a long line of monstrous creatures in the epic tradition that go back ultimately to Empedocles’ description of half-man, half-ox monsters created during the zoogony in the phase of increasing love. As Nelis realizes, this fits nicely into this section of the *Metamorphoses*, since the newly regenerated world is accompanied by the ascendancy of Amor, who shows his superiority to the epic Apollo, fresh from his victory over the monster Python, by shooting the god and inflaming his lust for the nymph

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661 Is Ovid glossing Empedocles’ penchant for repetition (cf. δίπλ᾽ ἐρέω, 25/17.1, 16) by repeating the Empedoclean “one from many” motif almost verbatim in his descriptions of Deucalion and Pyrrha? On Empedoclean repetition, see, for example, Wright (1981) 184-5.

Daphne. It turns out, then, that this literary-generic transformation is anticipated by the Empedoclean *topos* of the “one from many” in the Deucalion-Pyrrha episode, since the half of Empedocles’ cycle to which Ovid alludes (“one from many”) is associated with the ascendance of the principle of Philia.\(^{663}\) As we will see, the use of the converse of this theme (“many from one”) in the corresponding section in book 1 of the *Fasti*, once again in a strongly Empedoclean context, lends credence to this argument.\(^{664}\)

As we know, the flood is meted out as punishment for Lycaon’s murder of a guest and attempt to feed a meal of human flesh to Jupiter: this can be compared to the acts of transgressive sacrifice and eating with which Empedocles seems to frequently identify the principle of strife (cf. 124/139 and 128/137). See also fr. 11/115, in which the so-called daimon appears to be exiled from the realm of the blessed for a sin that involves the spilling of blood. Scholars are increasingly willing to see these “religious” fragments

\(^{663}\) It may be no coincidence either that the first tale of mythological metamorphosis after the Empedoclean *discors concordia* is that of Daphne into a laurel tree. Empedocles seems to have taken a special interest in the laurel and used it as an example of the way in which even plants (CTXT-109, CTXT-111) can harbor a sentient spirit. Plutarch tells us that Empedocles taught that one must “completely abstain from laurel leaves (trans. Inwood),” and that “one must also spare all the other trees and not adorn oneself by stripping them, pillaging their leaves violently and unnaturally.” Aelian, moreover, says that “Empedocles too says that the best change of dwelling [i.e. reincarnation] for man is to become a lion, if the lot should transfer him to an animal, and to become a laurel, if to a plant,” and then he quotes Empedocles directly “Among beasts they become mountain-dwelling lions with lairs on the ground, / and laurels among fair-tressed trees.” It is possible, then, that Daphne’s transformation into the laurel is part of the Empedoclean intertext in *Met.* 1.

\(^{664}\) Garani (forthcoming a) first noticed the appearance of this motif in Ovid’s account of the bugonia. Support for this argument also comes from another strongly Empedoclean passage in the *Metamorphoses*, Calliope’s tale of the rape of of Persephone in book 5 (346-661). The tale is sung by the Empedoclean Muse Calliope (*Met.* 5.339; cf. fr. 10/131, εὐχομένῳ νῦν αὔε παρίστασο, Καλλιόπεα) and is set in Empedocles’ native Sicily; indeed, Calliope’s opening description of Mt. Etna and Typhoeus (5.346-55) looks back to Lucretius’ description of the mountain in his praise of Empedocles in *DRN* 1. As in our passage in *Met.* 1, Calliope’s song describes the ascendance of Venus/Amor, and, furthermore, alludes to the Empedoclean “one from many” *topos* (5.379-81): *ille pharetram / solvit et arbitrio matris de mille sagittis / unam sepsouit*. I will explore the Empedoclean associations of this scene and its relationship to its wider context in *Met.* 5 elsewhere.
in the context of Empedocles’ physics.\textsuperscript{665} Indeed, a fragment such as 11/115 demonstrates the way that the life of the daimon can be described in terms of Empedocles’ four elements.\textsuperscript{666} Therefore, while the causal connection between human sin and the flood is part of a mythic tradition going back much earlier than Empedocles, this sequence in the \textit{Metamorphoses} is nevertheless easily framed in Empedoclean terms, given the way that Empedocles connects ethical choices and physical processes.

Lycaon’s sin compels Jupiter to dissolve the \textit{concordia} of the elements that the demiurge had established in the cosmogony (\textit{dissociata locis concordi pace ligavit}, 1.25).\textsuperscript{667} This begins a (seemingly) new phase in the world featuring the increasing dominance of love, which Ovid naturally casts in generic terms. Therefore, the “one from many” motif that Ovid adapts from Empedocles suggests that this phase in the poem corresponds to that of increasing love in Empedocles’ system. Of course, strife is not immediately banished: love and strife are both clearly present after the flood, as can be seen in the \textit{discors concordia} of the zoogony, just as it seems that love and strife need to be present at any creative stage in either half of Empedocles’ cycle. Inwood describes this well: “The termini of the cycle represent extreme cases: love and strife act in isolation on the elements at those points. Otherwise every state of the world is a product of their interaction and one should never, in reading Empedocles, assume that because love is

\textsuperscript{665} This tendency has been encouraged by the discovery of the Strasbourg papyrus. Cf. Martin and Primavesi (1999) 346: “The papyrus seems to indicate that Empedocles’ physics and his daemonology belong to one and the same system.”

\textsuperscript{666} The exiled daimon is rejected by each of the four elements in turn as his soul inhabits the forms of different mortal things through time (11/115.5-12).

\textsuperscript{667} This dissolution of the elements is a return to chaos. See Wheeler (2000) 29-30 on the similarity between the flood and chaos.
said to be creating something, strife is not also involved.”668 This idea that love and strife are involved in any creative period in the world can be aligned with the prevailing opinion about Ovidian genre, namely that meaning is created through the dynamic interplay of elegy and epic, love and war.669

4.3.3 The “Aristaeus” in Ovid and Vergil

It appears, then, that the beginning of the Metamorphoses — from cosmogony to recreation after the flood — adapts a number of motifs from Empedocles’ Peri Phuseos. It is time to return to the point of departure for this discussion, Ovid’s account of animal sacrifice in the Fasti. To briefly recap, Ovid describes an earlier time before animal sacrifice, in particular noting that cattle had not yet been made sacrificial animals. He makes it clear that he is referring to the Golden Age by the use of a number of topos of previous poetic descriptions of that age. The absence of cattle-sacrifice during this period is a feature of Golden Age accounts that can be traced back to Empedocles, to whom later authors including Aratus and Vergil allude in their own accounts. Furthermore, the poet’s criticism of animal sacrifice in the Fasti is saturated with allusion to Pythagoras’ diatribe against meat eating in Metamorphoses 15. Still another intertext for the Fasti passage is Ovid’s elaborate treatment of the Myth of the Ages in Met. 1, where Lycaon’s “sacrifice” of a human being and attempt to feed this perverted sacrificial meal to Jupiter is substituted for the act of sacrifice and consumption of animal flesh in other accounts of the fall from the Golden Age. This section in the Metamorphoses continues the

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668 Inwood (2001) 52.
669 The classic statement of this view of Ovidian genre is Hinds (1987). See also Hinds (1992a) and (1992b). It should be noted too that the scene between Amor and Apollo is, as Nicoll (1980) has shown, a reworking of Ovid’s initiation into elegiac poetry in Am. 1.1.
Empedoclean intertext in the form of Ovid’s allusion to the Empedoclean doctrine of an alternation between plurality and unity, in addition to his principles of love and strife in the form of the *discors concordia* of fire and water. This combination of ethical doctrine (rejection of animal sacrifice) and physics reproduces the two fundamental aspects of Empedocles’ work; it also anticipates the basic structure of Pythagoras’ Speech in *Met.* 15, in which the doctrine of metempsychosis and vegetarianism is followed by his physical doctrine of universal change. Indeed, Philip Hardie has argued that Empedocles is the model behind the basic structure of Pythagoras’ Speech.\(^{670}\) We will see that Ovid’s account of the capture of Proteus and the subsequent bugonia alludes to many of the same elements found in these other important “Empedoclean moments” in Ovid.

Aristaeus’ capture of Proteus and the bugonia had accumulated considerable philosophical baggage by Ovid’s time. The philosophical associations of the sea god Proteus arose from the allegorical interpretation of Menelaus’ capture of the god in the *Odyssey* (4.351-572), the primary model for the Vergilian capture of Proteus. As Joseph Farrell has discussed in his influential treatment of the “Aristaeus,”\(^{671}\) Menelaus’ capture of Proteus is one of four episodes in Homer that ancient critics interpreted as an allegory of cosmogony or the birth of the universe. Farrell demonstrates, in fact, that the “Aristaeus” alludes to all of these episodes in Homer featuring the theme of cosmogony. He rightly concludes that this is no coincidence and that Vergil chose these episodes precisely because of their allegorical significance. Cosmogony is an apt theme for the “Aristaeus” since the episode focuses perhaps above all on the question of rebirth.

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\(^{670}\) Hardie (1995).

\(^{671}\) For the sake of convenience, I will henceforth use “Aristaeus” to refer to the story of Aristaeus in *Georgics* 4.
Farrell has said, “the death of the bees and their recovery, the image of new life bursting forth from the carcass of a young bull, is clearly a symbol of the rebirth of a society that has, literally or figuratively, died.” This interpretation is grounded in several different observations: the first is that Vergil describes the society of bees in *Georgics* 4 in strongly anthropomorphic terms — as Farrell says, their “society is wiped out by a disease thematically identical to civil war” — so that the reader is encouraged to see the bee society as a metaphor for human society; the second is the tradition of using bees to symbolize the souls of the dead. Therefore, it is no surprise that the Neoplatonist philosopher Porphyry of Tyre (third century A.D.) interprets the bees of *Od*. 13.96-112 as symbols of the souls of the dead awaiting rebirth. As Farrell observes, Porphyry offers a similar interpretation of the bugonia, so that “It is...clear that for Porphyry, the bugonia is an allegory of metensomatosis, a religious idea central not only to his own Neoplatonic thought, but to many other eschatological systems of antiquity.” We cannot be sure that Vergil knew of such an explanation of the Homeric bees, but Farrell is right to think it likely, especially in light of Vergil’s use in *Aeneid* 6 of a simile that compares the souls of those awaiting rebirth to bees (6.703-18). Therefore, Vergil’s “Aristaeus” probably alludes to both the interpretation of Proteus’ capture as an allegory for cosmogony and the interpretation of bugonia as an allegory for metensomatosis.

672 Farrell (1991) 263.
674 See esp. *G.* 4.201, in which Vergil refers to the bees as *parvi Quirites*.
While Farrell’s exposition of the “Aristaeus” primarily focuses on literary-generic issues — although he is certainly cognizant of the political implications of the episode — Llewelyn Morgan makes the allegorical reading of Proteus’ capture and the bugonia central to his political interpretation of the *Georgics*. For Morgan the capture of Proteus in the “Aristaeus” is specifically an allegory of the recreation of the world according to Stoic cosmology. The Stoics believed that the universe consisted of two basic principles, an active and a passive one. These principles had several names in Greek and Latin, but for the sake of convenience they can be referred to as god (active) and matter (passive). According to the Stoics, creation occurs when god gives shape to matter, thereby producing the diversity of phenomena in the world.  

This god or active principle was often conceived of as fiery, and was responsible not only for creation, but also the periodic dissolution of the universe, as Morgan describes: “Once created the universe was in a perpetual state of decline, and periodically the structure of the universe would be dissolved and the world would suffer ἐκπύρωσις, dissolution by fire.” It is crucial to Morgan’s argument that this fire is both destructive and creative:

...in Stoic cosmological theory destructive violence was not merely allowed for in the process of renewal: the process actually entailed it. Without the prior destruction there was no creation...This scheme of chaos engendering order, war engendering peace, and death life, is one we shall encounter again. But clearly the cyclical nature of the Stoic model of creation made it a potentially ideal vehicle for Augustan propaganda, with its ideology of renewal and also — I shall later suggest — its pressing need to place a positive gloss on the violent chaos which accompanied the establishment of the new regime. Foreshadowing the common model of the *Aeneid*, a political renewal could easily be described as cosmic renewal.

Therefore, Morgan interprets Aristaeus’ capture of Proteus not only as an allegory of Stoic creation, but as a piece of propaganda: the Stoic account of creation, in which

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violent destruction enables recreation, supports an Augustan narrative of civil war and rebirth.

Now that Vergil’s “Aristaeus” and its accompanying philosophical associations have been laid out, we can consider Ovid’s abridged version of this tale in the *Fasti* (1.363-80). While Ovid’s account conforms to Vergil’s in broad outline, there are several significant differences. Whereas scholars have vigorously debated the precise relationship of Vergil’s description of bugonia (either the first at 4.281-314 or the second at 4.538-58) to Greco-Roman blood sacrifice to the point of questioning whether it should be called a sacrifice — Ovid erases all doubt about his account by making it the *aetion* for the sacrifice of cattle in the *Fasti*. It is, in fact, the first cattle slaughter of any kind, which is nowhere suggested by Vergil. It is also unclear whether in the *Georgics* the bugonia can be connected in any way to the slaughter and consumption of cattle that marked the end of the Golden Age (2.536-7). We have already seen that Vergil in that passage is imitating Aratus, who makes the consumption of cattle a feature of the debased Race of Bronze (129-34). Both of these passage go back ultimately to Empedocles’ description of the Golden Age, in which the sacrifice and consumption of oxen did not yet exist (fr. 122/128). There is an important difference, however, between the accounts in Aratus and Vergil and that in Empedocles: neither in Aratus nor Vergil is

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the slaughter of cattle specified as sacrifice. In the *Fasti*, however, it is made clear that the slaughter of cattle, which marked the end of the Golden Age, was sacrificial (1.347-8): *hic, qui nunc aperit percussi viscera tauri, / in sacris nullum culter habebat opus* (“The knife that now opens the innards of a slaughtered bull had no work in the sacred rites”). Therefore, Ovid’s account, which explicitly connects the end of the Golden Age and the sacrifice of cattle, looks past the Aratean and Vergilian accounts to their Empedoclean source. Moreover, Ovid connects the bugonia to this Empedoclean version of history by making it the *aetion* for cattle sacrifice.

As usual, Ovid is heavily manipulating his Vergilian source material. He directly relates two separate Vergilian treatments of cattle slaughter — *G.* 2.536-7, where it is wholly negative, and the bugonia in book 4, where it is less clear how we are to understand it — in order, as Elaine Fantham has suggested, either to expose a contradiction in Vergil’s attitude in the *Georgics* to cattle slaughter or to make it more clear that the bugonia should be seen through the moral lens of the earlier condemnation of cattle sacrifice at the end of book 2. In linking the bugonia to the moral decline after the Golden Age, Ovid effectively reconfigures these separate Vergilian passages so that they are part of the same sequence of thought.

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685 Another feature of Ovid’s use of the Golden Age motif that resembles that of Empedocles more closely than either Aratus or Vergil is his emphasis on the non-animal sacrificial offerings made during the Golden Age (1.337-46). Cf. Empedocles fr. 122/128.6-7.
686 Green (2004) 172 notes the objections of Lefèvre (1976) 47-47 and Porte (1985) 45 to the appropriateness of the bugonia for the section on animal sacrifice, since it is a slaughter and not a sacrifice; there is no divine recipient, for instance. Green, however, argues that “Ovid is relying on the reader to recall the Vergilian myth to justify the story’s inclusion in this section — at Verg. *G.* 4.532ff., the divine Nymph companions of Eurydice are recognised as the beneficiaries of the victims slaughtered by Aristaeus.” Since the sacrificial nature of the Vergilian bugonia is disputed, perhaps more compelling is Green’s observation that the language Ovid uses to describe the bugonia is sacrificial (see Green (2004) *ad Fasti* 1.377).
687 Fantham (1992b) 55, n, 29.
Signs thus far seem to point to a negative interpretation of the bugonia in the *Fasti*, since it is connected to the cattle sacrifice that marks the fall from the Golden Age (1.347-8). Moreover, it is bracketed by two different expressions of sympathy for cattle (and sheep) (1.362, 1.383-4). There is considerable evidence, then, that the bugonia in the *Fasti* is not an unequivocally positive act.\(^{688}\) Morgan, however, has argued that the paradoxical nature of the bugonia, namely that it is both destructive and creative, is crucial to interpreting its function in the *Georgics*. Morgan’s interpretation claims to account for Vergil’s own seemingly negative depiction of cattle slaughter at the end of *Georgics* 2, in which it is one of the events that marks the end of the Golden Age. Morgan argues that the propaganda of the *Georgics* is the more compelling for its acknowledgment of the terrible destruction of the civil wars; but at the same time it suggests that this is necessary for the recreation of the Roman state. Morgan, moreover, finds a philosophical basis for this reading in Stoic physics, where violence and destruction were similarly necessary for (re)creation.

We should ask, then, whether Ovid’s use of Empedoclean themes in his version of the “Aristaeus” encourages us to judge the historical implications of the story differently, since Empedocles’ cosmic process of dissolution and recreation, while similar to the Stoic view of cosmic history, seems to be different in important respects. For example, strife in Empedocles’ system can be creative, since it is an agent of cosmogony, separating out the elements that had been unified into an a-cosmic sphere by love; on the other hand, unlike in Stoic physics, this cosmic principle of strife seems to be identifiable

\(^{688}\) Cf. the conclusion of Fantham (1992b) 48: “...believe this sequence should be read not as a justification of sacrificial practice but as a historical account mixing overt praise and blame: in so far as it pretends to justify, it self-destructs during and immediately after the Aristaeus myth.”
with the ethically abhorrent strife manifested in cattle sacrifice and the consumption of flesh, which are associated with the fall from the Golden Age. It is tempting, for example, to connect the cosmic unity of the sphere under Philia to the rule of Aphrodite in the Golden Age, and thus the strife that marks the end of that age to the cosmic principle of Neikos that breaks apart love’s perfect sphere and inaugurates its own half of the cosmic cycle. In fact, there are a number of reasons to think that Ovid connects the story of Aristaeus to this phase of increasing strife in Empedocles’ system.

We saw that both Farrell and Morgan argue that Aristaeus’ capture of Proteus can be interpreted as an allegory for cosmogony. Is there any indication that Ovid was aware of this tradition? Good evidence that he was can be found in his description of Proteus’ transformations and subsequent return to his original form (1.373-4): *ille [Proteus] sua faciem transformis adulterat arte; / mox domitus vinclis in sua membrea redit* (“By his art that shapeshifter dissembles his appearance; soon, overcome by the bonds he reverts to his owns limbs”). The pentameter describing Proteus’ return to form takes language from the Vergilian episode, but it much more closely resembles the resumption of form by Janus/Chaos in the cosmogony earlier in book 1 of the *Fasti* (111-2): 689 *tunc ego, qui fueram globus et sine imagine moles, / in faciem redi dignaque membrea deo* (“At that time, I, who had been a sphere and a shapeless mass, reverted to the appearance and limbs worthy of a god”). We can compare line 112, *in faciem redi dignaque membrea deo*, to line 374, *in sua membrea redit*. 690 As we saw, the capture of Proteus in the *Georgics* is an allegory of cosmogony. It seems unlikely to be coincidental, then, that

690 Green (2004) *ad Fasti* 1.374 compares this line to *Fasti* 1.112, but does not pursue it further.
Ovid alludes to the chaos-cosmogony of the Janus episode in his description of Proteus’ transformations. Rather, by alluding to the earlier cosmogony Ovid glosses the allegorical interpretation of the capture of Proteus. The Janus-cosmogony, although not following any one philosophical doctrine exclusively, contains a number of Empedoclean features, to the point that Empedocles seems to be a privileged model for the cosmological material in that episode. Moreover, Ovid’s bugonia is prefaced by an allusion to Empedocles’ description of the Golden Age, which had not yet been polluted by the sacrifice of cattle. It is therefore reasonable to ask whether Ovid’s “Aristaeus” is “Empedoclean,” as well.691

First, Proteus’ capture resembles the chaos-cosmogony in the Janus episode in at least one respect. In the cosmogony of the Janus episode strife (lis, 107) separates the four elements out of the mass of chaos and into their respective regions of the cosmos (107-8). This, once again, is modeled at least in part on the Empedoclean principle of strife, which was responsible for dissolving the unity of the four elements in the sphere and separating them out. This strife can be compared to Aristaeus’ struggle to conquer Proteus (max domitus vinclis in sua membra redit, 1.374), whose transformations came to represent the four elements emerging out of the primordial matter of the universe.692

Although Ovid does not catalogue Proteus’ transformations in the abridged account of the Fasti, passages from both the Georgics and the Metamorphoses demonstrate that the series of transformations included the elements of fire and water — often synecdochic of

691 In fact, Garani (forthcoming a) argues that it is.
692 The range of meanings encompassed by domo includes “to subdue by war” and “to defeat in single combat, lay low” (see OLD s.v. domo (2)). For the Proteus allegory, see Heraclitus, Homeric Problems 66.3-6.
the four elements — and are likely an allusion to the philosophical interpretation of Proteus (G. 4.409-10): *aut acrem flammae sonitum dabit atque ita vinclis / excidet, aut in aquas tenuis dilapsus abibit* (“either he will produce the sharp crackle of fire and thus slip from his bonds, or he will escape by melting into thin water”). We can compare this to *Met* 8.736-37: *interdum faciem liquidarum imitatus aquarum / flumen eras, interdum undis contrarius ignis* (“at one time he imitated the appearance of flowing water and was a stream, at another water’s opposite, fire”). We should also note Achelous’ statement that Proteus is able to transform into “many shapes” (*plures...figuras*, 8.730). This idea of the one (Proteus) coming to be the many (*plures*) is a concept that will appear again in the bugonia in the *Fasti*. As we know, the opposite of this, the “many coming to be one,” is used to describe Deucalion and Pyrrha after the flood. Both the “many from one” and “one from many” are key concepts in Empedocles’ doctrine of an alternation between unity and plurality in the universe.

In fact, *membra*, into which Proteus returns in the *Fasti* after his transformations (*in sua membra*, 1.374), is often used to refer to parts of the universe. Green comments on this in his note on Janus/Chaos’ assumption of form earlier in book 1 (*dignaque membra deo*, 1.112): “As well as bodily ‘limbs’, *membra* is commonly used to describe the ‘limbs’ of the earth when it is formed after Chaos.” Since Ovid emphasizes that it is the four elements (105-6; 109-10; 117) that have emerged out of Chaos, it is tempting

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693 We might also see Proteus’ cosmic associations hinted at in Achelous’ opening description of the shape-shifting god (8.730-1): *sunt quibus in plures ius est transire figuras / ut tibi, complexi terram maris incola, Proteu*. Proteus is an inhabitant of the “sea that embraces the earth”, a universal expression distributed over two terms, sea and earth, that can stand in for the entire world. See Hardie (1986) 302-10 on “earth and sea.”

694 It also occurs in Venus and Amor’s power play in *Met*. 5.


to identify Janus’ *membra* with these elements. Indeed, Lucretius had used *membra* to describe the four great elemental masses of the world (5.235-46). Scholars have long understood that Empedocles is the chief source for this idea of the four elemental masses as limbs. Proteus’ *membra*, then, may refer not only to his resumption of form, but given the allegorical background of the myth, also to the articulation of the world into the four elemental masses, two of which, fire and water, are among Proteus’ transformations in both Vergil’s *Georgics* and Ovid’s own *Metamorphoses*.

The chaos-cosmogony of the Janus episode and the allegorical cosmogony of the capture of Proteus share the motif of strife: *lis* in the chaos-cosmogony and Aristaeus’ struggle to subdue Proteus by force in the later episode. This suggests that Proteus, like Janus, is the primordial matter of the universe. Ovid suggests that Janus is Chaos (1.103), while his allusion in the capture of Proteus to Janus/Chaos’ resumption of form glosses the interpretation of Proteus himself as the “shapeless inertness of confused matter” out of which the universe is formed. While scholars generally rely on Heraclitus’ interpretation of the capture of Proteus by Menelaus in the *Odyssey* for Proteus’ philosophical associations, it is difficult to definitively identify Heraclitus’ allegory with any one philosophical system. Since we know that Ovid is just as eclectic

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697 Cf. Green (2004) *ad Fasti* 1.112: “one might be tempted to see Janus as the ‘embodiment’ of the world.” See also Hardie (1991) 52, n. 15: “Janus may be seen as a personification of the macranthropic model of the universe.”


701 Morgan (1999) thinks that Heraclitus relied heavily on Stoic interpretations of Homer, to which, according to Morgan, Vergil added further Stoic elements. Given that Proteus is a sea-god, it is also
in his philosophical sources as his literary ones (the two, of course, not being completely separable), my goal is not to exclude the possibility of different interpretations with the aim of identifying a single, dominant philosophical model for Ovid’s “Aristaeus.” However, Ovid’s use of Empedoclean motifs bears emphasizing in this episode, since their addition to the story seems to be a departure from the Vergilian account.

It is time to consider the bugonia itself, which follows upon Aristaeus’ capture of Proteus. This too was interpreted allegorically, although its implications were more properly eschatological than natural philosophical, in contrast to the capture of Proteus. Still, Morgan has argued, largely on the basis of the similarity between the creative power of the Nile flood and the bugonia, that the bugonia, at least in the Georgics, is a figure for cosmogony, as well.\(^{702}\) The elements are implicated in this reading, since Morgan identifies the mixture of fire and water in the bugonia (G. 4.308-9) as one of the features that the rite has in common with the miraculous fertility of the Nile. The role of fire and water in the fertility of the Nile delta is best exemplified in Ovid’s description in Met. 1 of the regeneration of animals through the discors concordia of fire and water, which is compared to the fertile combination of heat and moisture after the flooding of the Nile (Met. 1.423-9). This cosmogonic power of fire and water, according to Morgan, recapitulates the same mixture of elements from the capture of Proteus, where Aristaeus represents the Stoic fiery principle and Proteus the liquid. While Morgan uses the zoogony in the Metamorphoses merely as a comparandum for the bugonia in the possible that the interpretation of his capture as an allegory for cosmogony appeals to Thales’ theory that the universe arises out of water.

Georgics, the bugonia in the Fasti engages that section of the Metamorphoses extensively. One of the elements common to the two contexts is the presence of Empedoclean motifs.

The bugonia in the Fasti is part of a larger section on animal sacrifice; indeed, it is made the original instance of cattle slaughter and the action of cattle sacrifice. We saw that this section — including the criticism of certain kinds of sacrifice — alludes to Pythagoras’ diatribe against animal sacrifice in the Metamorphoses. Furthermore, Ovid includes the Empedoclean idea that the sacrifice of cattle marked the end of the Golden Age. All of this prepares the reader to see the bugonia in terms of Pythagorean/Empedoclean eschatology, a major feature of this being the theory of metensomatosis. Here are Proteus’ brief instructions to Aristaeus and then the poet’s description of the rite and its consequences (1.377-80):

> “obrue mactati corpus tellure iuvenci: quod petis a nobis, obrutus ille dabit.” iussa facit pastor: fervent examina putri de bove: mille animas una necata dedit.

> “Bury the body of the slaughtered bull in the earth: the thing you seek from us, that buried creature will give.” The shepherd accomplishes his commands: the swarms surge out from the putrid cow: the death of one life furnished thousands of lives.

As we saw, scholars have argued that Vergil’s bugonia, on which Ovid’s is modeled, alludes to a tradition positing bees as symbols of the souls of the dead and bugonia as an allegory of metensomatosis. As Morgan has already noted in passing “such an interpretation of bugonia might also give further point to Ovid’s pentameter summary of the ritual (Fast. 1.380).”

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703 Morgan (1999) 144.
*animas una necata dedit* is commonly used in Latin to refer to the “soul.” If Ovid is alluding to the doctrine of metensomatosis, it is a continuation of the Pythagorean/Empedoclean context of the passage. In fact, the closest equivalent to the description of bugonia in the *Fasti* does not come from the *Georgics*, but from Pythagoras in the *Metamorphoses* (15.363-7):

```latex
+i quoque delectos+ mactatos obrue tauros
tauros (cognita res usu); de putri viscere passim
fiorilegae nascuntur apes, quae more parentum
rura colunt operique favent in spemque laborant.
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Come, bury slaughtered bulls (a rite familiar from practice); from the rotting innards flower-gathering bees are born, who, in the manner of their parents cultivate the fields, delight in work and toil in hope of a reward.

The two descriptions share much of the same language. While the Pythagorean description of bugonia is part of his exposition of the doctrine of universal change and is not properly part of his section on metempsychosis, the context of the above passage offers a clue to the significance of processes like bugonia for Pythagorean eschatology. It comes in the context of the *parva animalia* that are born from the dead bodies of other animals; the theme of rebirth after death is therefore central to the passage. The final *exemplum* in the list is especially notable (15.372-4):

704 See *OLD* s.v. *anima* (5).
705 In the ritual performed by Aristaeus in the *Georgics*, he sacrifices four bulls and four heifers and then nine days later offers poppies and a black ewe to appease Orpheus. The *Fasti* bugonia more closely resembles Vergil’s first bugonia, but even there the bull is not to be buried in the ground like it is in Ovid’s bugonia. Cf. Green (2004) *ad Fasti* 1.377. See Fantham (1992b) 55, n. 30, who refers to an observation of Barchiesi’s that “in *obrue mactati* Ovid has economically combined both the suffocation attributed to the Egyptian *Bougonia* in *Geor.* 4.296-304, and the sacrificial act of Aristaeus.”
706 Myers (1994) 155, n. 86 reports Hinds’ suggestion (in conversation) that *cognita res usu* footnotes Vergil’s bugonia, “thus showing that he knows about this from Vergilian literary ‘practice’ rather than from so-called agricultural practice.”
707 Myers (1994) 155-7 considers this passage as part of her discussion of paradoxography in Pythagoras’ speech, but she makes no mention of its possible significance for Pythagorean eschatology.
quamque solent canis frondes intexere filis
agrestes tineae (res observata colonis)
ferali mutant cum papilionem figuram.

The worms that in rural areas are accustomed to cover leaves with their white threads (an occurrence witnessed by farmers) change their shape into that of a funereal butterfly.

The butterfly (papilio, 374) is “funereal” (feralis, 374) because it appeared on tombs as a symbol of the soul. Can this allusion to the funereal iconography of the butterfly, coming as it does just after Pythagoras’ description of the bees born from the carcass of a bull, point to the eschatological significance of the bugonia?

Ovid, like Vergil, seems to be aware of the interpretation of the bugonia as an allegory for the transmigration of souls. This can be added to the other Pythagorean and Empedoclean motifs present in Ovid’s treatment of the Agonalia. However, there may be an allusion in the bugonia to natural philosophy, as well. The other Empedoclean material in Ovid’s history of sacrifice encourages the reader to see a further allusion to Empedocles in Ovid’s epigrammatic summary of the bugonia (1.380): mille animas una necata dedit. The concept of the “many” (mille animas) coming from “one” (una necata) should be familiar to us. It resembles one of Empedocles’ programmatic expressions of his doctrine of the alternation between unity and plurality (25/17.2, πλέον᾽ἐξ ἑνὸς ἐἰναί; 25/17.17, πλέον᾽ἐξ ἑνὸς ἐἰναί; 25/17.37, πλέον᾽ἐξ ἑνὸς ἐἰναί). These complementary ideas of the “many from one” and “one from many” denote the two halves of the cycle respectively. “Many from one” (πλέον᾽ἐξ ἑνὸς) describes the process

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709 Garani (forthcoming a) first noticed this similarity between Ovid’s description of the bugonia “many from one” and Empedocles’ description of strife’s activity in the cosmic cycle.
that the cosmos undergoes during the reign of Neikos, which breaks apart the sphere that has been unified by the principle of Philia. The cosmogony under strife takes place at this point: this can be seen by the fact that the phrase πλέον ἐξείναι at line 37 is followed by a description of the features of the world that arise during this process (38-41). Compare this expression of the “many from one” to Ovid’s epigrammatic summary of the bugonia, that is the “death of one gives birth to thousand of lives” (1.380): *mille animas una necata dedit.*

This adaptation of an Empedoclean concept connects the bugonia to strife’s half of the cosmic cycle; this is natural, since Empedocles had used the sacrifice of cattle as a paradigmatic example of strife’s presence in the world (fr. 122/128). This interpretation is supported by the fact that Aristaeus’ capture of Proteus, immediately preceding the bugonia, alludes to the strongly Empedoclean cosmogony earlier in book 1; this had also been set in motion by a kind of strife. In his account of the bugonia, then, Ovid relates two ideas: he connects the interpretation of the bugonia as an allegory for cosmogony, already used by Vergil in the *Georgics*, to the Empedoclean idea of cattle sacrifice as a transformational act of strife — it is the sacrifice and consumption of cattle that marks the end of a Golden Age ruled by Aphrodite. It is tempting to think that Ovid is following the lead of Empedocles himself, who very well could have linked the degeneration from the Golden Age to his cosmic cycle of love and strife. In any case, regardless of whether or not the connection is Ovid’s, the bugonia is assimilated to the cosmogony under strife. Moreover, the bugonia is a doublet of the capture of Proteus in several respects: both are accomplished by Aristaeus, both feature the combination of fire and water, and both are
figured as cosmogony. The “many from one” motif applied to the bugonia may also
be subtly prefigured in the capture of Proteus, if in the background of the episode is
Proteus’ identity as the Pythagorean monad or number one, before he assumes many
different shapes during his capture.  
Finally, the bugonia is connected to the
degeneration from the Golden Age or the steady corruption of humankind. Is it possible
to see Proteus’ transformations/cosmogony as a degeneration? In his note on Fasti 1.373,
ille sua faciem transformis adulterat arte, Green suggests that adulterat can be taken in
the sense of “corrupt,” “denoting a change from pure to impure state.” If Green’s
suggestion is correct, then perhaps not only the bugonia, but also the capture of Proteus
has negative connotations.

Lastly, the Empedoclean context of the Agonalia is also bolstered by the presence
of the familiar Empedoclean “fingerprint” of compound adjectives. In fact, just three
lines after the Empedoclean phrase under discussion (mille una necata dedit, 1.380) Ovid
uses two compound adjectives in the course of a single line in a restatement of his
complaint against the sacrifice of cows and sheep, rounding off the “Aristaeus” (1.383-4):
quid tuti superest, animam cum ponat in aris / lanigerumque pecus ruricolaeque boves?
The pentameter is only the most remarkable instance of the accumulation of compound
adjectives in the course of this section on animal sacrifice. Cf. lanigerae...ovis (1.334)
and saetigerae...suis (1.352). As Green notes ad 1.334 such adjectives appear
predominantly in epic, but, as we know, the clustering of compound adjectives is

710 On the interpretation of Proteus as the monad, see Buffière (1956) 566-70.
711 Garani (forthcoming a).
characteristic of Empedoclean style in particular and had been used by Lucretius to signal Empedoclean imitation.

Sedley first suggested this as part of his argument that the proem of DRN 1 is deeply indebted to Empedocles, but his hunch has been more or less confirmed by the discovery of the Strasbourg papyrus. The papyrus has enabled us to see that DRN 2.1081-3 — containing two compound adjectives just two lines apart — is a veritable translation of an Empedoclean passage (cf. a(ii) 26-8, or lines 296-8 of Empedocles’ poem). There are two other such passages in the DRN, both of which, as Sedley shows, are likely based on an Empedoclean model. As we saw in chapter 3, Ovid’s description of the Minotaur at the beginning of Ars Amatoria 2 uses two compound adjectives in a single line (2.24): *semibovemque virum semivirumque bovem*. This imitation suggests that Ovid too, like Lucretius, recognized the clustering of compound adjectives as characteristic of Empedocles’ style. It is reasonable to conclude, then, that the density of compound adjectives in the section on animal sacrifice in the Fasti, and especially the presence of two compound adjectives in a single line at 1.384, is a marker of the Empedoclean context of the passage.

Since Lucretius used this same technique and since *laniger*, appearing twice in the Fasti passage (334, 384), is used several times by Lucretius himself, this use of compound adjectives is also a marker of the Lucretian context of the passage. In fact, as often in his allusions to Empedocles, Ovid is probably alluding to one specific passage in

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713 5.788-91 and 5.864-7.
714 In fact, this conclusion has been drawn by Garani (forthcoming a).
715 1.887; 2.318; 2.662; 5.866; 6.1237.
Lucretius that itself alludes to Empedocles.\footnote{See Garani (forthcoming a) on Ovid’s use of Lucretius and Empedocles in this passage. A further instance in the passage of double allusion to Lucretius and Empedocles may be the poet’s reference to the story of Iphigenia’s (near) sacrifice. Lucretius’ account (1.80-101), where the girl is actually sacrificed, is part of Lucretius’ imitation of Empedocles at the beginning of the DRN (see Furley (1989) 181). Although the Fasti poet refers to an alternate version of the myth, the fact that this context in the Fasti has concerned the Pythagorean/Empedoclean idea of animal sacrifice as tantamount to human sacrifice, makes it likely that the differences can be ascribed to the principle of allusive variatio and that the Iphigenia myth is part of the same allusive network.} \textit{DRN} 5.864-7 is one of the passages discussed by Sedley as an example of the Empedoclean fingerprint of compound adjectives:

\begin{quote}
\textit{et levisomnia} canum fido cum pectore corda,  
\textit{et genus omne quod est veterino semine partum,}  
\textit{lanigeraeque simul pecudes et bucera saecla,}  
\textit{omnia sunt hominum tutelae tradita, Memmi.}
\end{quote}

and the light-sleeping hearts of dogs in their faithful chests, and all the race that is born from the seed of beasts of burden, and at the same time wool-bearing sheep and the ox-horned breeds, all of these have been entrusted to the care of men, Memmius.

As Sedley says, “these lines occur within Lucretius’ proto-Darwinian account of the survival of the fittest.”\footnote{Sedley (2003) 10.} While Sedley’s general position is that Empedocles is principally a literary rather than philosophical model for Lucretius, he does use the “Empedoclean fingerprint” in these lines as the basis of an argument for this being a case of actual philosophical affinity between the two, since Empedocles also seems to have held a theory of evolution compatible with Epicurean doctrine.

Important for our purposes, however, is not evolutionary doctrine \textit{per se}, but the reason posited by Lucretius for the survival of the animals in this passage, namely their usefulness to humankind. As Lucretius says, “All of these have been entrusted to the care of men” (867). Again, Sedley argues that this is based on an Empedoclean passage and
that it is “indirect evidence that Empedocles’ own full account of the zoogony will have included the theme of certain species’ survival through their usefulness to man,” notably usefulness not related to their being a source of food for human beings, which was taboo in Empedocles’ ethical doctrine.\footnote{Sedley (2003) 11, n. 26.} This gives greater point to Ovid’s complaint about the sacrifice of the lanigerumque pecus ruricolaeque boves (384) that appears to allude to Lucretius’ lanigeraeque simul pecudes et bucera saecla (5.867), since not only are these animals innocent of any crime against humankind, but, as described in the Lucretian (and Empedoclean) source passage, they have actually been entrusted to their care! This further underscores the problematic ethics of sacrifice, which has been a persistent theme of the passage, starting from Ovid’s suggestion that the sacrificial slaughter of cattle was one of the events that marked the end of the Golden Age, just as it had in Empedocles. In sum, then, the accumulation of compound adjectives is a reliable indicator of the Empedoclean context of Ovid’s history of sacrifice and account of Aristaeus’ capture of Proteus. It helps to confirm the presence of some of the other identifiable Empedoclean motifs in the passage, notably the “many from one” motif of the bugonia and its association with strife’s half of the cosmic cycle.\footnote{Fr. 25/17, which contains the programmatic statement of this alternation between the one and many, also contains an accumulation of compound adjectives near the end of the fragment (see lines 65 and 67 or ensemble a(ii) 26 and 28).}

4.3.4 Metamorphoses 1 and Fasti 1, Love and Strife

One of the most interesting aspects of Ovid’s use of the Empedoclean “many from one” motif in the bugonia is that he uses the opposite motif, the “one from many” at the beginning of the Metamorphoses to describe Deucalion and Pyrrha after the flood. We
can compare *Fasti* 1.380, *mille animas una necata dedit*, to *Met.* 1.325-6: *et superesse virum de tot modo milibus unum / et superesse videt de tot modo milibus unam*. As I suggested, this is an adaptation of Empedocles’ statement that under the influence of the principle of love, the things of the world “grow to be one alone from many” (cf. fr. 25/17.1-2). In Empedocles this describes the process taking place during the time of love’s dominance in the cycle, in which the complete separation (and plurality) of matter under strife is gradually unified by love until the cosmos is a perfect, unified whole “fixed in the dense cover of harmony, / a rounded sphere, rejoicing in its joyous solitude” (fr. 33.27).\(^{720}\) Ovid, of course, is not literally describing such a process in the *Metamorphoses*, but Empedocles does use both the “one from many” and “many from one” as mottoes, so to speak, for the two phases of his cycle, that of increasing love and strife. These phrases, therefore, can be used to gloss each half of the cycle. It is appropriate for Ovid to use this Empedoclean motif at this point in the poem because the world has just undergone a cosmic transition in the form of the flood. Moreover, at least ostensibly, there has been a transition from the sin and strife of the race of Lycaon to a human race begun by the pious Deucalion and Pyrrha. More importantly, it is fitting that Ovid equates this period to Empedocles’ phase of increasing love because it is not long after this that the first love story (*primus amor*, 1.452) of the poem occurs, in which the elegiac Amor defeats the epic Apollo in a reworking of the seminal opening scene of Ovid’s *Amores* 1.1. This appears to be signposted by Ovid’s use of the Empedoclean “one from many” motif.

Ovid, therefore, chooses to incorporate the opposite motif, the “many from one,” and therefore the principle of strife, into a comparable point in the first book of the *Fasti*. In fact, this is part of a detailed structural correspondence between the beginnings of the *Metamorphoses* and the *Fasti*. We know, of course, that the cosmogony in the Janus episode is clearly meant to correspond to the cosmogony at the opening of the *Metamorphoses*, although there too the respective cosmogonies are defined by a contrast, like the mirroring “many from one” and “one from many” themes. There are a number of reasons to think that this intertext continues in the Agonalia. In addition to the mirroring uses of the Empedoclean motifs, the “Aristaeus” in the *Fasti* has a similar relationship to the earlier cosmogony in its own poem as the flood and zoogony in the *Metamorphoses* do to the chaos-cosmogony earlier in that poem. Stephen Wheeler, for instance, has demonstrated that the flood is depicted as a “watery kind of chaos,” and that the aftermath of the flood reprises certain features of the initial cosmogony, although often with a slight twist.\(^{721}\) Just as the flood and zoogony recapitulate the chaos-cosmogony in the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid compares certain features of the “Aristaeus” to the chaos-cosmogony in the *Fasti*. Indeed, we saw that the description of Proteus’ transformations and return to form allude to Janus’ own resumption of form in the cosmogony; and that this glosses the allegorical interpretation of the capture of Proteus as an allegory for cosmogony. Therefore, both the flood and its aftermath in the *Metamorphoses* and the

\(^{721}\) The quote is from Wheeler (2000) 32; Wheeler (ibid.) 23-37 discusses the elements of repetition in the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*. 
“Aristaeus” in the *Fasti* are in some sense reworkings of an earlier chaos-cosmogony and participate in the recurring pattern of creation and destruction in the two poems.\(^{722}\)

The bugonia itself is also a fruitful parallel for the flood and subsequent zoogony in the *Metamorphoses*. Both feature the destruction or near-destruction of life (Aristaeus’ bees in the *Fasti* and human and animal life in the *Met.*) and its subsequent rebirth. It is in the rebirth that the parallel is especially close. In the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid attributes the rebirth of animals to a *discors concordia* of fire and water, which he compares to the animals that are born in the Nile delta after the flooding of the great river. The bugonia in the *Fasti*, itself a rebirth of animals, expects to be read alongside its model in the *Georgics*, in which Vergil sets the bugonia in Egypt, and, as Morgan argues, points to a resemblance between the miraculous fertility of the Nile flood and bugonia. The main point of comparison is the paradoxical creativity of the combination of the opposites fire and water, which Vergil alludes to in the bugonia (*Geo*. 4.308-9),\(^{723}\)

\[
\text{interea teneris tepefactus in ossibus umor} \\
\text{aestuat, et visenda modis animalia miris,}
\]

In the meantime, the moisture warmed in the softened bones boils, and wondrous creatures, a sight to behold...\(^{724}\)

and which Ovid incorporates into his imitation in the *Fasti* (1.379-80): *fervent examina putri / de bove* (“swarms pour hotly out of the rotting cow”). Therefore, both the bugonia

\(^{722}\) The similarities between chaos and the flood may allude to the philosophical idea, which was associated primarily with Thales in antiquity, that the primordial substance of the universe was water. This further underlines the functional and structural equivalence between the Proteus episode in the *Fasti* and the flood and its aftermath in the *Metamorphoses*, since Proteus is a watery deity who was also interpreted allegorically as the primordial substance in the universe.

\(^{723}\) Cf. the simile comparing the rebirth of the bees to rain bursting forth from clouds (*G*. 4.312-3): *donec ut aestivis effusus nubibus imber eruere*.

and the rebirth of animals in the *Metamorphoses* result from the paradoxical creativity of fire and water.

Beyond this, the flood in the *Metamorphoses* is part of Ovid’s account of the Myth of the Ages. Jupiter floods the earth to punish humankind and purge the earth of the degenerate race represented by Lycaon. Ovid’s history of sacrifice on the Agonalia treads similar ground as it describes an earlier time like the Golden Age in which ships had not yet brought foreign goods across the sea and cattle had not yet been sacrificed (*Fasti* 1.337-48). It is also the case that in the *Metamorphoses* the story of Deucalion and Pyrrha and the zoogony are closely connected by the theme of rebirth, although the former offers a mythological explanation for this rebirth and the latter a primarily physical one. It is interesting, then, that Aristaeus’ capture of Proteus and the bugonia appears to be parallel to not only the zoogony in the *Metamorphoses*, but also to the anthropogony of Deucalion and Pyrrha.

After he and Pyrrha have survived the flood, Deucalion offers a kind of lament for the human race (1.351-66), wishing he could restore its lost populations (*populos*, 1.362) by his father’s *ars* (363-4). He and Pyrrha weep (367) and then decide to ask for help (*auxilium*, 368) from the gods. They ask the oracle of Themis to tell them how they might turn aside the anger of the gods (*ira deorum*, 378) and restore the human race (379-80):

\[\text{dic, Themi, qua generis damnum reparabile nostri / arte sit et mersis fer opem, mitissima, rebus} \]

(“Tell me, Themis, by what art the loss of our race can be restored and bring help, gentlest goddess, in a dire situation”). In the *Fasti* Aristaeus too weeps (*flebat*, 1.363), like Deucalion and Pyrrha (*flebant*, 1.367), before his mother tells him how he
can restore his lost swarm, just as Themis instructs Deucalion and Pyrrha on how to restore the human race.\textsuperscript{725} Verbal parallels confirm the larger thematic parallels between the two episodes. We can compare Cyrene’s address to Aristaeus to \textit{Met.} 1.379-80 (\textit{Fasti} 1.367-8): \textit{siste, puer, lacrimas: Proteus tua damna levabit / quoque modo repares quae periere dabit} (“Stop your tears, my son: Proteus will relieve your losses and will tell you how you can restore what has been destroyed”). We should also compare Proteus’ address to Aristaeus after his capture (1.376): \textit{‘qua dixit ‘repares arte requiris apes?’} (“he said, “do you seek the art whereby you can restore your bees”).\textsuperscript{726} In other words, both Aristaeus and Deucalion/Pyrrha seek the art whereby they can restore a lost population; Ovid uses much the same language to describe the loss of bees and humans and the potential for restoration. One reason for this may be to underscore the fact that the bugonia is an allegory for the rebirth of human society and perhaps specifically of Rome after the civil wars, as several scholars have argued is the case in the \textit{Georgics}.

As we saw, however, the process Aristaeus uses to restores his bees in the \textit{Fasti} is similar not to Deucalion and Pyrrha’s regeneration of the human race, but rather the following episode in the \textit{Metamorphoses}, the physical zoogony characterized by the \textit{discors concordia} of fire and water, just as the combination of heat and moisture inside the carcass of the slain ox in the bugonia leads to the birth of bees. Once again, the comparison of the bugonia to the fertile conditions after the Nile flood in the \textit{Georgics} helps to confirm this, since in the \textit{Met.} Ovid compares the \textit{discors concordia} of fire and water after the mythical flood to the flooding of the Nile delta.

\textsuperscript{725} Note that the episodes occupy comparable lines in the first books of their respective poems.
\textsuperscript{726} Ursini (2008), in the context of discussing parallels between the story of Deucalion and Pyrrha and Numa’s reception of the \textit{ancile} in \textit{Fasti} 3, notes the parallels between \textit{Met.} 1.379-80 and \textit{Fasti} 1.376.
Conclusion

While the flood, anthropogony and zoogony in the *Metamorphoses* are clearly parallel to the “Aristaeus” in the *Fasti*, the former is compared to love’s half of the cycle in Empedocles and the latter to strife’s half. The association between the post-diluvian period and love’s half of the cycle makes sense on two levels, as we saw: first, Deucalion and Pyrrha are exceptionally pious and it seems piety characterized the reign of Philia/Aphrodite in Empedocles; second, shortly after the flood recedes, Amor enters the poem, and demonstrates his ascendancy over Apollo. The love represented by Deucalion and Pyrrha, however, and that represented by Amor, are not the same. The former can be said to be an ideal love, the other a more complicated, discordant one. While there are other examples of conjugal love and piety in the *Metamorphoses*, the “love” of the Apollo/Daphne episode is more representative of amor in the poem. It could be said that amor in the *Metamorphoses* is closer to the complex and paradoxical *discors concordia* of fire and water that is capable of incredible creativity, but also of *monstra*, than it is to the ideal *concordia* and unanimity of Deucalion and Pyrrha.

It is also the case that Ovid uses Empedoclean motifs at points in the first books of *Metamorphoses* and the *Fasti* where each poem is seriously complicating its generic identity. Empedoclean Philia is emphasized at the point in the *Metamorphoses* where Ovid is programmatically introducing elegiac themes into the epic universe of the *Metamorphoses*, a strategy that is underscored by his reworking of his elegiac initiation from *Am. 1.1* into Apollo’s defeat at the hands of Amor; in the *Fasti*, on the other hand, Empedoclean Neikos is given emphasis at a point where Ovid is imitating several epic
models simultaneously, Vergil’s *Georgics*, Lucretius’ *DRN* and Empedocles’ *Peri Phuseos* most prominently. Ovid is therefore using Empedoclean Philia and Neikos to reflect the generic complexity of both the epic *Metamorphoses* and elegiac *Fasti*.

Ovid’s use of Empedocles, however, is not limited to literary-generic concerns: in the *Fasti* Aristaeus is parallel to Deucalion and Pyrrha, but his capture of Proteus and his performance of the bugonia are compared to strife’s half of the cycle rather than love’s. This reflects the problematic nature of his actions: he violently subdues Proteus and then performs the violent rite of the bugonia. The poet’s connection of these actions to the decline from the Golden Age, in addition to cosmic strife, complicates the interpretation of them as positive acts of rebirth or restoration; instead it suggests that they are part of the corruption or degeneration of the world, whether one sees this as a cosmic transition to a period of strife or the fall from a better age; it seems likely that Empedocles combined the two. The presence of strife in the *Fasti*, both in the cosmogonies of Janus and Aristaeus, complicates the peaceful, concordant world of the poem and perhaps of Rome under Augustus. One of the prominent cosmological patterns in the *Fasti* thus far is strife’s breaking up of unity or concordia. We will see several more examples of this pattern, including the discordia of the famously concordant Muses in book 5, notably in the context of another cosmogony.

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727 Garani (forthcoming a) seems to interpret the Empedoclean aspects of the bugonia somewhat differently. In a summary of her position in Garani (forthcoming b) she says that “even if we sympathize with animals, in Empedoclean terms their sacrifice is the necessary precondition for life. In fact, this sympathy makes the contrast between death and life sharper and therefore explains the inevitability of the atrocities endured due to war.” This is similar to Morgan’s (1999) interpretation of the bugonia in the *Georgics*, although he of course bases his reading in Stoic rather than Empedoclean cosmology.
CHAPTER 5
Mars, Venus and the Structure of the *Fasti*

**Introduction**

In the last chapter we saw that book 1 of the *Fasti* programmatically establishes a natural philosophical and specifically Empedoclean frame of reference for the poem. In this chapter I focus on the way that this program is carried out through the presence of the Empedoclean deities Mars and Venus in the center of the poem, books 3 and 4, although I also suggest some possibilities for seeing larger structural features and patterns in the *Fasti* as “Empedoclean.” In the first section I elaborate on the claim that through the figures of Mars and Venus Ovid can relate his elegy to the tradition of didactic natural philosophy: these two figures, especially as allegorical representations of strife and love, are an important thread in the didactic tradition, both in Vergil’s *Georgics* and Lucretius’ *DRN*, but most prominently in Empedocles’ *Peri Phuseos*. Ovid participates in this tradition by placing the two figures at the center of his poem. This is also part of the poem’s “elegiac rhythm,” since the first six months of the year proceed in paired books that alternate quantitatively longer and shorter months similar to the metrical alternation of the hexameter and pentameter in the elegiac couplet; the alternation of Mars and Venus is perhaps the best example of this feature of the poem. The idea that books in the *Fasti* alternate in a kind of cycle featuring Mars and Venus at the center strongly suggests not only an elegiac but also an “Empedoclean” rhythm.

In the next section I demonstrate that the “disarming” of Mars in book 3 looks back to the Lucretian image of an equally “disarmed” Mars in the *DRN* 1 proem, where Mars is also Empedoclean Neikos. I argue that Ovid too acknowledges the
philosophical/allegorical background of Mars, in large part by alluding to the philosophical opening of the Janus episode and thereby framing Rome’s origins in terms of the *elementa* of Empedocles’ theory of matter and taking advantage of the widespread association in antiquity between *ktisis* and cosmogony. Mars continues to be my subject as I discuss Ovid’s allusion to the Lucretian Mars and Venus from the *DRN* 1 proem in his comic tale of Mars and Anna Perenna near the end of *Fasti* 3. As I demonstrate, Ovid also wittily alludes to the Empedoclean background of Lucretius’ image. This helps to confirm the Empedoclean/Lucretian frame of reference for Mars and Venus in the center of the *Fasti*, although it is at the same time a marvelously comic treatment of such themes. The episode, however, is bracketed by two references to civil strife, the first a secession of the *plebs*, the second Caesar’s assassination and Augustus’ revenge at Philippi. The latter notice especially raises the stakes of the metapoetic negotiation of peace and war, love and war; the surprising allusion to the cosmic forces of Neikos and Philia in the Anna Perenna tale adds to the sense that Ovid’s treatment of these themes is not simply playful and archly literary, but that it may also have more serious philosophical and political ramifications. Next I demonstrate that Empedoclean Neikos and Philia are further reflected in book 3 by the description of the reigns of Romulus and Numa in the context of the *aetion* for the *ancile*, an *imago mundi*.

I then discuss the end of book 3, the midpoint of the poem, where the months of March and April and therefore Mars and Venus meet. Ovid marks the structural importance of this position by alluding to the philosophical/allegorical idea of the union of Mars and Venus producing cosmic *concordia* or *harmonia*. The presence of Janus —
that thoroughly Empedoclean deity — at this juncture, also reinforces the

“Empedoclean” structure of books 3 and 4 since it enacts on a structural level the closure of War inside the Janus Geminus temple and the release of Peace. This is a natural segue to a brief discussion of Venus in the opening of *Fasti* 4 as an Empedoclean/Lucretian cosmic deity and counterpart to Mars in book 3. I then circle back to book 3 and the stories surrounding Numa’s reception of the *ancile* in order to complicate the dichotomous picture of Numa’s Venusian associations in contrast to Romulus’ Martial ones. Numa appears here as a double of Aristaeus from book 1; like Aristaeus’ ritual performance of the bugonia, Numa’s actions in gaining the cosmic *ancile* are assimilated to Empedocles’ principle of strife. This suggests that early Rome, under both Romulus and Numa, is characterized by the dynamic interaction of love and strife: both principles are featured in the early generative period in Rome’s history and are reflected in the figures of Mars and Venus.

Building upon this picture of the dynamic interaction of love and strife in the reigns of Romulus and Numa and in books 3 and 4, I consider the appearance of *concordia* at important structural positions throughout the poem and suggest that the notion of *concordia* is consistently problematized by undercurrents of *discordia* that, much like the episodes I treated from book 1, interrogate the view of the principate as the establishment of a lasting *concordia*. In the concluding section of this chapter I continue this wider view of the poem’s structure and make the suggestion that the structure of the *Fasti* is “Empedoclean” not only in the alternation of Mars and Venus at its center, but
also in the way that it more broadly enacts a cyclical rhythm and patterns of creation and destruction.

5.1 Mars, Venus and the Didactic Tradition

As we saw in the first half of the dissertation, poets, including Ovid, frequently make use of the tradition of interpreting Mars and Venus as allegorical representations of the cosmic principles of strife and love, which were associated especially with Empedocles in antiquity. This view of the gods had its origin in the interpretation of the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite, told by Demodocus in *Odyssey* 8, as an allegory of Empedocles’ cosmic principles of strife and love. Poets make use of this allegory in both heroic (*Argonautica, Aeneid*) and didactic epic (*De Rerum Natura, Georgics*). Indeed, such allegorical interpretations of myth are an important means for poets of uniting these strands in the epic tradition. However, the figures of Mars and Venus and the story of their adultery play an important role in Ovid’s elegiac poetry. These figures perform multiple functions in Ovid’s elegiac discourse, but the one most germane to this chapter is that their allegorical background enables them to be a bridge from elegy to more elevated poetry, such as didactic natural philosophy. Indeed, Ovid makes several gestures at the beginning of the *Fasti* that situate it as a successor to earlier poems in the tradition of Latin didactic, notably Lucretius’ *DRN* and Vergil’s *Georgics*. Specifically, Ovid alludes to the second line of the *DRN* in the second line of the *Fasti* and then later alludes doubly to Vergil and Lucretius in his praise of the *felices animae* at 1.295-310. Mars and Venus appear together in both the *DRN* and the *Georgics*, although much more conspicuously in the former than the latter.

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Lucretius famously depicts the lovers as part of his address to Venus in the proem (1.29-49). While Bailey has said that “the picture of Mars resting in the arms of Venus is purely mythological and cannot be interpreted allegorically,” the scholarly consensus seems to be that Mars and Venus are functioning here, at least in part, as allegorical representations of Empedocles’ principles of Philia and Neikos. This is not the place to discuss the passage in any detail, but simply note the richness of the associations raised by Mars and Venus: philosophical/allegorical, nationalist/political, and erotic. The allegorical significance has already been noted. In addition to this, Venus is identified in the first line of the poem as the mother of the Romans (Aeneadum genetrix, 1.1), while Mars is the father of Romulus, founder of Rome; together they are the divine “parents” of the Roman race. The emphasis in this tableau, however, is on their status as lovers. Lucretius uses metaphors like the “wound of love” from erotic poetry to describe Mars’ passion for Venus (aeterno devictus vulnere amoris, 1.34).

There may also be a literary-generic element to this opening appeal for Venus to conquer Mars and quiet the “wild works of war” (fera moenera militiai, 1.29), since Lucretius is composing an epic poem in hexameters, but a natural philosophical, not martial one. In other words, the suppression of Mars, or at least his warlike aspect, is a tacit rejection of martial epic. We can compare this to Ovid’s rejection of martial epic in the Fasti in favor of a more philosophical approach.

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729 Bailey (1947) ad DRN 1.33.
732 Edmunds (2002) has recently added to our understanding of the erotic context of the passage.
733 Although Lucretius does use themes, imagery and diction from martial epic throughout his poem. Ennius’ Annales are an especially important source. On epic themes in the DRN in general see Hardie (1986) 193-218.
of *sidera*, a common topic of natural philosophical poetry.\(^{734}\) Of course, Lucretius has placed the two gods in a structurally prominent position at the beginning of the poem.

The lovers Mars and Venus are much less conspicuous in Vergil’s *Georgics*; this is characteristic of Vergil’s treatment in his poetry of their mythological background as lovers. They are completely absent from the proem of the *Georgics*, even though it clearly looks back to the proem of *DRN* 1.\(^ {735}\) *Alma Ceres* (*G*. 1.7), for example, replaces *alma Venus* of *DRN* 1.2. The omission of Venus from the proem of the *Georgics* is all the more surprising given that Vergil’s poem begins in springtime, with which Venus is so closely associated in the proem of the *DRN*. The *Fasti* too omits Venus from the opening lines of the poem — made more conspicuous by his allusion to the second line of the *DRN* — but this could be in part because it begins not in spring, but winter. Venus is restored to her Lucretian status as the personified force of natural creation in the spring month of April at the beginning of *Fasti* 4.\(^ {736}\) In the *Georgics* the lovers Mars and Venus are mentioned only once, as part of the song of Clymene in *Georgics* 4 (345-7). It is a thoroughly erotic episode, as can be seen from the fruitless *cura* of the lover Vulcan and the adulterer Mars’ *dulcia furta*.\(^ {737}\) But scholars generally agree that Vergil has the myth’s status as Empedoclean allegory in mind, part of the widespread use of allegorizing interpretations of Homer in the *Aristaeus* episode.\(^ {738}\)

It is clear, therefore, that the love of Mars and Venus and their status as allegorical representations of Neikos and Philia are part of the tradition that Ovid

\(^{734}\) On the opposition between *arma* and *sidera* see Hinds (1992b) 115-6.

\(^{735}\) See, e.g. Gale (2000) 24ff.


\(^{737}\) See Hardie (1986) 83 on the erotic connotations of *cura* and *furta*.

inherited from his didactic predecessors Lucretius and Vergil. At the same time, Lucretius and Vergil are an important conduit for the reception of Empedoclean poetry and philosophy, including, notably, the philosophical/allegorical interpretation of Mars and Venus, in later Latin literature. Although Vergil is the primary model for the section in *Fasti* 1 extending from the *felices animae* to the “Aristaeus,” Ovid incorporates a great deal of Empedoclean material into this section, taking a cue both from Vergil himself, since Empedocles is an important model for Vergil at the end of *Georgics* 2, but also adding distinctively Empedoclean elements into Aristaeus’ capture of Proteus and the bugonia. This extended section in book 1, then, in addition to the Janus episode, makes the first book of the *Fasti* strongly Empedoclean, although Ovid’s use of Empedoclean ideas and motifs is nearly always mediated by Lucretius and Vergil. These philosophical/Empedoclean elements are not confined to book 1, however, but also extend to the structural centerpiece of the six book *Fasti* in the form of Mars and Venus, the tutelary deities of the months of March and April respectively. They also represent Empedoclean Neikos and Philia in the literary tradition. In one sense, then, the Empedoclean figures of Mars and Venus migrate from their important structural position in Lucretius’ proem to a different, but equally important structural position in the *Fasti* — its center.739

Just as in their appearance in the *DRN* proem, Mars and Venus in books 3 and 4 are implicated in multiple discourses; of these the literary-generic and nationalist/political

739 Cf. Farrell (2008) 7: “the central, Empedoclean image of Lucretius’ “Hymn to Venus,” that of the goddess of love subduing the god of war, speaks very directly to the position of Ovid’s allusion in the center not just of his poem, but of its central pair of books, at the very point where the month of Venus follows (and so replaces) the month of Mars.”
have garnered the most attention. Stephen Hinds, for example, has demonstrated that
*Fasti* 3 is self-consciously concerned about the threat Mars poses to the elegiac decorum
of the poem and undertakes a book-long project of “disarming” the god that culminates in
the prominence of the elegiac Venus in the proem of book 4.\(^{740}\) This is just one example
of Ovid’s abiding interest in exploring the dynamic relationship between elegy and epic. I
have previously observed that the adultery of Mars and Venus relates to a number of the
characteristic features of elegy. Books 3 and 4 of the *Fasti* can also be seen as a macro-
example of one of the ways that Ovid represents the elegiac couplet, that is, as consisting
of a Martial, epic hexameter followed by a Venusian, elegiac pentameter. As is well
known, the *Fasti* is organized into three groups of two books, or perhaps “couplets.”\(^{741}\)
Matthew Robinson has recently suggested that in this respect the *Fasti* exhibits an
“elegiac rhythm.” Robinson notes that quantitatively longer and shorter months alternate
for the first six books, not unlike the elegiac couplet, where the metrically longer
hexameter and shorter pentameter alternate.\(^{742}\) Thus it is possible to refer to certain books
in the poem as an “hexameter” or “pentameter” book. Robinson’s suggestion is
intriguing, although it can only be taken so far.\(^{743}\) Still, the months of March and April fit
this scheme remarkably well. If March is an “hexameter” book, it is altogether
appropriate that its patron deity is Mars, since Ovid conventionally associates the
hexameter with war (cf. *Am.* 1.1.1); the same is true for the “pentameter” book 4, whose
patron deity is the elegiac Venus. Once again, Morgan has demonstrated that even though

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\(^{740}\) Hinds (1992a).
\(^{742}\) Robinson (2011) 5.
\(^{743}\) As Robinson (2011) 5, n. 16 says, “The elegiac rhythm would of course be disrupted by the 31 days of
August.”
the pentameter does not exist independently of the hexameter, elegiac poets nevertheless use it as the focus for generic definition; in this sense the pentameter by itself can represent elegy.\footnote{744 Morgan (2010) 345-59.}

In addition to the literary-generic significance of the pairing of Mars and Venus, there are also nationalist/political associations.\footnote{745 See, e.g., Fantham (1995) 54-5.} The two deities assumed a greater prominence in the Augustan period as the divine ancestors of the Roman race and, more importantly, of the ruling family. This political significance is on full display in the \textit{Fasti}. In discussing the development of the calendar at the beginning of the poem, Ovid says that Romulus originally established March as the first month and April as the second to honor Mars and Venus, respectively (1.39-40): \textit{Martis erat primus mensis, Venerisque secundus; \ haec generis princeps, ipsius ille pater}; (“The month of Mars was the first, that of Venus the second; she was the founder of the race, he the father of [Romulus] himself”). Then in book 4, Ovid addresses Augustus and undertakes a complicated genealogical exercise linking him to both Mars and Venus, who are \textit{auctores} (4.24) and \textit{parentes} (4.57) of the Roman people. The important role that these two gods played in Augustan mythology has been well-documented.\footnote{746 See Herbert-Brown (1994) 81-95 with bibliography.} Therefore, by choosing to place Mars and Venus in books 3 and 4, and by emphasizing their connection in the calendar and in Roman genealogy, he literally puts Augustan political discourse at the center of the \textit{Fasti}.\footnote{747 As Green (2004) \textit{ad Fasti} 1.39 notes, Ovid chooses the less popular etymology of April from Venus via Aphrodite instead of April from \textit{aperio} so that he can make Venus the tutelary deity of the month. See also Herbert-Brown (1994) 81ff, who shows why “Venus’ connection with the month of April is [not] an automatic assumption on the part of all of Ovid’s own contemporaries.”}
5.2 Mars and Empedoclean Neikos

As in the tableau at the beginning of the *DRN* and in the brief mention of the gods in the song of Clymene in the *Georgics*, Mars and Venus in the *Fasti* also have a philosophical identity, specifically as cosmic Neikos and Philia. As we will see, this is made quite clear in the case of Venus, but less so for Mars. The proems of books 3 and 4, like so many other aspects of these books, are closely connected. For example, consider the poet’s opening request for Mars to put aside his arms (3.1-4):

Bellice, depositis clipeo paulisper et hasta,
Mars, ades et nitidas casside solve comas.
forsitan ipse roges quid sit cum Marte poetae:
a te qui canitur nomina mensis habet.

Warlike Mars, come set aside your shield and spear for a bit and let loose your brilliant hair from your helmet. Perhaps you may ask what a poet has to do with Mars: from you the month I am singing takes its name.

This is an ingenious adaptation of the opening of book 1 of the *Amores*, another book of elegiac poetry whose first word, *arma* (1.1.1), like *bellice*, seemed more appropriate for epic than elegy. But here it is the (elegiac) poet who is seeking to disarm the (epic) god, whereas in *Am.* 1.1 an (elegiac) god had figuratively disarmed the (epic) poet. The question the poet imagines Mars asking (*forsitan ipse roges quid sit cum Marte poetae*, 3.3) echoes the question the poet asks Amor in *Am.* 1.1.5. But the question also anticipates the one Venus asks the poet in the proem of the next book (4.3), occupying exactly the same line in its own book that Mars’ imagined question had in the prior one:

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749 On the metapoetics of this proem see Hinds (1992a) 88-90.
750 In still another reversal of *Am.* 1.1 the *Fasti* poet argues that Mars can set aside his arms temporarily just as Minerva takes time out from waging wars to practice “noble arts” (*ingenuis artibus*, 3.6). In *Am.* 1.1, on the other hand, the poet resists Cupid’s usurpation of his burgeoning epic poem by essentially arguing that gods should keep to their usual sphere of influence.
'quid tibi ait 'mecum? certe maiora canebas' (‘what business do you have with me?’) she said “surely you were singing of greater subject matter”). Of course, the poet goes on to demonstrate that Venus can be accommodated within the maiora of the Fasti, in large part because of her Lucretian identity as the cosmic principle of natural creation. The Lucretian identity of the Venus in Fasti 4 and the close association between Venus, Mars and their two proems suggests, once again, that Ovid has distributed the Lucretian (and Empedoclean) Mars and Venus of the DRN proem over the proems of Fasti 3 and 4. Indeed, if one seeks a parallel for the poet’s entreaty in the proem to Fasti 3 that Mars set aside his arms, it can be found in Lucretius’ appeal to Venus that she effectively “disarm” her mythological lover. As we will see, Ovid returns to this proemial scene from the DRN at the end of Fasti 3. In the DRN Mars is not only a mythological lover or father of the founder Romulus, but also an allegorical representation of Empedocles’ cosmic principle of Neikos. Is there any indication that this is an aspect of Mars’ identity in the Fasti? The poet begins to question the god on the Kalends of March, which was the beginning of the old Roman year before Numa’s calendrical reforms (1.39-44). In this sense, Mars, like Janus, is a god of beginnings. We saw that Janus begins his own conversation with the poet by giving an account of the beginning of the universe (105-12), in which the four elements are separated out from chaos by the principle of strife (1.105-10). Janus prefaces this cosmogony with the following address to the poet (1.101-2):

‘disce metu posito, vates operose dierum, quod petis, et voces percipe mente meas.’

Miller (1991) 29-30; Merli (2000) 56. There is perhaps no better (or funnier) illustration of the complex generic identity of the Fasti than that both Mars and Venus question their status in this poem.
'Set aside your fear and learn, laborious poet of the days, what you seek, and grasp in your mind my words.'

Mars virtually repeats Janus’ words in his own opening address to the poet in book 3 (177-8):

\[ \text{disce, Latinorum vates operose dierum, quod petis, et memori pectore dicta nota.} \]

Learn, laborious poet of the Latin days, what you seek, and mark my words in your mindful heart.

As often in Ovid, a “memory word” (\textit{memori pectore}, 178) signals that this is a poetic memory, namely of Janus’ address to the poet in book 1.\footnote{1752 But whereas Janus had given an account of the beginning of the universe, Mars refers to the beginning of the city of Rome (3.179-80):

\[ \text{parva fuit, si prima velis elementa referre, Roma, sed in parva spes tamen huius erat.} \]

Rome was small, if you wish to recall its first beginnings, but in that small town was nevertheless the hope of this city.

It seems unlikely to be a coincidence that Ovid uses the phrase \textit{prima elementa} (179) to refer to Rome’s origins in an address modeled on Janus’ account of cosmogony — we should remember that Janus had emphasized the articulation of the cosmos into the four \textit{elementa} of earth, water, air and fire. Instead, Ovid is tapping into a well-established association between \textit{ktisis} or “city-foundation” and cosmogony.\footnote{1753 There is a useful parallel from the beginning of book 15 of the \textit{Metamorphoses}, where Ovid once again uses the same language to describe the beginnings of a state, this time Croton, and the}

\footnote{1752 On this practice see Miller (1993), “Ovidian Allusion and the Vocabulary of Memory.”}

\footnote{1753 Hardie has shown this to be a major feature of Vergil’s description of the Shield of Aeneas in \textit{Aeneid} 8. On the association between \textit{ktisis} and cosmogony, see Hardie (1986) 344, n. 31; 345-6; 350; 363.}
beginnings of the universe. We can compare the way that he concludes the story of Croton’s foundation (15.58-9), *talia constabat certa primordia fama / esse loci positaeque Italis in finibus urbis* (“tradition has left no doubt that such were the beginnings of the place and the city built on the Italian coast”) to his description of Pythagoras’ exposition of his philosophy (15.66-7), *in medium discenda dabat coetusque silentum / dictaque mirantum magni primordia mundi* (“he used to offer precepts in the midsts of gatherings of people, hushed and wondering at his discourse on the beginning of the cosmos”). As we saw earlier, this description of Pythagoras is modeled closely on Lucretius’ praise of Epicurus in book 1 of the *DRN* and here Ovid uses a word, *primordia*, that Lucretius often uses to refer to atoms. Once again, the use of the same word for city-foundation and cosmogony in such close proximity points to the associations between the two in ancient thought.

At the risk of pressing the correspondence between the cosmogony in book 1 and Rome’s origins in book 3 too far, I will make a few more tentative observations. The cosmogony is motivated by strife in book 1, while Mars, who can be an allegorical representation of strife, is the progenitor of Rome’s founder. It is clear that Romulus has inherited his father’s bellicose character. Mars is also said to be the patron deity of the Latin people, as Athena is to Athens, and the people get their fierce natures from him.

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754 Segal (2001) 72 notes this shift of *primordia* from a geographic to a “scientific” meaning.
755 According to Wacht’s concordance, Lucretius uses *primordia* 73 times in the *DRN*. Cf. Hardie on *Ars Amatoria* 3.337, *et profugum Aenean, altae primordia Romae*: “Ovid footnotes the atomic origin of Rome.” See also Gibson (2003) *ad loc.*, quoted by Hardie: “a striking hexameter ending which grandly implies that Aeneas is the (Lucretian) ‘original substance’ of Rome.”
756 Note that Ovid uses another Lucretian word for atoms, *semina*, in describing Mars’ impregnation of Rhea Silvia (3.9-10): *tum quoque inermis eras, cum te Romana sacerdos / cepit, ut huic urbi semina magna dares.*
757 Cf. 3.197, where Mars says he gave Romulus his own temperament before the rape of the Sabines: *indolui patriamque dedi tibi, Romule, mentem.* See also *Fasti* 3.73-4.
Mars Latio venerandus erat, quia praesidet armis; / arma ferae genti remque decusque dabant (“Mars had to worshipped by Latium, because he presides over arms; arms furnished a fierce people wealth and glory”). According to this interpretation, arma or strife is responsible for the Roman “cosmogony,” not unlike the cosmogony in book 1. Therefore, Mars or “strife,” as one of the parentes of the Roman race, might be said to act on its prima elementa (cf. 3.179) analogously to the way that lis acts on the four elements in the universe. We saw that the chaos-cosmogony of book 1 corresponds to Empedocles’ cosmogony under strife, marking the beginnings of strife’s ascendancy in the cosmic cycle.

5.3 The Disarming of Mars (and the Arming of Vesta?)

We will see even more clearly that the Empedoclean/Lucretian figures of Ares/Mars and Aphrodite/Venus are an important frame of reference for the central books of the Fasti by briefly considering the splendidly comic episode near the end of book 3 that has Anna Perenna trick the lovesick Mars into thinking that he is about to marry the (famously virginal) Minerva (3.675-96). Needless to say, this story, in which Mars not only appears as a lover (amans, 3.689; amatorem, 3.693) but also as an absurdly inept and ridiculous one, is one of the signature moments in Ovid’s project of “disarming” the martial, epic god in book 3. It appropriately appears near the end of the book and thus

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758 One objection that could be raised at this point is that Ovid’s use of the Roman legal term lis to describe “strife” in the cosmogony is not really related to Mars’ domain of martial strife. Yet Ovid elsewhere uses the name of Mars as a metaphor for legal strife, which suggests that the two are conceptually related (4.187-8): spectate, Quirites, / et fora Marte suo litigious vacent.

759 The bibliography on this episode is considerable, for which see Merli (2000) 60, n. 39. Merli (ibid.) 59-67 emphasizes the episode’s references to theater and especially to mime. On this see also Littlewood (1980).

760 See Hinds (1992a) 99-101. As he notes, this episode is the culmination of the poet’s suggestion in the proem that Mars model his cultivation of peace on Minerva (3.5-8).
the transition from March to April, where the transformation from war (Mars) to love (Venus) will be fully complete. The predominantly erotic nature of the episode, in addition to the poet’s aside that Anna’s trick greatly pleased Venus (3.693), glances ahead to book 4 and Venus’ ascendancy. Yet, commentators on the episode have not seemed to notice that the tale of Mars and Anna Perenna contains numerous echoes of the Lucretian Mars and Venus from the *DRN* 1 proem, where, as in the *Fasti*, the war god is conquered by *amor*. Not only this, but Ovid subtly acknowledges his recognition of the Empedoclean background of this scene in Lucretius. As I argue, he archly suggests that his “disarming” of Mars and the shifting interplay of love and war in his poem can be seen in Empedoclean terms.

First, however, I need to briefly note the preceding *aetion*, that of Anna’s worship at Bovillae (657-74), since it is germane to the discussion, as well. During civil strife the *plebs* retreated to the top of the Sacred Mount, only to have their supplies fail them. An Anna from Bovillae — equated to Anna Perenna — fed the people on rustic cakes and once the strife ended, they set up a statue in thanks to the goddess (3.673): *pace domi facta signum posuere Perennae* (“When peace was made at home, they dedicated a statue to Anna Perenna”). This transition from strife to peace prefaces the story of Mars and Anna; the significance of this episode will become apparent in the course of my interpretation.

The poet presents the story of Mars and Anna as the *aetion* for why *puellae* sing obscene songs on the feast day of Anna Perenna (3.675-96). Mars goes to see Anna and

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761 Bömer (1957-8) does not note the parallels. At least to my knowledge, no treatment of the Mars and Anna passage compares it to the Lucretian image of Mars and Venus.
beseech her for help in gaining the object of his love, Minerva. Anna falsely promises to set up a marriage ceremony between the two gods, but at the appointed time a carefully veiled Anna herself takes Minerva’s place and Mars only realizes he has been duped as he leans in to give his “bride” a kiss. Here is the Fasti passage in full, including the end of the previous aetion about Anna’s role in seeing the plebs through a period of strife, succeeded by Lucretius’ description of Mars and Venus:

_Fasti_ 3.673-96

pace domi facta signum posuere Perennae, 
quod sibi defectis illa ferebat opem.

Nunc mihi, cur cantent, superest, obscena puellae, 
dicere; nam coeunt certaque probracanunt.

nuper erat dea facta: venit Gradivus ad Annam, 
et cum seducta talia verba facit:

'mense meo coleris, _iunxi mea tempora tecum_;

pendet ab officio spes mihi magna _tuo._

_armifer armiferae correptus amore_ Minervae 
uro, et hoc _longo tempore volnus_ alo.

effice, di studio similes coeamus in unum:
conveniunt partes hae tibi, comis anus.'
dixerat; illa deum promisso ludit inani,
et stultam dubia spem trahit usque mora.

saepius instanti 'mandata peregimus' inquit;

'evicta est: precibus vix dedit illa manus.'
credit amans thalamosque parat. deducitur illuc

Anna tegens voltus, ut nova nupta, suos.

oscula sumpturus subito Mars aspicit Annam:
nunc pudor elusum, nunc subit ira, deum.

ridet amatore carae nova diva Minervae,
nec res hac Veneri gratior ulla fuit.

inde ioci veteres obscenaque dicta canuntur,
et iuvat hanc magno verba dedisse deo.

When peace was made at home, they dedicated a statue to Anna Perenna, because she brought aid to them in their time of need. Now, it remains for me to explain why girls sing obscene songs; for they gather together and sing certain immodest verses. She had only recently been made a goddess; Gradivus comes to Anna, and after taking her aside says to her: ‘You are worshipped in my month, I have joined my season with you; a great hope of mine depends upon your help. An arm-bearing
god myself I burn seized by passion for arm-bearing Minerva, and I have
nursed this wound for a long time. Make it so that we two gods who are similar in
our pursuits come together into one: this role befits you, kind old woman.’ He had
spoken; she dupes the god with a false promise, and continuously strings along his
foolish hope with dubious delay. In response to his constant pressure, she said ‘I
have carried through your orders’; ‘she has capitulated: scarcely did she yield to
your pleading.’ The lover believes her and prepares the marriage bed. Anna is led
there with her face veiled, like a new bride. Mars leaning in for a kiss suddenly
recognizes Anna: now embarrassment, now anger come over the duped god. The
new goddess laughs at the lover of dear Minerva, and nothing ever pleased Venus
more. From that old jokes and obscene songs are sung, and it pleases them that
Anna tricked the great god.

DRN 1.29-40
effice ut interea fera moenera militiai
per maria ac terras omnis sopita quiescant. 30
nam tu sola potes tranquilla pace iuare
mortalis, quoniam belli fera moenera Mavors
armipotens regit, in gremium qui saepe tuum se
reicit aeterno devictus vulnere amoris,
atque ita suspiciens tereti cervice reposta
pascit amore avidos inhians in te, dea, visus,
eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore.
hunc tu, diva, tuo recubantem corpore sancto
circumfusa super, suavis ex ore loquellas
fundet petens placidam Romanis, incluta, pacem. 40

In the meantime bring the fierce works of warfare to quiet repose over every sea
and land. For only you can bring the delight of tranquil peace to mortals, since
Mars rules the fierce works of war, who often throws himself into your lap
conquered by the eternal wound of love, and thus looking up with his graceful neck
lain back, gaping at you, goddess, he feeds his greedy eyes on love, and as he lies
back his breath hangs upon your lips. You, goddess, enveloping him from above
with your holy body as he reclines, pour out seductive words from your lips,
seeking peace, glorious goddess, for the Romans.

As we can see, the parallels are extensive. Lucretius asks Venus to “bring about” (effice,
1.29) peace over land and sea, Mars in the Fasti passage asks Anna to “bring about”
(effice, 3.683) his marriage to Minerva. The Lucretian Mars’ breath hangs upon Venus’
lips (eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore, 1.37), while the Ovidian Mars’ hope depends
upon Anna’s service (*pendet ab officio spes mihi magna tuo*, 3.680). These are the most precise parallels, but Ovid also nicely varies some of the Lucretian expressions. The Lucretian *armipotens* (1.33) Mars is “conquered by an eternal wound of love” (*aeterno devictus vulnere amoris*, 1.34), while the Ovidian *armifer* (3.681) Mars is “seized by love for Minerva” (*correptus amore Minervae*, 3.681) and has “nursed his wound for a long time” (*et hoc longo tempore volnus alo*, 3.682). Ovid therefore substitutes *correptus* (681) for the Lucretian *devictus* (34), although the latter is echoed in Anna’s false claim that Minerva “has been conquered” (*evicta est*, 3.688); and he reflects the Lucretian *aeterno...vulnere* (1.34) by *hoc longo tempore volnus alo* (3.682). More obliquely, we also see Lucretius’ prayers for peace at Rome (*pace*, 1.31; *pacem*, 1.40) echoed at the end of the *aetion* immediately preceding the story of Anna and Mars (*pace domi facta*, 3.673).

Ovid also nods to his Lucretian model by mentioning the pleasure Venus took from Anna’s trick (3.694): *nec res hac Veneri gratior ulla fuit* (“Nothing ever pleased Venus more than this”). On a subtler level, the union of Venus and Mars might also be alluded to in Mars’ appeal to Anna for help on the basis that his *tempora* have been joined to hers, in the sense that her feast day appears in the month of March (*iunxi mea tempora mecum*, 3.679). In the *Fasti*, however, Mars’ “time” is most prominently joined to Venus’ in the structure of the calendar (cf. 4.60, *tempora dis generis continuata dedit*; 4.130, *utque solet, Marti continuata suo est*; also *Ars* 1.405-6, *sive dies suberit natalis, sive Kalendae, / quas Venerem Marti continuasse iuvat*). Therefore, Ovid gives numerous

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762 Merli (2000) 57 suggests that this alludes generally to Mars and Venus’ mythological status as lovers, but she does not connect it specifically to the Lucretian Mars and Venus.
indications that the love affair of Mars and Venus, especially its Lucretian
embodiment in *DRN* 1, is in the background of his comic tale of Anna and Mars. In fact,
it is quite appropriate for Ovid to allude to this scene from the proem of *DRN* 1 near the
end of *Fasti* 3 since at the beginning of the next book (*Fasti* 4), Ovid will praise Venus in
a passage modeled on Lucretius’ hymn to Venus in the *DRN* 1 proem.

Yet, we also know that the Lucretian Mars and Venus themselves nod to the
Ares/Neikos and Aphrodite/Philia of Lucretius’ great model Empedocles. Ovid
acknowledges the Empedoclean background in several ways. As I mentioned, Ovid’s
description of Mars as *armifer* (3.681) echoes Lucretius’ description of Mars as *armipotens* (1.33); he substitutes one compound adjective for another. But he also wittily
applies the same adjective to Minerva in the *same* line (3.681): *armifer armiferae
correctus amore Minervae*. This reflects on the level of diction the similarity in character
between the two gods (*di...similes*, 3.683). As we know, however, the clustering of
compound adjectives in the space of a few lines and especially in a single line as here is a
technique used by Lucretius to mark Empedoclean allusion. Ovid recognized and used
this Empedoclean fingerprint, usually as a marker of double allusion to both Lucretius
and Empedocles. 763 Doubtless therefore, this striking use of mirroring compound
adjectives in a single line is a similar acknowledgment of the Empedoclean heritage of
the Lucretian Mars and Venus. 764

763 We saw Ovid doing this, for example, at *Ars* 2.24, *semibovemque virum semivirumque bovem*, and
*Fasti* 1.384, *lanigerumque pecus ruricolaequa boves*.
764 I should note too that Sedley (1998) 24-5 has in fact used the presence of compound adjectives in the
*DRN* 1 proem to argue for Lucretius’ imitation of Empedocles there.
Given the presence of this Empedoclean fingerprint in the Mars-Anna passage, one might also see an allusion to Empedocles at Fasti 3.683, where Mars entreats Anna, *effice, di studio similes coeamus in unum* (“make it so that we two gods who are similar in our pursuits come together into one”). The phrase that ends the hexameter, *coeamus in unum* (“we come together into one”), has parallels in the fragments of Empedocles, where he uses a very similar expression to describe the influence of the cosmic principle of Philia or Philotes, for example at fr. 38/20.2, ἄλλοτε μὲν φιλότητι συνερχόμεθα εἰς έν, “at one time by love we come together into one” (cf. a(i) 6, a(ii) 17 = Inwood fr. 25/17.36, 56). In Empedocles’ system, as we know, the cosmos under the influence of Philia and Neikos seems to have alternated between a unity and plurality or between the one, a perfect sphere under complete dominance of Philia and the many, divided by Neikos. We have seen that Ovid alludes several times in both the *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses* to this basic feature of Empedocles’ cosmology, the alternation between the one and many, which Empedocles states repeatedly in the fragments (cf. esp. fr. 25/17). Therefore, Mars’ request to Anna to “make it so that we like gods [Mars and Minerva] come together into one” may point to the influence of Empedoclean Philia or, in Ovidian terms, Venus or *amor*, on the war god Mars.

More generally, “Empedoclean” in the Mars and Anna passage and its surrounding context is the repeated emphasis on the transition from war to peace or *arma* to *amor* that is connected by poets in the Greco-Roman literary tradition to Empedocles. Not only does the episode enact the transformation of Mars from soldier to lover that is

765 Cf. Fasti 4.97, describing Venus’ effects on human beings, illa [Venus] rudes animos hominum contraxit in unum, and 4.100, describing her effect on animals, nec coeant pecudes, si levis absit amor.

766 Cf. Fasti 1.380, Met. 1.325-6, 5.380-1, each of which I discuss in chapter 4.
an important theme in the book — the poet had begun the book by reminding Mars of his lust for Rhea Silvia (3.9-10) — but immediately preceding the story of Anna and Mars had been Ovid’s commemoration of Anna’s aid to the plebs, which featured the transition from civil discord to peace at home (pace domi facta, 3.673). On the other hand, strife rears its head again immediately after the erotic-elegiac and comic tale of Anna and Mars. Anna’s feast day is also the Ides of March, the fateful day of Caesar’s assassination (Fasti 3.697-710). The poet represents himself as content to pass by this subject, but the goddess Vesta effects a striking change in mood from the obscene, jocose episode of Anna and Mars (3.697-8): praeteritus eram gladios in principe fixos, / cum sic a castis Vesta locuta focis (“I was about to pass by the daggers plunged into the prince, when Vesta spoke thus from her chaste hearth”). Whereas Mars had seemed happy enough to set aside his spear and shield for his cameo in Ovid’s elegiac poem, Vesta is determined not to let the Ides pass free from arma (cf. telis, 3.700). The metapoetics of this passage in relation to that of Anna and Mars is characteristic of the Fasti. The poet’s arch hint at a praeteritio suggests that such a subject is too weighty (and too martial) for his elegiacks, an anxiety he openly expresses elsewhere in the face of Augustan themes. But Ovid also works this interplay between peace and war, love and strife into his poem’s Empedoclean discourse.

767 See Newlands (1996) on this juxtaposition.
768 Although as Hinds (1992a) 99 has noted, Mars’ “disarming” is not quite complete. He still carries his spear (hasta, 3.172).
769 See especially Fasti 2.119-144 and the poet’s anxiety over being able to celebrate Augustus’ assumption of the title of Pater Patriae. Newlands (1995) 60-1 sees Ovid as prioritizing the carnivalesque festival of Anna over the political events of the Ides of March. Barchiesi (1997) 129-30 thinks that the juxtaposition of the two commemorations “undermines the efficacy of the propaganda of Caesar’s avenger.”
As we saw, near the beginning of book 3 Mars’ quotation of Janus’ opening cosmogony from book 1 and his reference to Rome’s beginnings as its *prima elementa* had pointed to Mars’ background as Empedoclean Neikos, despite the (nearly complete) “disarming” he undergoes in book 3. Significantly, the phrase *prima elementa* occurs again — its only other appearance in the poem — in this passage near the end of book 3 on the assassination of Caesar and the civil wars. Prompted by Vesta, the poet dutifully celebrates the revenge Augustus took for his adoptive father’s murder at the battle of Philippi (3.709-10): *hoc opus, haec pietas, haec prima elementa fuerunt / Caesaris, ulcisci iusta per arma patrem* (“this was the work, this the piety, these the first beginnings of Caesar, to avenge his father by just warfare”). This allusion is richly suggestive, but one thing it surely does is to point to the idea that Augustus’ victory in the civil wars was the first step in his refoundation of Rome, since *prima elementa* had referred earlier in book 3 to Rome’s Romulean origins. But it also strongly ties Augustus to strife, since Mars’ use of *prima elementa* had alluded to the earlier chaos-cosmogony under strife. Therefore, it underscores the point that the recent Roman cosmogony under Augustus came out of the strife of the civil wars and perhaps suggests a measure of continuity between the reigns of Romulus and Augustus, both founded on civil strife. The subtext of Empedoclean philosophy that surprisingly surfaces in the comic tale of Mars and Anna suggests that Augustus’ vengeful *prima elementa* enact a Roman cosmogony under strife that recapitulates not only the chaos-cosmogony of the Janus episode but also the political allegory of Aristaeus and the bugonia. The Empedoclean frame of reference may question the ethics of this Roman cosmogony, in as much as Neikos in Empedocles,
though sometimes creative, also seems to have carried strongly negative moral connotations.\footnote{The unsettling aspects of this passage are best discussed by Barchiesi (1997a) 124-30.}

Once again, the juxtaposition of the ludic tale of Anna and Mars and commemoration of Caesar’s assassination and Augustus’ revenge is also symbolic of the persistent pressure that Augustan and martial themes put on the elegiac identity of the *Fasti*. The trick that Anna plays on Mars is perhaps the culmination of the poet’s effort in book 3 to “disarm” the epic god and accommodate him into his elegy, but this generic victory is almost immediately undermined by Vesta’s insistence on recalling the assassination of Caesar and the civil wars. She seems all too ready to take up Mars’ idle arms. In fact Vesta herself is consistently a source of this generic and ideological pressure in the *Fasti*. She, perhaps even more than Mars, is an embodiment of strife in the poem.\footnote{See Garani (2011a) 11-7 for an argument that Vesta in Propertius 4.4 is a version of Empedoclean Neikos. Garani is also apparently working on Vesta as Empedoclean Neikos in the *Fasti*. On Vesta’s connection to vengeance in the poem see Newlands (1996) 333.}

She is linked to civil war in *Fasti* 5 during Ovid’s commemoration of the temple of Mars Ultor. There the poet imagines Octavian addressing his army at Philippi, where he refers to his father Caesar as his *causa belli*, naming him specifically as a priest of Vesta and, moreover, that he intends to avenge both his father’s divinity and Vesta’s (5.573-5): *si mihi bellandi pater est Vestaeque sacerdos / auctor, et ulcisci numen utrumque paro, / Mars, ades et satia scelerato sanguine ferrum* (If father, Vesta’s priest, is my reason for war, and I prepare to avenge each deity, be present Mars, and sate your sword on blood of the impious”).\footnote{It should be noted that the *Fasti* and Augustus’ *Res Gestae* belong to essentially the same period. As the beginning of the *Res Gestae* (2-3) demonstrates, Augustus hardly shied away from recalling his role in the...
anniversaries than any other and whose central panel is occupied by Vesta, the
goddess promises that Augustus will avenge the murder of Crassus at the hands of the
Parthians (6.465-8), in which the final image of the festival is Augustus as avenger
(*quique necem Crassi vindicet, ultor erit*, 468). Yet, given the fact that an ancestor of one
of Caesar’s assassins is mentioned immediately preceding this (461-2), Vesta’s naming of
Augustus as an *ultor* likely alludes once again to the vengeance exacted from Caesar’s
murderers. We will see in the final chapter that Vesta’s temple too is a site of *discordia*,
this time among the Empedoclean elements.

While my focus thus far has been on strife, book 3 also introduces us most fully to
the figure of Numa. The contrast between Romulus and Numa in the *Fasti* has been
discussed extensively, but, as we will see, cosmology also informs this contrast. Whereas
Romulus’ reign is characterized mostly by strife, Numa’s influence on the Roman people
is described in similar terms to Ovid’s description of the cosmic Venus’ effect on the
natural world in the *Fasti* 4 proem. Therefore, by considering these two figures we will
continue to flesh out the influence of the Empedoclean Mars and Venus on the central
books of the *Fasti*.

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civil war, although, like Vesta in *Fasti* 3, and like the speech put into his mouth by Ovid in *Fasti* 5,
5.4 Further reflections of Mars and Venus in Fasti 3: Romulus, Numa and the ancile

After the story of the union of the Sabines and Romans in book 3, the focus turns to Rome’s second king, Numa, whose philosophical associations are explicitly, if not unproblematically, stated. In both the Fasti and Metamorphoses he is said to be a disciple of Pythagoras.

The stories told in this section (3.259-398) all surround the ancile or shield that descended from the sky as a pignus imperii during Numa’s reign (259-60):

\[ \text{quis mihi nunc dicet, quare caelestia Martis / arma ferant Salii Mamuriumque canant?} \]

(“Who will now tell me why the Salii bear the celestial arms of Mars and sing of Mamurius?”). The phrase caelestia arma is in the plural because, as the reader learns shortly, Numa ordered that several copies of the genuine ancile be made in order to frustrate any attempt to steal the shield. The Salii then carried these copies (ancilia) of the shield in their ritual dance in honor of Mars Gradivus.

Although the expression caelestia arma seems to be taken from Livy, Emma Gee has argued that Ovid’s ancilia in Fasti 3 “might be seen to act as Ovid’s equivalent of Aeneas’ Shield.”

The ancilia in fact appear as part of Vergil’s ecphrasis of the Shield of Aeneas in book 8 (663-5). Therefore, Ovid elaborates the brief mention of the Salii and ancilia in Vergil to fill an entire section of the Fasti (259-392). Gee further argues that Ovid’s ancilia reproduce one specific aspect of Aeneas’ Shield, namely its status as

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773 Met. 15.479-81; Fasti 3: 151-4.
774 Gee (2000) 41. Littlewood (2002) is the other important discussion of the ancile. She too connects it to the Shield of Aeneas in Vergil, but, also sees Augustus’ Clupeus Virtutis as the descendant of both earlier shields. Augustus, Numa and Aeneas are all connected as shield-bearers. In general, she thinks that the ancilia/Salli episode in Fasti 3 establishes Numa as a mirror for Augustus. As she argues, this is done in part through allusion in the ancilia episode to Aristaeus and the bugonia in Georgics 4, which Littlewood, like others, reads as an allegory of Rome’s rebirth after the civil wars. Through the parallel between Numa and Aristaeus, Littlewood (2002) 188 sees further evidence that “Numa mirrors Augustus in the years immediately following Actium, shielding his people by a restoration of temples and a revival of Roman religion.”
an *imago mundi*, which, as we saw in chapter 2, draws upon the allegorical interpretation of the Shield of Achilles as a cosmic icon. Ovid seems to have been aware of this interpretation of Achilles’ Shield, since he refers to it in the *Metamorphoses* as *clipeus vasti caelatus imagine mundi* (13.110).\(^775\) Gee’s interpretation is essentially confirmed by Ovid’s description of the *ancile* (3.377-8):

> idque ancile vocat, quod ab omni parte recisum est, quaque notes oculis *angulus omnis abest*.

He calls this the *ancile*, because it is cut away on every side, and there is no angle that you can see.

The expression *angulus omnis abest* is repeated verbatim in book 6 in Ovid’s description of the spherical earth (6.271-2): *ipsa volubilitas libratum sustinet orbem, / quique premat partes angulus omnis abest* (“its own circular motion keeps the sphere in balance, and there is no angle that presses its side”). Gee concludes: “Like the Shield of Aeneas, the *ancile* is an *imago mundi* which is also a guarantee of Roman rulership over the world it represents: a *pignus imperii*.”\(^776\)

Therefore Numa, like Achilles and Aeneas before him, accepts *caelestia arma* that are also an *imago mundi*. Gee focuses on the astral themes on both the Shields of Achilles and Aeneas, since her main concern is the relationship of the *Fasti* and its astronomical material to Aratus’ *Phaenomena*, but one of the focal points of the allegorical interpretation of the shield in Homer is its depiction of a “city of peace” and a “city of war.” According to the allegorical interpretation, these two cities represent the cosmic principles of Philia and Neikos respectively. Therefore, as Heraclitus the

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\(^776\) Gee (2000) 45.
allegorist says, “it was to suggest this pair that Homer fashioned the two cities on the
shield, the city of peace, that is of Love, and the city of war, that is of Strife.” Vergil
also incorporates the themes of love and strife into the Shield of Aeneas, in part through
allusion to Rome’s divine ancestors, Venus and Mars. It turns out that Ovid too,
although not undertaking an elaborate ecphrasis of the ancile, includes a depiction of a
city of war and a city of peace — in homage, I suggest, to the Homeric model and its
Empedoclean associations.

After announcing that his subject is the caelestia arma of Mars (259-60), the poet
introduces Numa through his relationship to the Muse-like Egeria (cf. Egeria...dea grata
Camenis, 3.275) and describes Numa’s influence on Rome and its people by contrast
with their character under Romulus (3.277-84):

principio nimium promptos ad bella Quirites
mollii placuit iure deumque metu.
inde datae leges, ne firmior omnia posset,
ceoptaque sunt pure tradita sacra coli.
exuitur feritas, armisque potentius aequum est,
et cum cive pudet consuerisse manus,
atque aliquis, modo trux, visa iam vertitur ara
vinaque dat tepidis farraque salsa focis.

In the beginning it seemed right to Numa to soften the Quirites who were
excessively prone to war by means of law and the fear of the gods. Therefore he
made laws, so that the stronger might not have the upper-hand in all matters, and
the sacred rites of tradition began to be piously cultivated. Fierceness is put off, and
fairness is more powerful than arms and it becomes shameful for for citizen to fight
against citizen, and someone, recently wild, is at the sight of an altar transformed
and offers wine and salted spelt on the warm hearth.

Under Romulus, the Romans were nimium promptos ad bella (277), wild (characterized
by feritas, 281), savage (trux, 283) and prone not only to war (armis, 281) but civil strife

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778 Hardie (1986) 360-1.
Numa softens their tempers by law and religion, turning their attention to activities such as the cultivation of *sacra* (280), justice (281) and offerings to the gods (283-4). Ovid, therefore, essentially describes two cities, Rome under Romulus, which is characterized by strife, and Rome under Numa, characterized by peaceful activities like law and religion.\(^779\) This much has been recognized, but in light of the fact that this description appears in the context of Ovid’s *aetion* of the *ancile*, an *imago mundi*, the passage also seems to be an imitation of the Homeric depiction of a city of war and a city of peace, which were allegorized as the cosmic principles of strife and love.\(^780\)

These two images of Rome, then, reflect the pair of Mars and Venus in books 3 and 4 of the *Fasti*. We have already seen that Romulus and his reign are closely identified with Mars. The association between Numa and his reign with Venus is less obvious, but is strongly suggested by Ovid. We can compare the above passage describing Numa’s influence on Rome to Ovid’s description of Venus’ influence on the natural world, encompassing both humans and animals (4.97-108). The overall tenor of the two passages is quite close, but compare especially the way that under Numa the Roman loses his *feritas* (3.281) and, while previously savage (*modo trux*, 3.283), begins to cultivate the gods, to the behavior of the savage ram (*trux aries*, 4.101), who becomes gentle under under the influence of Venus, and the bull, who sets aside his *feritas* (4.103) to

\(^{779}\) Of course, the association of Romulus with war, Numa with peace, is not unique to Ovid. Cf. Livy 1.21.6: *alius alia via, ille bello hic pace civitatem auxerunt.*

\(^{780}\) Littlewood (2002) 186, following Hardie (1986), recognizes the importance of the city of war and city of peace on the Shield of Achilles for the Shield of Aeneas, since the latter represents Augustus at war (Actium) and peace. She says that “these two images, reflecting the dual legacy of Romulus, son of Mars, and Aeneas, son of Venus, are evident on Augustus’ *Clupeus Virtutis* where *virtus* clearly refers to Augustus’ military valour and *pietas* to his restoration of temples as well as to his piety in avenging his adoptive father’s murder.” However, Littlewood does not acknowledge that the Homeric city at war and city at peace have been displaced by Ovid from their depiction on the Shield to his description of the contrast between Rome under Romulus to the city under Numa.
pursue the heifer. This seems to suggest that the dichotomy of Romulus and Numa can be mapped onto that of Mars and Venus, who, like the city of war and peace on the Homeric Shield, were allegorized as Empedoclean Neikos and Philia. It also suggests an Empedoclean model for the early regal period in Rome, in which a period of strife under Romulus is succeeded by a period of peace or love under Numa. However, we will see shortly that Ovid complicates this dichotomous picture in several ways.

5.5 The Union of Mars and Venus and the Birth of Harmonia/Concordia

The Empedoclean Mars and Venus of the Lucretian proem migrate to books 3 and 4 of the *Fasti*, forming the centerpiece of the poem. In one sense, this separates the two gods joined as lovers in Lucretius’ striking proemial image. The poet, for example, in the proem to book 3 beseeches Mars to lay aside his arms, whereas Lucretius had prayed to Venus to calm her lover Mars. As we saw, however, the Empedoclean/Lucretian image of the two gods appears as a subtext for the comic tale of Mars and Anna. As we will see, Ovid makes more of the pairing of Venus and Mars in book 4, but the close of book 3 also represents a point at which the months of March and April meet and therefore Mars and Venus symbolically come together as the patron deities of their respective months.781 Several times Ovid notes their proximity in the calendar.782 He may also allude to this structural feature of his poem, that is, both to the conjunction of Mars and Venus and to the closing of March (Mars) and opening of April (Venus) at the end of book 3. Here is the second-to-last entry for the month of March (30th) (3.879-82):

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781 As Merli (2000) 58 notes, however, their love affair is never explicitly mentioned in the *Fasti*. She attributes this to Ovid’s desire in the *Fasti* “a fare della dea una matrona di una certa rispettabilità.” Cf. Fantham (1995) 54-5.
When the shepherd will have penned in his sated goats four times from that day, and four times the grass will have whitened with new dew, Janus ought to be worshipped, and along with him gentle Concordia, Roman Welfare and the Altar of Peace.

It is tempting to see Ovid’s specific way of marking the passage of time since the last festal day, i.e. the shepherd’s closure (clauserit, 879) of his goats inside their pen, as a metalinguistic allusion to the closure of the month of March. This suggestion is bolstered by the emphasis on the number four, which can look ahead to the fourth month of April. The presence of Janus could be significant too, since, as we know from book 1, Janus is the god of opening and closing (omnia sunt nostra clausa patentque manu, 1.118). Such associations seem to inform the poet’s remark in the opening line of book 2: Ianus habet finem (“Janus has an end”). Ostensibly, this latter statement refers to the closing of book 1, Janus’ month, but its placement in the very first line of February also implicitly comments upon the opening of book 2. Janus, once again, is uniquely suited to occupy such a structural position since he is the god of thresholds and opening/closing. His appearance here at the juncture of books 3 and 4 can similarly mark the closing of one book and the opening of another, in addition to the closing of the poem’s first half and opening of its second.

But perhaps there is more. Janus is the god not only of opening and closing, but,

as the keeper of the temple of Janus Geminus, specifically presides over its

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783 He is also called Patulcius and Clusius (Fasti 1.129-30).
784 Robinson (2011) ad Fasti 2.1 notes that habet finem is repeated from the last line of book 1 (cumque suo finem mense libellus habet, 724).
opening/closing and thus the release of War and Peace. This earthly function is
granted a cosmic analogue in book 1 (121-4), in which Peace and War are a version of
Empedoclean Philia and Neikos. We should note that Ovid’s commemoration of the
30th of March says that Janus will be worshipped along with Concordia and the Ara
Pacis. It is tempting to think, then, that not only Janus, but also the temple of Janus
Geminus, is called to mind at this important structural point in the Fasti, since the temple,
as the passage in book 1 suggests, can mark the closure or confinement of War (Mars)
and the opening or release of Peace (Venus). Indeed, as the poet acknowledges, April
has a special connection to the theme of “opening” (4.87-90). This closure of the
Empedoclean principle of strife or Mars (March) and opening of the principle of love or
Venus (April) is embodied in Janus and his role as the keeper of Gates of War of the
Janus Geminus, an Empedoclean monument.

Finally, this passage at the end of Fasti 3 also represents the juncture of Mars and
Venus in the calendar and therefore is structurally a point of “union.” The presence of
Concordia and Pax at this point can reflect a philosophical interpretation of their union.
As we saw in chapter 2, the allegorist Heraclitus interpreted the love affair of Ares and
Aphrodite in the second song of Demodocus in Odyssey 8 as an allegory of the coming
together of the Empedoclean principles of Neikos and Philia in concord. As Heraclitus
says, “Homer seems here to be confirming Sicilian doctrine (the views of Empedocles),
calling strife Ares and love Aphrodite. He therefore represents these old adversaries as

786 Bömer (1957-8) ad loc. actually suggests that Janus here refers to the historical closing of the temple of
Janus Geminus in 10 B.C., but he does not relate this to the placement of the notice in the poem’s structure.
787 Cf. 4.87, aperit; 4.88, patet; 4.89, aperto tempore.
giving up their former contention and coming together in *concord* (ὁµόνοιαν).

Naturally therefore the child born of these two is Harmonia, because the universe is unshakably and harmoniously put together. That the gods should laugh and take pleasure in all this is also probable, because the original forms are not destructively separated, but maintain *concord* and *peace* (ὁµονοοῦσαν εἱρήνην).

Ovid’s *Fasti* represents this on a structural level, placing Concordia and Pax (in the form of the Ara Pacis) at the juncture of Mars (March) and April (Venus).

5.6 Venus and Empedoclean Philia

Although the philosophical associations of Mars in book 3 had to be teased out, the task is significantly less difficult in regard to the Venus of book 4. Whereas Ovid had alluded to the opening lines of the Lucretian proem in the proem of *Fasti* 1, but had suppressed Venus, Ovid restores Venus to prominence in book 4 in an example of Conte’s “proem in the middle.” As scholars have recognized, the Venus of this proem is heavily indebted to the Lucretian Venus of the proem to the *DRN*. For example, the poet initially addresses the goddess as *Alma...geminorum mater Amorum*, recalling Lucretius’ prayer to *Aeneadum genetrix...alma Venus* (1.1-2). Ovid also virtually quotes the opening couplet of book 1 of the *Fasti*, whose pentameter, as we saw, adapts the second line of the *DRN* (*Fasti* 4.11-2):

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789 In one myth, Mars and Venus had a daughter, Harmonia, alluded to at *Met*. 3.131-3. The juxtaposition of Mars and Venus in the architecture of the *Fasti* can also be compared to the physical contiguity of the Forum of Augustus, containing the Temple of Mars Ultor, and the Forum of Julius Caesar, where resided the Temple of Venus Genetrix. Ovid, in one sense, erects a poetic version of this *fora* and temple complex at the center of the *Fasti*. It also seems that statues of Mars and Venus stood near one another in the Temple of Mars Ultor. See *Tristia* 2.295-6: *venerit in magni templum, tua munera, Martis, / stat Venus Ultori tuncta, vir ante fores*.
790 Conte (1976); see Farrell (2008) on the *Fasti* 4 proem and Lucretius.
tempora cum causis, annalibus eruta priscis,
lapsaque sub terras ortaque signa cano.

Times and their causes, dug out from ancient annals, the signs setting underneath the earth and rising I sing.

Compare this to the opening couplet of the poem (1.1-2):

tempora cum causis, Latium digesta per annum
lapsaque sub terras ortaque signa canam.

Times and their causes, distributed throughout the Latin year and the signs setting underneath the earth and rising I shall sing.

The proem to Fasti 4 dramatizes the relationship between Ovid’s earlier erotic elegy and his more elevated aetiological elegy in the Fasti by having the goddess Venus frankly ask the poet what he has to do with her now that he is singing maiora (4.3): ‘quid tibi’ ait ‘mecum? certe maiora canebas’. The poet, however, contends that Venus will always be his subject (4.8), tu mihi propositum, tu mihi semper opus (you are my theme, you always my work”), although he does acknowledge that his elegy is treading on more elevated ground (4.10): nunc teritur nostris area maior equis (“my horses trod a greater ground”). It is immediately after this that the poet quotes from the opening couplet of the poem (1.1-2) — and from DRN 1.2.

This is a carefully chosen allusion, since it is in part the identity of Venus as the Lucretian and Empedoclean principle of voluptas or love that enables her to be a bridge between Ovid’s erotic elegy and the more elevated elegy of the Fasti.792 As in Lucretius, Venus is the bland voluptas (4.99) that represents the force of generation in the natural world (4.97-106). The Lucretian Venus “governs the nature of things” (quae quoniam

792 Of course, the identity of Venus as ancestress of the Julians also lends her a more august aspect. Cf. 4.19-60.
rerum naturam sola gubernas, 4.21), while the Venus of the Fasti is depicted even more emphatically as a cosmic ruler (4.91-4):

illa quidem totum dignissima temperat orbem,
illa tenet nullo regna minora deo,
iuraque dat caelo, terrae, natalibus undis,
perque suos initus continet omne genus.

Indeed, most fittingly she rules the entire globe; she has a kingdom lesser than no other god, and she dispenses laws to the sky, the earth and her natal waters, and by her entrances she controls every species.

She “rules the globe” (illa...temperat orbem), although tempero also carries the connotation of “blending together” and “harmonizing” different elements.\(^{793}\) Compare this to Manilius’ description of Venus in book 4 of his Astronomica, in which Venus more clearly “temper” in proper proportion (4.718-9): Martia Romanis urbis pater induit ora / Gradivum Venus miscens bene temperat artus (“the father of the city passes on Martial features to the Romans, and Venus joining Mars combines their limbs in good proportion”). Green has demonstrated that an important motif in the month of April is the union of fire and water, since authors like Varro explained Venus’ philosophical identity as the force that bring together fire and water in generation.\(^{794}\) This interpretation rationalized the poetic legend of Venus’ birth, in which the fiery semen of Cronus fell into the sea and created Venus. In light of the philosophical context of this passage, the reference to this legend (natalibus undis, 4.93) can be seen to anticipate the theme of the harmonization of fire and water that permeates book 4. Venus is also a theogonic goddess (4.95): illa deos (longum est numerare) creavit (“she has created the gods (it is lengthy to

\(^{793}\) Compare the way that the demiurge in the Metamorphoses establishes a temperies (< tempero) of hot and cold in the inhabitable region of the earth (1.51): temperiemque dedit mixta cum frigore flamma.

\(^{794}\) Green (2002).
enumerate them”). This alludes to catalogue poetry (cf. *longum est numerare*) and perhaps especially Hesiod’s *Theogony*, where Eros is one of the primordial gods (*Theog.* 120-2). This same goddess is also the impetus behind elegiac poetry (4.109-12), in addition to thousands of arts (*mille per hanc artes motae*, 4.113) and *multa reperta* (4.114).

The course of the *Fasti* has led the poet to spring, the season with which the *DRN* begins and Ovid, like Lucretius, hymns Venus as the goddess of spring and the creation that takes place during that season. This displacement of Venus from the beginning of the *Fasti* to the beginning of book 4, however, also means that Ovid is celebrating Venus in the same book in his poem as that book in the *DRN* where Lucretius had issued his famous diatribe against Venus and *amor*, book 4. In this sense, the praise of Venus in the proem of *Fasti* 4 can be seen to not only imitate the proem of the first book of the *DRN*, but also to contradict the criticism of Venus and *amor* in book 4 of the *DRN*. Ovid may implicitly acknowledge this in the criticism of Venus’ detractors in the proem. The poet asks who would dare take the title of April from Venus and *amor*, book 4. In this sense, the praise of Venus in the proem of *Fasti* 4 can be seen to not only imitate the proem of the first book of the *DRN*, but also to contradict the criticism of Venus and *amor* in book 4 of the *DRN*.795 Ovid may implicitly acknowledge this in the criticism of Venus’ detractors in the proem. The poet asks who would dare take the title of April from Venus and then distances himself from such *furor* (4.115-6): *hunc quisquam titulo mensis spoliare secundi? audeat? a nobis sit furor iste procul* (“Would anyone dare to take the title of the second month from her [Venus]? May such madness as that be far from me”). In his diatribe against Venus and *amor* in book 4 Lucretius’ main criticism is that love causes a kind of madness or *furor*

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795 Farrell (2008) 7. Farrell also rightly notes that Ovid’s “quotation” of the *Fasti* 1 proem in the *Fasti* 4 proem imitates Lucretius’ own repetition of a passage from *DRN* 1 in *DRN* 4. However, as Farrell says, “Lucretius’ repetition, in effect, involves a *renuntatio amoris,*” but “Ovid’s allusion to Lucretius’ repetition restores love, a theme that the poet had “abandoned” in the first three books of the *Fasti*, to its former preeminence while placing Venus herself in the position of Ovid’s Muse.”

796 As the poet had said at *Fasti* 1.39, the Roman year originally began in March, making April the *second* month. See Fantham (1998) *ad Fasti* 4.115.
(cf. 4.1069) that is obviously inimicable to the Epicurean goal of quiæs. In his imitation of Lucretius in book 3 of the Georgics Vergil also decries the furor caused by love (cf. 3.266.). Here it is instead the detractors of Venus who are possessed by furor. In light of Ovid’s extensive imitation of Lucretius in this section, the Fasti poet’s rejection of furor can also be seen as a tacit rejection of the picture of Venus in Georgics 3 and DRN 4. Instead, Ovid’s book 4 celebrates the Empedoclean Venus of the DRN proem, who calms her lover Mars and the wild works of war.\textsuperscript{797} Indeed, the pairing of Venus and Mars in his poetic calendar is the image with which Ovid closes the opening section of book 4 (4.129-30): \textit{et formosa Venus formoso tempore digna est, / utque solet, Marti continuata suo est}.\textsuperscript{798} Although, as we saw, Ovid suggests the easy association between Romulus and Mars, on the one hand, and Num\textae and Venus, on the other, this dichotomy is also problematized, as we will see in the next section. This suggests the presence of \textit{both} Mars and Venus at Rome’s formative periods.

5.7 Numa and Strife

As we saw earlier, in book 3 Ovid translates the Homeric “city of war” and “city of peace” on the Shield of Achilles into Roman history, making Rome under Romulus a city

\textsuperscript{797} In as much as the beginning of book 4 re-establishes Venus’ ascendancy, especially as a cosmic goddess, we might compare \textit{Fasti} 4 to \textit{Met}. 5, where Venus complains that the power of amor is diminishing (\textit{mecum vires minuuntur Amoris}, 5.374) and that several virginal goddesses have made their own renuntiationes amoris. The parallel may be strengthened by the fact that \textit{Fasti} 4 and \textit{Metamorphoses} 5 are both the final books in the first \textit{third} of their poems, if we think of the \textit{Fasti} in terms of twelve books. As I suggested in the previous chapter, Venus’ planned take-over of the cosmos in \textit{Met}. 5 is framed in Empedoclean terms. We might see the expression of Venus’ power in \textit{Fasti} 4 similarly, from both an internal, structural perspective, since “love” or Venus succeeds strife or “Mars,” and also from a literary-historical perspective, since Ovid is promoting the ascendancy of Venus as a beneficent force at a similar point in his poem to where both Lucretius and Vergil in their poems had “renounced” her. This suggests we might see the alternating diminution and ascendancy of Venus in literary history in Empedoclean terms.

\textsuperscript{798} Miller (1997) 396 compares this line to the image of the Lucretian Mars and Venus at \textit{DRN} 1.29ff. He also suggests that \textit{ut solet} and \textit{continuata} are double entendres, especially in light of the fact that \textit{Fasti} 4.130 recalls a more obviously erotic allusion to the calendrical proximity of Mars and Venus at \textit{Ars} 1.405-6: \textit{Kalendae, / quas Venerem Marti continuasse iuvat}. Cf. also Merli (2000) 57, n. 35.
of war and under Numa a city of peace. This should be seen not only as a static
snapshot of early Roman history, but also as a transition from war to peace not unlike the
cosmic transition from strife’s reign to that of love in Empedocles’ cosmology, in as
much as critics interpreted the cities on the shield as prefigurations of Empedocles’
cosmic principles of Neikos and Philia. While Ovid acknowledges that it is possible to
interpret Roman history in such terms, he also suggests it is a somewhat naive view of
history that begins to break down under closer examination.

Moreover, viewing the world simply through the opposition of the principles of
love and strife rather than their dynamic interaction also appears to be an inaccurate
representation of Empedocles’ cosmology, since the complete dominance of either
principle only occurred at the termini of each half of the cycle, both a-cosmic states —
either the complete separation of the elements or their perfect unity in a sphere.
Therefore, while Empedocles seems to have given a negative ethical valuation to strife
and a positive one to love, any “cosmos” resulted from the interaction of these two
principles. This is closer to the view of love and strife offered in the Fasti. While there
are many passages in the poem that call into question the tidy dichotomy between peace
and war or love and strife, I will examine just one that speaks directly to the contrast set
up between Romulean Rome as a city at war and Numan Rome as a city at peace in book
3.

Numa is introduced in book 3 as part of the poet’s inquiry into the caelestia arma
of Mars or the ancilia (3.259-60). Under the umbrella of this aetiology are three
interrelated stories, Numa’s capture of Picus and Faunus, Jupiter Elicius, and the
fabrication of the *ancilia*. As we know, the description of the “city of war” under Romulus and the “city of peace” under Numa opens the *aetion* and, once again, alludes to the two cities on the Homeric Shield of Achilles interpreted as anticipating Empedocles’ principles of Neikos and Philia. The *aetion* for the *caelestia arma*, however, begins in earnest at 3.287, where the poet says that at a time during Numa’s reign thunderbolts fell unusually frequently: *non alias missi cecidere frequentius ignes* (“not at another time did the hurled fires fall more thickly”). In fact, it was a time of extreme elemental imbalance, with periods of torrential rain, as well (3.285-6): *ecce deum genitor rutilas per nubila flammis / spargit, et effusis aethera siccat aquis* (“Look, the father of the gods hurls red flames through the clouds, and dries the air after the torrential rain”). These extreme meteorological conditions involving fire and water in the early period of Rome are “miniatures” of the catastrophes of fire and flood of the early history of the world in the *Metamorphoses*.799 We will see further parallels between Numa’s reign and the beginning of Ovid’s universal history in the last chapter. More immediately, the fact that it is incumbent upon Numa to calm these meteorological events taps into the ancient idea of the ruler as a master of the elements.800 Egeria, Numa’s goddess-wife, tells him that Jupiter’s anger (*ira Iovis*, 3.290) can be expiated. She further explains that the Roman deities Picus and Faunus can teach him the means of expiation, but they will only do so under compulsion and therefore need to be bound in chains (*nec sine vi tradent: adhibe tu*

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799 As Joseph Farrell suggests to me, the outline of this episode — elemental imbalance succeeded by a political/cosmic (re)foundation — is broadly similar to Horace *Carm*. 1.2. In this poem Horace comments upon recent elemental disasters (1.2.1-20), which he connects to civil war, before expressing hope for Rome’s renewal under Octavian (41-52).

800 Hardie (1986) 333.
vincula captis, 3.293). This makes the story the Roman twin of Aristaeus’ capture of Proteus in book 1.801

While there are numerous points of contact between the episodes, I will discuss only the most important here. As we saw in the previous chapter, Aristaeus’ capture of Proteus comes in the context of Ovid’s “history of sacrifice” during the Agonalia, which alludes extensively to Pythagoras’ diatribe against animal sacrifice in book 15 of the Metamorphoses. Although the Fasti poet did not openly criticize all forms of animal sacrifice, as Pythagoras does, he did explicitly question the sacrifice of cows and sheep, which were undeserving of slaughter in his eyes (1.361, 383-4). In addition to this Pythagorean frame of reference, we saw that the motif of the Golden Age and subsequent decline appears in this section, as well. Specifically, the sacrifice of oxen is linked to the decline from a Golden Age that had seen only vegetable or mineral offerings, like spelt and salt (1.337-8): ante, deos homini quod conciliare valeret, / far erat et puri lucida mica salis (“at an earlier time, for man spelt and bright grains of salt had the power to appease the gods”). Therefore, the bugonia, a form of cattle sacrifice, is implicitly connected to the fall from the Golden Age. We saw that not only is the ostensibly Pythagorean philosophy of Met. 15 part of the fabric of the passage, but also motifs from the philosophy of Empedocles: he had similarly connected the fall from the Golden Age to cattle sacrifice. Moreover, by the use of the “many from one” motif, Ovid had connected the bugonia to strife’s half of the cosmic cycle.

801 Littlewood (2002) seems to have been the first to compare the binding of Picus and Faunus to the binding of Proteus and thus Numa to Aristaeus, although somewhat strangely, she focuses her comparison exclusively on Vergil’s version in Georgics 4 rather than on Ovid’s own reworking of the story in Fasti 1. Garani (forthcoming b), however, notes that Numa’s binding of Picus and Faunus recalls several other binding scenes: Silenus in Ecl. 6, Proteus in Georgics 4, and Proteus in Fasti 1.
The stories surrounding Numa in book 3 of the *Fasti* feature many of these same issues. As we know, Numa himself is said to be a Pythagorean. Moreover, his reign, as summarized in the “city of war”/“city of peace” passage, has a number of features in common with the Golden Age: the apparent absence of war, the close relationship between humans and gods represented by his relationship with Egeria, and even the use of spelt as a sacrificial offering (*farraque salsa focis*, 3.284).

Yet, the idea of Numa as a surrogate of Aristaeus, who was connected to the fall from the Golden Age and the reign of strife, complicates matters. Indeed, Numa uses violence, as Aristaeus had done, to capture Picus and Faunus (3.293): *nec sine vi tradent: adhibe tu vincula captis* (“They will only tell you under compulsion: apply bonds to them after they have been captured”). Moreover, upon coming to the grove where he will ambush the gods, Numa sacrifices a sheep (3.300): *huc venit et fonti rex Numa mactat ovem* (“King Numa comes to the place and he sacrifices a sheep to the spring”). The sheep, remember, is one of the animals whose sacrifice the poet had criticized in *Fasti* 1, where he had drawn heavily on Pythagorean rejections of sacrifice. Numa, then, seems to be contradicting the Pythagorean affiliation that is elsewhere claimed for him (3.158).

After Numa captures Picus and Faunus by force, they teach him a song whereby he can draw Jupiter down from the sky, after which the god will give Numa the means of expiating the thunderbolts, the aetion of Jupiter Elicius (*eliciunt*). The motif of sacrifice continues, as Jupiter asks Numa to perform a series of human sacrifices, each of which Numa by clever speech is able to turn into the comical sacrifice of an onion, human hair

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802 Garani (forthcoming b).
and a fish. Numa not only accomplishes the appeasement of Jupiter’s anger by these means, but secures from him the promise of “pledges of empire” (*imperii pignora certa dabo*, 346). When the *pignora* descends from the sky the next day in the form of the *ancile*, Numa sacrifices a heifer before lifting up the shield (3.375-8):

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tollit humo munus caesa prius ille iuvenca,
quae dederat nulli colla premenda iugo,
idque ancile vocat, quod ab omni parte recisum est,
quemque notes oculis, **angulus omnis abest**.
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He lifts the gift up from the ground after first sacrificing a heifer whose neck had never felt the yoke, and he calls this the ancile, because it is cut away on every side, and there is no angle that you can see.

The last phrase in this passage (*angulus omnis abest*, 378), remember, indicates that the *ancile* is an *imago mundi*, since the exact same expression is used to describe the spherical earth later in book 6 (272). At the same time, this *imago mundi* seems to be connected by the book 1 intertext to strife. The sacrifice of a sheep had precipitated the series of events ultimately leading to the *ancile* and here its reception is marked by the sacrifice of a heifer; the two animals, sheep and cow, whose sacrifice the poet, assuming a Pythagorean/Empedoclean persona in book 1, had criticized (*quid bos, quid placidae commeruistis oves?*, 1.362; *quid tuti superest, animam cum ponat in aris / lanigerumque pecus ruricolaque boves*, 1.383-4). The last example is especially important, since it helped to build the case that Empedocles is an important intertext in that passage.

Aristaeus’ sacrifice of an ox in the bugonia had resulted in the “many coming from one,”

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803 Compare this to the substitution of a deer for Iphigenia in Ovid’s history of sacrifice in book 1 (387-8). In her reading of Numa as an Empedoclean figure, Garani (forthcoming b) interprets these substitutions (onion, human hair, and fish) as allusions to Empedocles’ own reincarnations (cf. fr. 111/117).
assimilating it to Empedocles’ principle of strife. Can Numa’s sacrifice of a heifer and reception of the ancile, an imago mundi, be interpreted in a similar manner?

The fact that the ancile is an imago mundi suggests that it can be a figure for cosmogony; and in as much as it is also a “pledge” of Roman imperium (pignus imperii), it can be seen as a figure for a specifically Roman cosmogony. In the “Aristaeus” the bugonia too had been a figure for cosmogony, specifically for one under strife, since Ovid had adapted the Empedoclean motif of “many from one” that Empedocles used to describe the activity of strife. In book 1 the “many from one” described the birth of thousands of bees from the death of a single ox. In light of the dialogue between Numa’s reception of the ancile and the bugonia, the final element of the story of the ancile may look back to that ritual. Remember that the poet had initially introduced the story of the ancile by referring to caelestia arma, since several copies of the original ancile existed.

Upon receiving the shield, Numa had ordered the smith Mamurius to make many (plura, 381) copies of the one original shield in order to deceive potential thieves (3.379-84):

\[
\text{tum, memor imperii sortem consistere in illo,}
\text{consilium multae calliditatis init:}
\text{plura iubet fieri simili caelata figura,}
\text{error ut ante oculos insidiantis eat.}
\text{Mamurius, morum fabraene exactior artis}
\text{difficile est, illud, dicere, clausit opus.}
\]

Then, remembering that the allotment of empire resided in that [shield], he embarks upon a plan of great cunning: he orders many [shields] to be embossed in the same shape, in order to trick the eyes of a thief.

Therefore, by Numa’s orders “many shields” (plura, 381) came into being from the one authentic ancile. Although Ovid does not say this in so many words, he doesn’t need to given the extensive parallels between this episode and the “Aristaeus.” Therefore, the
ancile, and Numa’s reign are surprisingly assimilated to the principle of strife through the motif of “many from one,” in spite of the fact that Numan Rome had earlier been described as an historical instantiation of the “city of peace” on the Homeric Shield of Achilles.⁸⁰⁴

Emma Gee has suggested, however, that one key difference between the Shields of Achilles and Aeneas and the Numan ancile is that the former are martial shields, the latter a cultic one.⁸⁰⁵ While it is true that the ancilia are used in cult rather than in battle, they are nevertheless a product of a related form of strife, the sacrifice of animals such as the sheep and cow.⁸⁰⁶ Moreover, they are closely tied to Roman imperium, which was won and maintained by force of arms, as well as by religion in the form of ensuring the pax deorum.⁸⁰⁷ Therefore, it seems to be going too far to exclude all martial associations from the shields, or from Numa’s reign.⁸⁰⁸ The inescapable associations of the month of

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⁸⁰⁴ For other possible Empedoclean motifs in the binding of Picus and Faunus and the other stories surrounding Numa’s reception of the ancile, see Garani (forthcoming b). Garani (ibid.) also sees an allusion to the bugonia in Numa’s sacrifice of a pregant heifer on the Fordicidia (4.665-6), in which det sacris animas una iuvenca duas (466) in order to placate Tellus, again during a time of elemental imbalance. After this both the earth and the cattle increased their yield.

⁸⁰⁵ Littlewood (2002) 181 also emphasizes that the ancile is a cultic rather than military object.

⁸⁰⁶ Littlewood (2002) argues that Numa in this episode is parallel to Aristaeus in Georgics 4. Moreover, she accepts those readings of the bugonia that see it as an allegory for the civil wars and Rome’s rebirth under Augustus. Therefore she sees Numa, like Aristaeus, as another analogue for Augustus. She (2002) 85, like Morgan (1999) and others, sees the parallel as essentially optimistic: “Because Numa protects his primitive kingdom by scrupulously obeying the will of the gods, we can see in Ovid’s use of the Aristaeus intertext an allusion to the regeneration of Roman society through Augustus’ restoration of Roman religion after the Battle of Actium.” However, Littlewood, once again, does not account for Ovid’s version of the “Aristaeus” in Fasti 1 where Aristaeus’ actions are problematized by the connection between the bugonia and both the fall from the Golden Age and Empedocles’ cosmogony under strife. By assimilation to Aristaeus, Numa’s reception of the ancile is similarly complicated.


⁸⁰⁸ Garani (forthcoming b) also argues that the martial associations of the ancile complicate Numa’s image as a peaceful king, as do the sacrifices he performs in the course of gaining the ancile. On the other hand, she concludes of Numa’s sacrifices in books 3 and 4 that they conform to the pattern in which “only by a violent act, i.e. sacrifice, may peace be achieved.” This conforms to her interpretation of the bugonia in book 1.
March with strife can be seen in the notice with which Ovid ends his action of the *ancile*. The poet cautions girls from marrying during March because of its associations with war: *arma movent pugnas, pugna est aliena maritis; / condita cum fuerint, aptius omen erit* (3.395-6).^809

Therefore, although Ovid’s imitation of the Homeric Shield of Achilles includes a portrait of a “city of war” under Romulus and a “city of peace” under Numa, the larger context offers a more nuanced picture. Numa’s reign is seen to include acts of strife, notably the sacrifice of sheep and cattle; this ironizes his Pythagorean associations and connects his reign to the principle of strife. This ambiguity surrounding Numa finds its counterpart in Romulus’ abduction of the Sabines in book 3 (3.179-232), where, as Hinds has demonstrated, the interplay between *arma* and *amor* is especially pronounced.^810

Early Rome, then, under both Romulus and Numa, is characterized by the dynamic interaction between the principles of strife and love. Romulus and Numa, as military and religious founders of Rome respectively, cannot be entirely dependent upon either strife or love, since the total domination of either principle is incompatible with activity or creativity such as founding.^811 Ovid suggests that both principles are involved in this early, generative period in Rome’s history, a feature of the world of the *Fasti* that is embodied in the two divine parents of the Roman race, Mars and Venus, who together form the structural centerpiece of the poem. As we will see in the next section, this complex interplay between love and strife can be seen in structural terms not only by the

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^809 Numa’s institution of the *Salii*, like his establishment of the Janus Geminus temple, indicates his connection to both peace and war, since the *Salii* performed their ritual dance in March to mark the beginning of the military campaigning season and in October to mark its end.


^811 I owe the formulation of this point to Joseph Farrell.
position of Mars and Venus at the center of the poem, but also by the careful placement of Concordia and, more implicitly, Discordia, in the structure of the poem. This will require us to range beyond books 3 and 4, but this will help us to see that the position of Mars and Venus at the center is part of wider structural patterns in the poem.

5.8 Concordia (and Discordia) in the Structure of the Fasti

In the survey in chapter 2 of love and strife in the literary tradition we saw that discordia was available as a gloss on Empedoclean Neikos from an early point in Latin literature, probably beginning from Discordia in Annales 7, but certainly the case by the time of Cicero, who uses discordia for Neikos and concordia for Philia.\(^8\) Specifically, Cicero suggests that political concordia and discordia are instantiations of Empedocles’ cosmic principles of Neikos and Philia. Several scholars have suggested that the themes of discordia and concordia at the end of Georgics 2 and beginning of Georgics 3 allude to Empedoclean philosophy, specifically the association between knowledge and concordia, on the one hand, and ignorance and discordia, on the other. We have seen that Ovid imitates the end of Georgics 2 in Fasti 1, including the interaction of Empedoclean discordia and concordia. Horace, moreover, uses the epigrammatic phrase concordia discors in an explicitly philosophical context.\(^9\) Scholars generally regard this as a gloss on Empedocles’ cosmic principles, but the Stoic philosopher Stertinius, in addition to Empedocles, appears in the passage, and it is possible that the phrase is alluding to Stoic doctrine, as well.\(^1\) As we know, Ovid uses the Horatian expression in a philosophical context, the zoogony of Met. 1. This is all to say that both concordia and discordia, in

\(^8\) Laelius 23-4.


addition to being highly charged political terms, have considerable philosophical baggage. Alex Hardie has suggested that, “Underlying these explorations of concord and discord in Latin poetry is the complex, shifting interplay of “strife” (neikos) and “love” (philia) in Empedoclean physics.”815 The Fasti, as Hardie suggests, is very much a part of this, in light of the structural prominence of both the pair Mars/Venus and, as we will see, concordia.

Concordia is a key concept in the Fasti.816 Both concordia and discordia are connected early in the poem to cosmology in the form of the Empedoclean monument of the Janus Geminus, whose closure is a symbol of pax and concordia, but whose dual nature also represents the threat of discordia. Concordia continues to be prominent in the poem. The Concordia temple occupies one of the final notices in book 1 of the poem; and the very last celebrates the Ara Pacis, a monument closely connected to Augustan Concordia.817 The poet in fact commemorates three different monuments to Concordia on January 16th: an ancient temple built by Camillus (antiquam [Concordiam], 641) after conflict between the plebs and patricians; a newer temple to Augustan Concord built by Tiberius from a causa...melior (645), that is, the successful issue of Tiberius’ campaign against German tribes west of the Elbe; finally, the poet notes that Tiberius’ mother, Livia, also established a shrine to Concordia, most likely in the Porticus Liviae.818

I will make just a couple of observations about this passage. The first is that, as Levick and others have said, the slogan of concordia is usually sounded the loudest

817 Newlands (1995) 44.
818 Bömer (1957-8) ad Fasti 6.637; Newlands (1995) 44, n. 47. As Newlands says, this passage in the Fasti is our only evidence for Livia’s shrine.
during times of *discordia*.\textsuperscript{819} This is quite obvious in the case of the Camillan temple, which is said to have been vowed in the midst of civil strife (1.643-4): *causa, quod a patribus sumptis secesserat armis / volgus, et ipsa suas Roma timebat opes* (“The reason was that the people had taken up arms and seceded from the fathers, and Rome feared her own strength”). The poet’s endorsement of the reason for the Tiberian temple, victory over German tribes, reflects, in Green’s words, “the strong distinction between civil war (disgraceful and illegitimate) and war against foreigners (justified)” in Augustan ideology.\textsuperscript{820}

However, a full seventeen years had passed between vow (7 B.C.) and dedication (A.D. 10) of the Tiberian temple. In the interim *concordia* accumulated other associations. This period featured considerable dynastic strife, of which Tiberius’ exile (and probably Ovid’s, as well) were symptoms.\textsuperscript{821} *Concordia*, therefore, came to refer especially to domestic concord among members of the imperial family, whereas in the Republic it had typically signified concord among different factions in the state, such as *concordia ordinum*.\textsuperscript{822} Livia’s inclusion in this commemoration of the Tiberian temple testifies to this domestic aspect of *concordia*. Livia is defined both as mother of Tiberius (*genetrix*, 649) and wife of Augustus (*sola toro magni digna reperta Iovis*, 650). *Concordia* therefore encompasses harmony between mother and son, and husband and wife. The comparison of Livia to Juno and Augustus to Jupiter also suggests that the

\textsuperscript{821} Green ibid. See also Littlewood (2002) 194: “Concordia was necessarily much celebrated in Augustan ideology, particularly through the years of dynastic power struggles which followed the naming of Tiberius as Augustus’ successor in A.D. 4.”
\textsuperscript{822} On the evolution of political *concordia* see Levick (1978), Herbert-Brown (1994) 162-7, Pasco-Pranger (2002a) 267-70, Newlands (2002) 244.
harmony between the two of them reflects the cosmic *concordia* symbolized by the
marriage between Jupiter and Juno. However, the domestic associations accrued by the
Tiberian temple and the Livian shrine to Concordia displaces the focus of *concordia* from
the unproblematic military concord achieved by victory over a foreign enemy onto the
concord regained after a period of turmoil. One of the effects of this is to dull the contrast
between the associations of the Camillan temple and its Tiberian reincarnation. Both, it
seems, celebrate the accomplishment of concord after forms of civil strife, whether
among the orders or members of the imperial household. A second reference to Livia’s
shrine to Concordia in book 6 will similarly explore the issues of *concordia* and
*discordia*.

As we saw earlier, Concordia and the Ara Pacis are united once again, like they
are at the end of book 1, at the close of book 3, which is the structural midpoint of the
Pacis erit* (“Janus ought to be worshipped, and along with him gentle Concordia, Roman
Welfare and the Altar of Peace”). It is unclear exactly to what Concordia refers here, but
this grouping (Janus, Concordia, Romana Salus, Ara Pacis) are all conceptually related
by their peaceful associations. 823 Janus is not only a peaceful god, but a guardian of
cosmic and elemental *concordia*. As I argued earlier, the appearance of Concordia here at
the junction of the months of Mars (March) and April (Venus) alludes to the
philosophical idea of *harmonia* or *concordia* as the result of the union of the cosmic

823 See Bömer (1957-8) *ad loc.* on the possibility of connecting these figures to a statue-dedication
mentioned by Dio (54.35.1f.), although Dio does not mention Janus. Bömer thinks the mention of Janus
here refers to the closing of his temple in 10 B.C. and that the proximity of this to the dedication of the
statues (11 B.C.) led Ovid to loosely connect them.
principles of love (Venus) and strife (Mars). Concordia is therefore literally at the center of the *Fasti*.

However, the theme of Concordia is arguably most prominent in book 6. It is in the proem to this book that the goddess Concordia herself makes an appearance (6.91-92): *venit Apollinea longas Concordia lauro / nexa comas, placidi numen opusque ducis* (“Concordia came her hair intertwined with Apolline laurel, the deity and work of the peaceful leader”). The proem comprises a contest between the goddesses Juno and Hebe, who both argue that the etymology of *Iunius mensis* comes from them. In the proem Juno is playing her conventional role as an agent of discord and therefore a threat to *concordia*. Indeed, the poet says that strife between Juno and Hebe, her daughter, was imminent (89-90): *et in litem studio certaminis issent, / atque ira pietas dissimulata foret* (“and out of their eagerness for competition they might have entered into strife, and familial piety might have been forgotten because of anger”). It is at this point that Concordia enters, with the expectation that — true to her name — she will resolve the familial strife between the two goddesses. Instead, she joins the conflict herself by offering a third etymology, that is, June gets its name from the “union” of the Romans and Sabines, which was her own work (96): *‘his nomen iunctis Iunius’ inquit ‘habet’* (“June has its name” she said “from their union”). The poet, citing the precedent of the judgment of Paris and its disastrous consequences, refuses to decide among the competing goddesses. Therefore, a tenuous concord (cf. *ite pares a me*, 99), if there is one at all, is accomplished by the poet’s deferral of judgment. The goddess Concordia’s self-interested claim betrays the similarly self-interested political ends which the “slogan” of *concordia*
often served. Therefore, the proem of Fasti 6 leaves the impression of the fragility of concordia, threatened even by Concordia herself.

Concordia appears again at 6.637 in the form of Livia’s shrine to Concordia (637-8): te quoque magnifica, Concordia, dedicat aede / Livia, quam caro praestitit ipsa viro (“to you too, Concordia, Livia dedicats a magnificent shrine, which she presents to her dear husband”). This is enmeshed in a complicated intratextual network of passages. As commentators have pointed out, this passage is linked to the poet’s commemoration of Concordia in book 1, also beginning at line 637.824 That passage had contained references to three different monuments to Concordia, the Camillan and Tiberian temples to Concordia, and Livia’s shrine to Concordia. Therefore, the poem is framed by these two commemorations of Concordia in books 1 and 6. In book 1 Ovid focused on the concord between members of the imperial family, Tiberius and his mother Livia, and Livia and Augustus, whose marriage was compared to that of Juno and Jupiter. This domestic concord is again highlighted in book 6, especially in contrast to the familial discord which had appeared in the previous story of Tullia’s role in the murder of her own father, Servius.825

The celebration of Livia’s shrine to Concordia at 6.337-8 leads into an anecdote about the Porticus Liviae. The poet says that there used to be an immense house on the site that the Portico now occupies. It was the house of Vedius Pollio, who bequeathed it to Augustus upon his death. Instead of taking the house for himself, Augustus razed it and erected the Porticus Liviae for public use (639-48). Augustus leveled Pollio’s house,

but “under no charge of treason” (*nullo sub crimine regni*, 643), in contrast to Manlius Capitolinus’ house, which was razed after his death sentence in 384 for causing a rebellion among the plebs (6.189-90): *vixit, ut occideret damnatus crimine regni: / hunc illi titulum longa senecta dabat* (“he lived to die condemned by the charge of treason: this title his long span of years gave to him”). As Littlewood says, by this cross-reference “Ovid seems to point to the hubris which ultimately destroyed both the reputation of the Republican hero and the monument to the successful equestrian’s wealth.”

Whereas the razing of Capitolinus’ house had made room for the temple to Juno Moneta, dedicated by Camillus (6.183-4), the razing of Pollio’s house lays the ground for the Porticus Liviae. This parallel may be significant since the commemoration of the shrine to Concordia in book 1 had explicitly compared Livia to Juno. In this sense, Capitolinus’ house yields to a monument of Juno and Pollio’s house to a monument of the earthly Juno, Livia.

These three passages, Camillan, Tiberian, and Livian Concordia at 1.637-50, the Camillan temple to Juno Moneta (6.183-90), and Livian Concordia again (6.637-48), are all densely interconnected. Implicated in this is Juno’s connection to Concordia, as illuminated by Alex Hardie, but civil discord is also prominently featured in each passage. Therefore, Juno’s ambivalent nature is significant: she is associated not only with concord, but perhaps more prominently with discord. However, once again, the commemoration of Livia’s shrine to Concordia at 6.637-49 appears to distinguish the domestic concord between her and Augustus from the domestic discord of Servius

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827 Hardie (2007).
Tullius’ reign; moreover, it distinguishes Augustus’ razing of Pollio’s house from the razing of Manlius Capitolinus’ house, which was due to his role in inciting civil discord. Therefore, Ovid seems to free Livia and Augustus from any associations with discord, either familial or civil.

Yet, considerably more can be teased out of this passage. I suggest that it alludes to the discord of the civil wars, which was the prelude to Augustan concordia, and, moreover, that the passage suggests that concentration of power in a single house makes the concordia of that house an urgent matter for the welfare of Rome. Note first the poet’s manner of describing Pollio’s house (641-2): urbis opus domus una fuit spatiumque tenebat / quo brevius muris oppida multa tenent.⁸²⁸ Ostensibly, this equation between the size of Pollio’s house and cities or towns demonstrates its “hubristic immensity.”⁸²⁹ Yet, this identification between a house and city, especially in the context of a commemoration of the concordia between Livia and Augustus, cannot help but recall the fact that at the time Ovid was writing the Fasti the welfare of the state was tied to the domus Augusta. In a real sense the city of Rome was identifiable with a single domus. Therefore, in as much as Livia’s shrine to Concordia within the Porticus is a monument to domestic concordia, Augustus has replaced one house “as big as a city” by another.

The significance of the destruction of Pollio’s house can be better understood by an intertext that seems to have gone unnoticed by commentators. The poet says of

⁸²⁸ Newlands (2002) notes the difficulty in translating urbis opus. The phrase also occurs at Aen. 5.118-9 in a description of the ship Chimaera. Newlands cites Williams’ (1972) 70-1 commentary on the Aenéid, where he suggests that the phrase refers to size and could therefore be translated “as big as a city.” As Newlands notes, size may be meant by the use of the phrase in the Fasti, as well, since Ovid says that the house occupied more ground than many towns enclosed within their walls (6.641-2).

Augustus’ destruction of the house (645-6): sustinuit tantas operum subvertere moles
/ totque suas heres perdere Caesar opes (“Caesar bore destroying such a great structure
and losing as heir so much wealth”). The adjective-noun combination tanta moles is
familiar to any reader of the Aeneid, since in the proem to book 1 the poet says of
Aeneas’ trials at the hand of Juno that “so great was the work to found the Roman
people” (1.34): tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem. Vergil, therefore, uses
tantae molis to refer to Aeneas’ role as a ktistic hero or a “city-founder.” Paradoxically,
Ovid uses the same expression (tantas moles, 6.645) in the context of Augustus’
destruction of a house as large as a city. On one level, this paradoxically ktistic act of
destruction reinforces the idea that Augustus rebuilt Rome by eschewing private luxuria
in favor of public building projects like the Porticus Liviae. On another level, perhaps, it
can refer to the destruction inherent in Rome’s founding and later its “re-founding” under
Augustus. As the proem of the Aeneid makes clear, Rome’s foundation emerges out of
the destruction of Troy and, moreover, that the destruction of another city, Carthage
(excidio Libyae, 1.22) occurs in the course of Rome’s foundation and rise to power.
Augustus’ re-foundation of the city emerged out of the destruction of the civil wars,
which was later recast as an act of pious revenge for the murder of his adoptive father,
Caesar.

Indeed, some of the language Ovid uses to describe Augustus’ destruction of
Pollio’s house is intriguing in light of the possibility that Ovid is broaching the subject of
the civil wars. Augustus is referred to here not only as Caesar but as an “heir,” (heres,
646), a juxtaposition that resonates given his status as Caesar’s heir. One of the ways that
Octavian proved himself as heir to Caesar was by exacting vengeance upon his father’s killers; he is called a *vindex* (648) or “one who punishes (an offence) or takes vengeance for (a wrong)” in his act of razing Pollio’s house. For the use of *vindex* in the context of destruction of a house, compare *Met.* 1.230-1, where Jupiter describes his destruction of Lycaon’s palace: *ego vindice flamma / in domino dignos everti tecta Penates.* The idea that there is a subtext of civil discord in the *Fasti* passage is bolstered by the fact that the two intratexts discussed above in *Fasti* 1 and earlier in *Fasti* 6 both include civil strife. Yet, even if the passage does contain the subtext of civil strife, it does not necessarily lessen the eulogistic aspect of the passage. Augustus’ destruction of Pollio’s house in order to make way for a public monument to *concordia* can be compared to Octavian/Augustus’ actions in the civil war, whose destruction was necessary to establish a lasting *concordia*.

However this may be, the anecdote highlights Augustus’ destructive, as well as creative, powers. This is underscored by a further intratext, in which Augustus’ actions are compared to Jupiter’s. As censor and *vindex*, Augustus set an example by doing himself what he advises other people to do (*sic agitur censura et sic exempla parantur, / cum vindex, alios quod monet, ipse facit*, 647-8). Just over a hundred lines later, the poet briefly encapsulates the story of Hippolytus or Virbius, who was brought back to life by the art of Asclepius. Jupiter, fearing such an example (*exemplum veritus*, 759), struck

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830 *OLD* (3). *Vindex* appears in several manuscripts, but not in the most important *U*, which has *iudex*. As one might imagine, both have their defenders. Merkel and AWC prefer *vindex* in their editions, as does Syme (1961) 29. Bömer (1957-8) prefers *iudex*, as does Newlands (2002) 233-4 and Littlewood (2006), although the latter acknowledges that a case can be made for *vindex*, as well.

831 As *OLD* (3) says, when applied to things, *vindex* is often used predicatively and nearly equals “avenging.”
down Asclepius with a thunderbolt. Apollo, however, appealed to his father to restore his son and Jupiter, after the plea from Apollo, does himself what he forbids to take place, in a clear echo of the earlier description of Augustus’ actions (762): *propter te, fieri quod vetat, ipse facit* (“on account of you [Apollo], he [Jupiter] himself does what he forbids from happening”). This seems to be an example of *oppositio in imitando*: Jupiter does what he forbids, while Augustus does what he advises. But the intratext also suggests that powerful gods and men, like Jupiter and Augustus, have the capacity both to destroy and create, punish and restore.

These are examples of the concentration of power in the hands of one supreme individual. But the Pollio episode, by equating house with city, also points to the concentration of power within a single *domus*, by whose fortune the city subsequently rises and falls. While Augustus may be able to check the forces of discord as long as he is *princeps*, the underlying instability of the state might not be so successfully managed by a successor. The forward-looking orientation of the *Fasti* is encapsulated in the poet’s introduction to the anecdote about Pollio’s house. The poet assumes a didactic persona and portentously addresses the “coming age” (*disce tamen, veniens aetas*), suggesting just what an urgent matter for Rome’s future is the identification of city with *domus* and the maintenance of *concordia*.

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832 On the other hand, the parallel could also undermine the statement that Augustus does what he advises others to do by showing that Augustus’ divine analogue, Jupiter, does what he forbids other to do. This can point to an inconsistency in Augustus’ own actions in regard to Pollio’s house. That is, while he condemns the hubristic immensity of Pollio’s house, which is “as big as a city,” his own house, the *domus Augusta*, has become identifiable with the city of Rome.

833 I plan to explore elsewhere the implications of this section of the poem for Ovid’s exile.

834 Newlands (2002) 228 notes the strongly didactic voice assumed by the poet.
The poet’s commemoration of Livia’s shrine to Concordia is the last explicit reference to *concordia* in the poem, but the closing scene of the *Fasti* features a monument, the *Aedes Herculis Musarum* (AHM), closely related to the concept of *concordia*. The AHM was a symbol of musical *concordia*, in as much as the Muses were goddesses of song famous for their harmonious unanimity. However, the Muses also have a civic dimension, namely their ability “to turn aside anger, calm public disturbance and *stasis*, and restore harmony within the well-tempered *polis*.” The AHM may well have embodied this association between the Muses and political *concordia*.

It is also possible that the first edition of Ennius’ *Annales* covered the AHM as part of its final, fifteenth book, which would have made it an important precedent for Ovid’s treatment of the temple at the end of the *Fasti*. The AHM is doubly appropriate as a concluding scene for Ovid’s *Fasti* because, in addition to the cult statues of Hercules and the Muses, the temple also contained Fulvius’ own *Fasti*, which, as Littlewood says, “included etymological explanations of the names of the months and a basic chronicle of Roman temple *natales* and their aristocratic founders, over which the poet Ennius had possibly cast a critical eye.” Therefore, Ennius may have ended the fifteen-book

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837 It seems that the temple was conceived and built during a time of political turmoil, in which the senate criticized Fulvius for his looting of Ambracia. See Littlewood (2006) 230 with bibliography. As Hardie (2007) 560 points out, one member of the opposition was M. Aemilius Lepidus, with whom Fulvius later shared the censorship in 179 and made a public reconciliation as a sign of their *concordia*. Hardie (2007) 561 moreover argues that that the AHM should be connected to this restoration of *concordia* between two political enemies: “The timing of Fulvius’ embarkation on his temple of Hercules, in 179,... looks like the product of their *concordia*.”
edition of the *Annales* with a symbol of concord, the AHM, after much of his poem had concerned the discord of war, and in which Discordia herself had made an appearance. If scholars are correct to see the Ennian Discordia as version of Empedoclean Neikos, then it seems reasonable to suppose that the climactic AHM temple and its concordant associations were involved in Ennius’ use of Empedoclean motifs in the *Annales*. We can compare, for example, Alex Hardie’s observations on the cosmic associations of the Greek Muses and their concord: “In an extension of the civic dimension, and under Pythagorean influence, the Muses’ *homonoia* was elevated to the status of a governing principle of political and cosmic order. These ideas proved profoundly important for the Greek theology of the Muses, as also for the representation in poetry of the power of their musical harmony to symbolise familial, political, and elemental or cosmic balance.”

Hardie has suggested the AHM symbolized political *concordia* between the rivals Fulvius and M. Aemilius Lepidus. However, as in the Tiberian temple to Concordia celebrated in book 1, which came to be a symbol of familial *concordia* within the *domus Augusta*, the AHM as it appears in the *Fasti* is also strongly connected to the family of Augustus. The *Fasti* commemorates the temple’s restoration in 29 B.C. by L. Marcius Philippus, Augustus’ step-brother, and effusively praises Philippus’ daughter Marcia. While *concordia* is not explicitly mentioned, scholars have seen it reflected in the “perfect balance of Marcia’s praiseworthy features (*par...par...respondent*, 804-5)” and in the reference to Marcia’s descent from Ancus Marcius, the third king of Rome who

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“balanced Romulus’ martial virtues with Numa’s interest in state religion.”

*Concordia* is also present in the assent of the other Muses to Clio’s praise of the *sacra domus* (*sic cecinit Clio, doctae adsensere sorores*, 811); this restores the harmony among the sisters that had been surprisingly absent in the proem to book 5. *Concordia* is also implicitly present in the reconciliation of Juno and Hercules (799-800): *dicite, Pierides, quis vos addixerit isti / cui dedit invitas victa noverca manus* (“Tell me, Pierides, who attached you to that man to whom his defeated step-mother begrudginly yielded”). Both the sisterly concord of the Muses and especially Juno’s reconciliation with Hercules counter-balance the motif of familial discord in *Fasti* 6, which had begun with the strife between Juno and Hebe, Hercules’ wife, and recurred in scenes such as Tullia’s betrayal of her father Servius.\(^{843}\)

However, the theme of *concordia* in this closing scene, like the other examples discussed, is far from straightforward. Consider first the poet’s reference to the reconciliation between Hercules and Juno. A “conquered” (*victa*, 800) Juno “yielded reluctantly” (*dedit invitas...manus*, 800). This tense “reconciliation” can be compared to the precarious *concordia* accomplished by the poet’s refusal to judge among the three goddesses in the proem. Indeed, the poet had cited the disastrous consequences of the judgment of Paris as his reason for refusing judgment; there, Juno’s “defeat” had led to the Trojan War. In light of the dialogue between this closing scene and the proem, a *victa* Juno is perhaps not only a submissive Juno but also a threatening one. As Hardie points out, these lines also recall the end of the *Aeneid* and Juno’s “unwilling abandonment of


Turnus (12.809, *invita*), as she moves to reconciliation with Jupiter and assent to the existence of Rome. Therefore, Juno’s ambivalent nature seems to be in evidence once again at the end of the poem. In other words, her reconciliation with Hercules contains the seeds of discord.

Pertinent here is Don Fowler’s suggestion that Juno in the *Aeneid* often resists closure, which is emblematized in her opening of the Gates of War. He identifies Juno with the narrative energy that impels the poem forward. Of course, the *Fasti* is a famously open-ended poem. Juno can therefore embody this fundamental ambiguity surrounding the “ending” of the *Fasti*, in as much as she, like the programmatic god Janus, is a goddess of both opening and closure. Ostensibly, her mention at the end of the poem is part of its atmosphere of reconciliation, *concordia* and closure, but it is impossible to entirely banish her associations with violent energy, *discordia* and opening.

The second dissonance in the midst of the closural *concordia* is, as Hardie says, “the cultic association of the Muses with the notoriously unmusical Hercules and is brought out by the discord he strikes on his lyre, even as he nods assent (*increpuit lyram*, 812).” This alludes to Horace’s last ode, where Apollo indicates displeasure at the poet’s ambition to sing martial epic by striking a discordant note on his lyre (4.15.2). Ovid’s allusion to the end of Horace’s *Odes* is therefore another example of *oppositio in imitando*. Hercules’ discordant lyre-playing, unlike Apollo’s, indicates agreement, and perhaps humorously alludes to Hercules’ reputation as a poor musician. Hardie’s

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845 *Tristia* 2.549-52.
847 Ibid.
assesssment of the closing scene of the *Fasti* is just: “...it introduces incongruities around the themes of reconciliation, unanimity, and concord. Ovid thereby suggests musical harmony as an analogue for concordant reconciliation while exploring the potential for *discordia* within ostensibly stable or concordant situations.”

One of the questions that seems to be raised by the exploration of *concordia* and *discordia* in the *Fasti* is the ability of the city’s rulers to maintain *concordia* in the face of discordant elements in the state. This is related to the question of the poem’s view of time and history. Has history, as the *Metamorphoses* suggests, culminated in the reign of Augustus, in which a lasting *concordia* is finally achieved? Or is the universe a fundamentally unstable and anti-teleological one. Stephen Wheeler has argued that this question is posed at the very beginning of the *Metamorphoses*, where the image of a cosmos under divine control is opposed by an image of an unstable one subject to the inexorable physical laws of creation and dissolution. Wheeler also sees this dichotomy represented by the philosophical frame of the *Metamorphoses*, that is, the “teleological creation episode in book 1 and the anti-teleological speech of Pythagoras in book 15.”

As I discuss in some detail in the final chapter, a philosophical frame is one of the many elements shared by the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*. Like the *Metamorphoses*, one of the questions of the philosophy of the *Fasti* is the teleological versus anti-teleological view of time and history. Or, put another way, the question of whether the *discordia* of the elements in the early history of the world has yielded to a lasting, stable *concordia* under Augustus.

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848 Ibid. 568.
850 Ibid., n. 17.
5.9 Elegiac and Cosmogonic Rhythms

In this final section I am going to step back and consider the poem’s structure as a whole in light of some of the more localized features and patterns I have discussed so far, both in this chapter and the previous one, such as the pattern of creation and destruction and the cyclical view of time and history, in order to probe the limits of characterizing the structure of the *Fasti* as “Empedoclean.” We saw earlier that Matthew Robinson has made the provocative suggestion that the alternation of longer and shorter months (in terms of days) lends the macro-structure of the *fasti* (and the six books of the *Fasti*) an elegiac rhythm.851 This seems to me almost certainly right and it can perhaps be augmented in some interesting ways.

Just as the calendar falls into an elegiac alternation between longer (hexameter) and shorter (pentameter) months, so new beginnings seem to be given particular emphasis in each of the “hexameter” books, implying, like the alternation of the elegiac couplet itself, a cyclical pattern. Book 1, of course, contains Janus’ cosmogony and he is the god of beginnings and openings. On the other hand, the idea of book 2 as an “ending” or “descending” — like the pentameter — after the beginning or “ascending” of book 1 is over-determined: the poet tells us that it used to be the last (*imus*, 2.52) month in the calendar because it is dedicated to the *imis manibus* (52) or the dead; it also features the festival of the Terminalia (2.639-84) in celebration of the god Terminus or the “End.” In as much as the Romans commonly used *chaos* for Hades852 the dedication of February to the *imis manibus* suggests that the year used to end in a kind of chaos before a rebirth out

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851 Robinson (2011) 5.
of chaos, precisely the process described in book 1 — Janus/Chaos being transformed into cosmos. The beginning/end binary of January/February is programmatical stated at the beginning of book 2 (47-54).\textsuperscript{853}

sed tamen (antiqui ne nescius ordinis erres)
\textbf{primus}, ut est, \textit{lani mensis} et ante fuit;
qui sequitur, veteris fuit \textit{ultimus} anni:
tu quoque sacrorum, \textit{Termine, finis} eras.
\textbf{primus} enim \textit{lani mensis}, quia ianua \textbf{prima} est:
qui sacer est \textit{imis manibus}, \textit{imus} erat.
postmodo creduntur spatio distantia longo
tempora bis quini continuasse viri.

But nevertheless (so that you may not be in ignorance of the ancient order), the month of Janus used to be the first, as it is now; the month that follows, was the last of the old year; you too, Terminus, were the end of the sacred rites. Indeed, the month of Janus is first, because the door is first; the month that is sacred to the shades below, used to be last. They believe that later the Decemvirs joined times separated by a long space.

The antitheses of first/last and beginning/end are here flaunted. Ovid, however, also introduces a third element: not only first/last and beginning/end, but also \textit{lowest} \textit{(imis manibus}, 2.52). The last \textit{(imus)} month is dedicated to the “lowest” shades. \textit{Imus} introduces the possibility of defining the antithesis of January/February vertically. We might recall that the poet had opened his treatment of the Kalends of January by describing the consuls’ \textit{ascent} to the Capitol (1.79): \textit{Tarpeias itur in arces}. Therefore, we might add ascent/descent or rising/falling to the binaries represented by January/February. This too could contribute to the elegiac rhythm of the opening two books, since, as we know, Ovid describes the elegiac couplet as “rising” in the hexameter

\textsuperscript{853} On the contrasts in this passage see Hübner (1999) 542-4. This is part of his larger discussion of the paired months in the \textit{Fasti}, including January and February.
and “falling” in the pentameter.\(^{854}\) Indeed, the importance of the notion of rising and falling to the poem’s program is announced in the second line of the poem, where the poet says that in addition to \textit{tempora} (1.1) he will sing of the \textit{setting} and \textit{rising} of the stars (\textit{lapsaque sub terras ortaque signa canam}, \textit{Fasti} 1.2).

After this figural descent into chaos in book 2, there is naturally a new beginning in March, formerly the \textit{first} month of the year (3.75). The sense of another beginning is underscored by the fact that March marks the beginning of spring. Birth is also a prominent theme at the beginning of the book: the first tale told is Mars’ rape of Ilia and the birth of Romulus and Remus (3.9-45) — also in a sense the \textit{birth} of Rome; Mars quotes Janus’ preface to his cosmogony in book 1 and refers to Rome’s \textit{prima elementa}, Rome’s “cosmogony” (3.177-80). The poet reports a dream Ilia has while pregnant of the fiery destruction of Troy (3.27-38): the presence in this single image of destruction and creation again implies a cycle. The idea of rebirth in a cycle is further underscored by reference to the tradition making Numa a pupil of Pythagoras, who “thinks we can be reborn” (3.153-4): \textit{sive hoc a Samio doctus, qui posse renasci / nos putat, Egeria sive monente sua}. Not long after this is the description of the cyclical beginning of spring (3.235-44). We might remember too that a common theory in antiquity held that conditions at the beginning of the world resembled those during springtime.\(^{855}\) After this extended description of springtime conditions in the \textit{Fasti} the poet proceeds to the \textit{aetion} of the \textit{ancile}, an \textit{imago mundi} in the mold of earlier cosmic shields such as those of Achilles and Aeneas (3.259-392). As we know, Vulcan’s creation of the Shield of

\(^{854}\) The most famous occurrence is at \textit{Am.} 1.1.27: \textit{sex mihi surgat opus numeris, in quinque residat.}

\(^{855}\) See Morgan (1999) index s.v. “spring.”
Achilles came to be interpreted as an allegory for cosmogony. The making of the ancilia, then, can be seen as part of the cosmogonic pattern repeatedly featured at the beginning of book 3, including the birth of Romulus and Remus, Mars’ allusion to Janus’ cosmogony and prima elementa, and springtime.856

Therefore, a literal cosmogony occurs in book 1, and then a reference to Rome’s origins figured as cosmogony at the beginning of book 3. In book 4, as we know, Venus appears, the goddess of elegiac poetry. Her succession of Mars again reinforces the idea of paired books in the Fasti, as well as the poem’s “elegiac” structure, since the hexameter month of Mars is succeeded by the pentameter month of Venus.857 If this cyclical rhythm is to be kept up, then May should emphasize beginnings, like the other “hexameter” months. It in fact does: Polyhymnia relates a cosmogony (post chaos ut primum data sunt tria corpora mundo, 5.11) and theogony (5.11-52) This also comes in the context of the famously concordant Muses’ discord (dissensere deae, 5.9)858 so that not only is the theme of beginning strongly emphasized in book 5, as in books 1 and 3, but it also prominently features strife or discord. In this sense too the book-level structure of the Fasti can reflect the elegiac couplet in as much as the couplet too makes a (new) beginning in the discordant hexameter. This structure strongly emphasizes the idea of cyclical time: specifically perhaps a cycle of creation and dissolution based on the repeated pattern of cosmogony in the odd-numbered books. Any kind of rigidly

856 The idea of death and rebirth or a cycle is also implicit in the poet’s reference during the aetion of the ancilia to Hippolytus or Virbius, the “Twice-Man,” who was brought back from the dead by Asclepius.
857 As Joseph Farrell suggests to me, one might see the idea of “rise” and “fall” in books 3 and 4, as well, if we imagine that Ovid has to rise to the epic subject of Mars in book 3 and descend to more typically elegiac subject matter in Venus and book 4.
858 On the discordant Muses at the beginning of Fasti 5 see Barchiesi (1991).
schematic picture like this is not going to be a perfect fit (the proem to book 4, for example, also emphasizes spring and opening, for example), but it is at least one structural pattern strongly suggested by the poem. The ending of book 4 seems to fit nicely into this scheme, since the creation theme (cosmogony) in the next book is immediately preceded by a notice about the agricultural destruction brought by Sirius, and the deferral of the poet’s celebration of Flora, goddess of agricultural fertility until the next month. Like the theme of the dead in February prepares for the theme of rebirth at the beginning of March, so the ending of book 4 prepares for the theme of cosmogony in May. This establishes a cyclical temporality as one of the dominant features of the poem. The careful placement of cosmogonic themes at the beginnings of the odd-numbered books suggests on a structural level the cycle of creation and dissolution, and perhaps therefore that the poem is not only Empedoclean in the sense that it has Mars and Venus at its center, but also in its enactment of this cosmogonic pattern.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated the certain features of the structure of the *Fasti*, such as the position of Mars and Venus in the central two books of the poem or the positioning of Janus and Concordia at its precise midpoint can be understood in terms of natural philosophy and especially the Empedoclean tradition. The importance of these two figures in the structure of Ovid’s poem is also another indication, like the programmatic didactic gestures in book 1, that the *Fasti* strongly positions itself in the tradition of didactic poetry, since Ares/Mars and Aphrodite Venus had been a theme in important didactic predecessors like Vergil and Lucretius, and especially Empedocles. As he had
done in the *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria*, Ovid playfully exploits the lofty background of Mars and Venus as cosmic principles in comic episodes like the faux marriage Anna Perenna arranges for Mars, but, as is typical of the *Fasti*, lighter, comic themes are strikingly juxtaposed to weightier ones like the assassination of Caesar and the civil wars. At one and the same time Ovid playfully undermines the seriousness of Empedoclean and Lucretian themes and relates them to weighty historical themes like the *discordia* of the civil wars. The alternation of Mars and Venus in books 3 and 4 are also part of the poem’s wider strategy of identifying an “elegiac” rhythm for the calendar that appears to offer the cycle as the dominant temporal model or pattern in the poem. The fact that this cyclical pattern features Mars and Venus relates Ovid’s calendar rhythms to those of Empedocles’ cosmic cycle. Indeed, I have also suggested that the poem enacts an “Empedoclean” rhythm in as much as its “hexameter” books, 1, 3 and 5, all heavily emphasize beginnings, especially in the form of cosmogony. In each of these books this cosmogonic pattern is connected to strife and therefore perhaps reflects the martial, discordant opening hexameter in the elegiac couplet. The *Fasti*, therefore, elaborates on Ovid’s hints in the *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria* that his elegiac poetics can be assimilated in fascinating ways to Empedocles’ cosmology.
CHAPTER 6
The Vestalia and the Philosophical Frames of the *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses*

Introduction

In the prior two chapters I made important observations about the intricate structure of the six books of the *Fasti*, which, among other things, can contribute to the increasing recognition that at some point Ovid shaped these books as a carefully integrated whole. Moreover, I have demonstrated that Ovid’s use of natural philosophical themes informs this structure, in particular those of Empedocles and the Empedoclean tradition in Roman poetry. We saw in chapter 4 that the god Janus and his programmatic opening episode in the poem are deeply Empedoclean, symbolized above all perhaps by the Empedoclean monument of the Janus Geminus. Other key episodes in the book, notably the programmatic praise of the *felices animae* and the history of sacrifice on the Agonalia, reinforce the Empedoclean frame of reference for the poem established in the Janus episode.

This “philosophical” and Empedoclean structure of the poem is equally prominent at its center, where the Empedoclean deities of Mars and Venus occupy the architectural centerpiece of the six-book poem. We also saw that Empedoclean love and strife are implicated in the extensive engagement in *Fasti* 3 and 4 with peace and war, elegy and epic that Hinds and others have shown to be such an important part of the fabric of these books. We also saw that the *Fasti* can be seen to exhibit an “elegiac rhythm” in as much as it alternates quantitatively longer and shorter months; this structural enactment of the elegiac couplet is nowhere more pronounced than in books 3 and 4, where the “hexameter” month of March and the “pentameter” month of April are presided over by
Mars and Venus respectively. This cyclical alternation involving Mars and Venus, however, also lends itself to an Empedoclean interpretation. More tentatively, I also argued that the “Empedoclean” structure of the Fasti extends to the way that Ovid suggests a cycle of creation and destruction by carefully placing cosmogonic themes at the beginnings of the “hexameter” books, 1, 3 and 5. This suggests that a cyclical model of time is the dominant one in the Fasti, perhaps unsurprisingly given that its subject is the annual round of the calendar and its meter the alternating hexameter and pentameter of the elegiac couplet.

This final chapter adds to these earlier structural arguments by showing that book 6 is part of the careful arrangement of material in the six books of the Fasti, but also that it relates in interesting ways to the structure of the Metamorphoses. The philosophizing description of Vesta’s temple in book 6 relates it to the philosophical opening of the Janus episode and particularly the Empedoclean monument of the Janus Geminus. As we will see, this structural pairing is reflected on another level in the book by the Empedoclean contrast between Janus and concordia in book 1 and Juno and discordia in book 6. The oft-discordant Vesta and her temple appear as an iteration of discordant Juno from earlier in the book. This philosophical frame in the Fasti, however, also parallels the philosophical frame of the Metamorphoses, where the cosmogony occurs in book 1 and the speech of Pythagoras in book 15. In this sense, the Metamorphoses has an “Empedoclean frame” as well, since both the cosmological opening of the poem, as we saw in chapter 4, and the speech of Pythagoras, which we will discuss in more detail in this chapter, adapt a number of Empedoclean themes.
One of the fruits of this insight about the structure of the *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses* is to enable us to see an extensive dialogue between the Vesta episode and its structural counterpart in *Metamorphoses* 15, the speech of Pythagoras. In particular, the Vesta episode as a whole — and not simply the philosophical description of the temple — engages Pythagoras’ doctrine of the four elements and universal change, both of which can be characterized as “Empedoclean.” What I will argue specifically is that the Vesta episode contains a number of assertions about the stability and permanance of Vesta’s temple and the goddess herself *qua* elemental being that offer a view of the Roman universe — since the Vesta temple is an *imago mundi* and Vestal fire a guarantee of Roman *imperium* — as stable and unchanging under the principate of Augustus.

However, we will see that elements of Pythagoras’ Empedoclean philosophy of universal change continually surface in the episode and exist in uneasy tension with the idea of a stable Roman universe and a teleological view of time and history. I will set the stage for this culminating argument by first laying out the poet’s emphasis on his (ambivalent) vatic status at the beginning of book 6, before briefly discussing the initial structural correspondence between books 1 and 6 established by the pair of Janus and Juno.

**6.1 Poet as Vates**

As we saw in the last chapter, the proem to book 6 has three different goddesses plead their case to the poet for the etymology of June, but the poet declines to choose among them and places the burden on the reader instead. This deferral of judgment ironizes the poet’s claim that he is divinely inspired and has spoken to the goddesses, since these kinds of claims are often meant to lend the poet’s account authority and an aura of truth.
in respect to competing accounts. However, even the ultimate model for this scene, Hesiod’s *Musanweihe* on Mt. Helicon, indicates the slipperiness of this truth, given the limitations of human intellect (*Theog. 26*-8).

Still, perhaps at no other place in the *Fasti* is the poet’s vatic status given greater emphasis. He claims that (6.5-6) *est deus in nobis, agitante calasminus illo; / impetus hic sacrae semina mentis habet* (“There is a god in me, by whose movement I grow warm; the god’s force holds the seeds of sacred mind”). The heat of inspiration connects the poet to vatic figures of prophecy like Carmentis, who in *Fasti* 1 is said to have given true prophecy once she had conceived ethereal fires in her mind: *quaes [Carmentis], simul aetherios animo conceperat ignes, / ore dabat vero carmina plena dei* (1.473-4). The poet’s heat here is also appropriate to the month’s physical identity: the summer month of June is characterized by heat and dryness, qualities of the element fire. The poet’s *calor* anticipates the prominence of fire in the book: Vesta, who is both guardian of fire (*flammae custos*, 6.258) and the element itself (*nec tu aliud Vesta quam vivam intellege flammam*, 6.291), dominates the book; also prominent is the early Roman King Servius, whose father is Vulcan (*namque pater Tulli Volcanus*, 6.627) and whose genealogy is confirmed by the sign of fire (6.635-6) *signa dedit genitor tunc cum caput igne corusco / contigit, inque comis flammeus arsit apex* (“His father then offered a sign when he touched his head with flashing fire, and a crown of flame burned upon his hair”). The book also contains notices about the destruction of two temples by fire (Vesta, 437-54;

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859 Williams (1991) 183. Williams considers this destabilization of the poet’s vatic authority to be a basic feature of the *Fasti*.
861 Servius’ mother, Ocresia, conceives him by sitting upon a hearth-fire in the shape of a phallus (6.631-4).
Fortuna, 625-6), in addition to an appearance by the fire demon Cacus (6.81-2).

Therefore, the month/book of June unfolds under the sign of the element fire, and the poet’s own heat (calescimus, 6.5) is a sign of his vatic status.

In fact, the poet names himself as a vates in offering possible explanations as to why he can see the “faces” of the gods (6.7-8): *fas mihi praecipue voltus vidisse deorum, / vel quia sum vates, vel quia sacra cano* (“it is lawful for me in particular to see the faces of the gods, either because I am a prophet-poet, or because I sing of sacred rites”). The fact that the poet has privileged access to gods is one of the distinguishing features of the *Fasti* and the suggestion that this is possible because the poet is a vates makes his vatic status central to the poem’s project. ⁸⁶² The poet’s identity as a vates is underlined only a little later in Juno’s address to the poet (6.21-4):

> namque ait ‘o vates, Romani conditor anni, 
> ause per exiguos magna referre modos, 
> ius tibi fecisti numen caeleste videndi, 
> cum placuit numeris condere festa tuis.’

> And in fact she said “O poet-prophet, founder of the Roman year, who has dared to recount great themes in a modest meter, you have given yourself the right of seeing celestial divinity, since you have chosen to build the festivals in your own meter.”

In what sense is the poet a “founder”? Since Ovid elsewhere calls himself a conditor in respect to his remarkably innovative didactic elegy, the *Ars Amatoria* (*P.* 2.11.12), this use of conditor in the *Fasti* may allude to Ovid’s unique literary achievement in the *Fasti*. ⁸⁶³ But the emphasis on the ktistic nature of the poet’s project in the *Fasti* also compares him to political figures like Romulus, as Pasco-Pranger has observed:

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⁸⁶² On the vatic persona of the poet in the *Fasti* see Pasco-Pranger (2000) and (2002b).
The language of foundation naturally evokes the foundation of the city and closely echoes language used of Romulus elsewhere in the poem. In the proem to Book 3, the syntax by which Ovid names Romulus as *Romanae conditor urbis* (3.24) matches perfectly his own role as *Romani conditor anni*. At 1.27, Romulus is addressed as “founder of the city” at precisely the moment when he is laying out the calendar: *tempora digeret cum conditor urbis*; compare Ovid’s own statement of his topic as *tempora...digesta per annum* (1.1). This similarity of expression closely links city-founding and calendar-founding and casts Ovid’s composition of the *Fasti* as a close analogue to the foundation of Rome itself.\(^{864}\)

The characterization of the poet as a “founder” or culture hero is in perfect alignment with the conception of the *vates* during the Augustan period that Hardie has described as “the belief that the poet has a serious contribution to make to the progress of his society, and that poetry and music have a regulatory and civilizing effect; the belief that the poet has serious things to say about religion and the gods...[and] the belief that, through some form of inspiration, the poet has privileged access to eternal truths.”\(^{865}\) Numa, in addition to Romulus, is another of the prominent “founder” figures in the *Fasti*, since ancient authors frequently depicted him as a second founder of the city after Romulus, due in large part to his religious reforms.\(^{866}\) Numa’s “refoundation” of Rome will become an important theme in the Vestalia.

In fact, Numa is more closely connected to the poet than Romulus; he is consistently characterized as a poetic figure in the *Fasti*, especially in terms of his marriage to the Muse-like Egeria.\(^{867}\) The poetic characterization of Numa in the poem and his status as civic leader who has a privileged relationship to the gods has led Pasco-Pranger to argue that Numa is a model specifically for the poet as *vates*. Numa is one of

\(^{864}\) Pasco-Pranger (2006) 79.

\(^{865}\) Hardie (1986) 16.

\(^{866}\) See, for example, Livy 1.19.1: *qui regno ita potitus urbem novam, conditam vi et armis, iure eam legibusque ac moribus de integro condere parat*. See also Littlewood (2002) 179.

\(^{867}\) Hinds (1992); Pasco-Pranger (2002b).
several figures from the past on which Augustan poets based their conception of the vates. We have already seen how the mythical archetype of the vatic poet is Orpheus, whose kinetic effect on nature came to symbolize both the efficacy of poetry and the knowledge of rerum natura or natural philosophy;\textsuperscript{868} Empedocles too is an important figure in the vatic tradition, since his poetry contains both natural-philosophical and religious doctrine. Numa has a natural place among such figures, since he, like Empedocles, is reputed to have been a pupil of Pythagoras and, as we will see, is thought to have incorporated aspects of Pythagorean theology and cosmology into the temple and cult of Vesta, as well as into other areas of Roman religion. Myrto Garani in fact argues that Empedocles is a philosophical model for Numa in the Fasti.\textsuperscript{869} The poet inserts himself into this tradition by emphasizing his vatic status at the beginning of Fasti 6: the poet not only names himself as a vates (6.8), but also has Juno further suggest that the poet’s vatic status is defined in large part by the efficacy of his poetry: she describes his poetry as calendar-founding and perhaps implicitly compares the project to city-founding.

Nevertheless, Juno’s grandiose statements about the poet should make us a little suspicious, since Juno is after all attempting to persuade the poet to judge in her favor regarding the etymology of the Iunius mensis and therefore has good reason for endearing herself to the poet. We may feel that we are on firmer ground in the poet’s own assertion of his vatic status, but at this point in the poem the apparatus of divine inspiration and the

\textsuperscript{868} Cf. the depiction of Orpheus and Amphion, both legendary poets, in the Ars Poetica of Horace (391-6). Horace says that both had a role in civilizing mankind. The traditional story of Orpheus taming wild animals arose, Horace says, because he tamed the savagery of men (silvestris homines sacer interpresque deorum / caedibus et victu foedo deterruit Orpheus, / dictus ob hoc lenire tigris rabidosque leones, 391-3). Similarly, the tale of Amphion’s role in founding Thebes shows the poet as culture-hero (394-6).

\textsuperscript{869} Garani (forthcoming b).
Muses, in particular, has been deeply problematized; in the proem to the last book the Muses themselves could not even come to a conclusion about the etymology of the Maius mensis.\textsuperscript{870} How can the poet be expected to be a reliable source of information — much less a poet-prophet — if even the Muses are at odds about the “truth”? As scholars have recognized, the poet’s vatic status is complicated, to say the least.\textsuperscript{871}

Molly Pasco-Pranger, moreover, has demonstrated that the phrase vates operose dierum, a title by which the poet is addressed twice in the poem, can be seen as a programmatic statement of the “updating” that the vates undergoes in the Augustan period.\textsuperscript{872} Vates encompasses not only “inspired poet-prophet” but also the learned, laborious researcher of antiquarian knowledge that looks back to Callimachus and the scholar-poets of Alexandria. Therefore, the Fasti poet’s status as a vates is complex, ambivalent, and, to some extent, paradoxical.\textsuperscript{873} Nevertheless, it is a mistake to consider the poet’s naming of himself as a vates merely parodic. We need to acknowledge that the idea of the ancient poet-prophet as applied to Ovid’s poetic persona is always going to appear to a large degree to be ironic and incompatible, but at the same time Ovid’s playful, witty, ironic persona does not mean that his incorporation of subject matter appropriate for the vates, like cosmology, into his poetry is entirely comic or, to put it another way, not interested in making serious points about the world in which he lives. As we will see, the Fasti poet’s ambivalent vatic status has a parallel in the figure of

\textsuperscript{870} See Barchiesi (1991) on the “Discordant Muses” in Fasti 5.

\textsuperscript{871} Williams (1991) 183-5.

\textsuperscript{872} Pasco-Pranger (2000).

\textsuperscript{873} Williams’ (1991) 183 assessment is just: “far from occupying a position of rigidly inflexible authority as he moves through the calendrical cycle, Ovid’s vatic persona proves to be a flexible narratological instrument which compromises his vatic authority at different points within the poem.”
Pythagoras from *Metamorphoses* 15, where it is also the case that the humor and irony of Ovid’s presentation of the philosopher does not mean the speech should simply be dismissed as parody. In *Fasti* 6 Ovid has some serious things to say, even if they are said in his characteristically playful and witty way.

### 6.2 *Fasti* 1 and 6, Janus and Juno

In a moment I will discuss the dialogue between the Vestalia and the Janus episode, specifically in terms of the philosophical associations of two monuments prominent in the respective episodes, the temple of Vesta and the Janus Geminus temple. But this dialogue between *Fasti* 1 and 6 in fact begins in the proem of the latter and involves the fundamental contrast between peace and war, which we have seen associated with Empedocles at numerous points in the poem. Littlewood describes this contrast in her introduction to the book:

> January makes a stately progress from the civic order of the new magistrates’ entry into office on the first day of the month to the great dynastic monuments of Tiberius’ Aedes Concordiae and Augustus’ Ara Pacis. The month of Juno, Iuventas, and Concordia, on the other hand, midway through the fighting season, records Rome’s early struggle for dominion in a series of military anniversaries. It could be suggested that June has a greater potential than March to initiate the generically incompatible topic of War and the *ira* which flares up between Juno and Iuventas in the proem is symbolic.

As we saw in the last chapter, Concordia too, in a striking appearance, offers her own etymology for the month’s name instead of attempting to resolve the conflict between Juno and Iuventas. Once again, the impression left by the passage is the fragility of

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*concordia* and the concomitant threat of *discordia* chiefly in the form of Juno and her *ira*.\(^{876}\)

Allusions to Juno’s anger and the conflicts in which it figured are scattered throughout her speech and the larger proem. They are only thinly masked threats to the poet and, more indirectly, to the idea of political *pax* and *concordia* in Rome, the latter of which is said to be the work of the peaceful leader, Augustus (*Concordia...placidi numen opusque ducis*, 91-2).\(^{877}\) Juno is incredulous that a goddess of her stature cannot be linked to the name of a single month (6.39-40): *an facient mensem luces, Lucinaque ab illis / dicar, et a nullo nomina mense traham*? (“Shall days (luces) constitute the month, and from these I be called Lucina, but not take my name from any month”). She threatens that if this is indeed the case, i.e. that she is not honored by the name of June, she may repent of having set aside her anger at the Trojans, repent of neglecting the citadels of the Carthaginians, and of allowing her other patron cities to be subjected to Rome (6.41-50).

By alluding to past conflicts in which she had a major role — such as the Trojan War, the war over Latium from the *Aeneid*, and the Punic War, all motivated by her deep-seated hatred for the Trojans — she threatens to resume her anger and release war upon Rome once again. We might note, for example, her statement (threat?) that her chariot and *arma*, her instruments of war, are in Carthage, as if waiting to be taken up once again. (45-6). The provisional and uncertain nature of her tolerance of Rome is in keeping with her representation elsewhere in Latin poetry.\(^{878}\) While Roman authors record Juno’s

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\(^{877}\) On the identification of this *placidus dux* as Augustus, see Littlewood (2006) *ad Fasti* 6.92.

\(^{878}\) Feeney (1984) 179-94. Building upon Johnson (1976) 123-7, Feeney demonstrates that the reconciliation between Juno and Jupiter at the end of the *Aeneid* only “resolves the question of Aeneas’
reconciliations to various aspects of Rome’s rise to prominence, Denis Feeney has observed that “for poets writing even about their own times, it is natural to treat her [Juno] as unmanageable and disquieting.”

Juno’s speech in the Fasti contains numerous allusions to her depiction in the Aeneid, in which she is the malevolent force who bursts open the doors of Janus’ temple and inaugurates the war between the Latins and Trojans (Aen. 7.620-2), before her temporary reconciliation to (the future) Rome in book 12 (791-842). Juno’s speech, in fact, through the mention of her patronage of Tatius and the Sabines (adde senem Tati,um, 6.49), can remind us of her similar action during Tatius’ attack upon Rome in Fasti 1. As we saw, Juno’s opening of Rome’s gates to the Sabines alludes to her opening of the Gates of War in the Aeneid. Janus, on the other hand, skillfully combines water and sulphur to create a boiling torrent of water that blocks Tatius’ path to the city and thereby finds a relatively peaceful means of preventing the attack. The episode creates a stark contrast between Juno as a force of discordia and Janus as guardian of peace and concordia.

The thematic contrast that Littlewood has identified of “Peace in January and War in June,” then, can be represented respectively by the similarly-named deities Janus and

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settlement in Latium, and the final passing away of Troy; it does not resolve any more of Juno’s grudges” and “ahead lie centuries of strain...and Juno’s hate once more to face.” Feeney also discusses other reconciliations, including Juno’s assent to the deification of Romulus, where there too her reconciliation is highly qualified (p. 189): “one may look to Horace’s ode [3.3], to see there a Juno who is not yet an enthusiastic partisan of the Roman state.” See ibid. 189, n. 67 with bibliography on Juno’s ambivalent attitude towards Rome in C. 3.3. Her reconciliation in this context too is not a “full” reconciliation, since she is only conceding Romulus’ apotheosis, but will still extend her support to Carthage in the Punic Wars. Both Feeney and Nisbet and Rudd (2004) 36 also note that elsewhere (C. 2.1) Horace in fact has Juno still supporting Carthage as late as 46 B.C. For a brief survey of interpretations of the poem see Nisbet and Rudd (2004) 38.

879 Ibid. 194. In this context Feeney mentions Juno’s appearance in Fasti 6, observing the unresolved dispute between the goddesses Juno, Iuventas and Concordia.

Juno.\textsuperscript{881} This contrast, however, should not mask the ways in which the two gods are related: in this respect they form a pair framing the six books of the poem.\textsuperscript{882} We have already seen Juno’s penchant for opening doors or gates — in the \textit{Aeneid} these are specifically the gates of the Janus Geminus — which is one half of Janus’ function. He, however, also closes them (cf. \textit{omnia sunt nostra clausa patentque manu}, 1.118). Ancient authors also connected Janus and Juno.\textsuperscript{883} Juno seems to have had a special relationship to the Kalends of each month,\textsuperscript{884} and therefore the idea of “opening” inherent in both entry-ways and the Kalends of each month connects the two deities. Appropriately, then, both Janus and Juno open their respective books in the \textit{Fasti}, 1 and 6.

Roman cult apparently connected the two deities, as well: “It was in their capacity of civic deities of Rome’s first thirty \textit{curiae} that Juno and Janus each had an altar standing near the Tigellum Sororium, honouring respectively Juno Sororia and Janus Curiatus.”\textsuperscript{885} Juno is also the goddess of childbirth in Roman religion. This fact, once again likely prompted by the similar-sounding Juno and Janus, led to further etymological speculation connecting the two deities.\textsuperscript{886} Testimony such as that found in

\textsuperscript{882} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{883} Ibid. ivii. Servius \textit{ad Aeneid} 7.610 says that Janus is “Junonius” and therefore Juno appropriately opens the gates of his temple: \textit{idem Iunonius; inde pulchre Iuno portas aperire inducit}. Macrobius too says that Janus is called “Junonian”: \textit{a qua etiam Ianum Iunonium cognominatum diximus, quod illi deo omnis ingressus, huic deae cuncti Kalendarum dies videntur adscripti} (\textit{Saturnalia} 1.15.19).
\textsuperscript{884} Cf. \textit{Saturnalia} 1.9.16 in a context in which Macrobius is explicitly following Varro, his likely source for the information on Janus and Juno. See Ovid, \textit{Fasti} 1.55 for Juno’s association with the Kalends.
\textsuperscript{885} Littlewood (2006) Introduction ivii. See also n. 147.
\textsuperscript{886} Cf. Isidore \textit{Orig.} 8.11.69: \textit{lunonem dicunt quasi ianonem, id est ianuam, pro purgationibus feminarum, eo quod quasi portas matrum natorum pandat, et nubentum maritis}. In his book on Isidore, Henderson (2007) 119 offers a nice translation of the etymology: “Next, take \textit{juno} (69-70): “‘philosophers see in her the \textit{janitor} (\textit{quasi ianonem}), gatekeeper for menstruation, childbirth, and husbands’.” E. Mazurek (2010) 136 notes too that Juno is depicted by Juventas in the \textit{Fasti} 6 proem as controlling the entrance to heaven. In her metaltiterary reading of the episode Juventas assumes the role of elegiac \textit{amator} addressing the \textit{domina} Juno. Yet, given that Juno controls the entrance to heaven, M. suggests she is also like the elegiac
Servius, Macrobius and Isidore, in addition to the cultic association of Janus and Juno at the Tigillum Sororium, reinforce the connection made between the two in the account of Juno bursting open the gates of the temple of Janus Geminus in the *Aeneid* and her similar action of opening the gates of the city in the *Fasti*, an attack repulsed by Juno’s “male double,” Janus. Juno’s actions in these scenes closely connect her to *discordia*, since both scenes can be traced back to the fragment of Ennius in which he describes Discordia breaking open the Gates of War (fr. 225 Sk.): *postquam Discordia taetra / Belli ferratos postes portasque refregit* (“Then monstrous Discord broke open the iron doors and the Gates of War”). Juno reprises the role of Discordia both by opening the Gates of War in the *Aeneid* and the gates of the city (as a prelude to war) in the *Fasti*. Through Ennian Discordia, this aspect of Juno’s literary ancestry goes back to Empedoclean Neikos. Of course, Janus too has an Empedoclean background. Juno’s recollection in the *Fasti* 6 proem of her past anger and the past wars in which she was involved and in which she was always an enemy of the Trojans/Romans is used as an implicit threat to the poet and perhaps to the larger audience of Romans; it suggests that her *ira*, rather than being completely forsaken, is simmering just beneath the surface. Juno’s speech in the proem to *Fasti* 6 suggest that she could burst open the Gates of War and release *discordia* at any moment.

In the *Aeneid*, Juno’s opening of the Gates of War has structural significance, as well. It marks the opening of the narrative of the war between Trojans and Latins that takes up the second half of the poem. Therefore, the posturing of Juno in her speech to

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*ianitor*. Janus, in turn, tells us in *Fasti* 1 that he is the doorkeeper of heaven; Hardie (1991) 61 has noted that Janus is like the *ianitor* from elegy, as well.
the poet in the *Fasti* 6 proem, which would have been one of the middle books of a twelve-book poem, perhaps contains the metaliterary threat that her presence has a similar significance, suggesting that *Fasti* 6 is a hinge on which the poem will turn towards war, a recurrent subject in the book. War is a threat both to the elegiac code of the *Fasti* and to the political *pax* and *concordia* of Rome under Augustus, with which Ovid identifies the peacefulness of his elegiac program.\textsuperscript{887} Therefore, the presence of Junonian *ira* in the proem is, as Littlewood says, appropriate as a symbol of the martial orientation of *Fasti* 6, but it also introduces the potential instability of *pax* and *concordia* as one of the major themes of the book. As we will see, instability surfaces as a major theme in the Vesta episode and is connected by Ovid to Pythagoras’ Empedoclean doctrine of universal change.

In light of the importance that the elements will have in my analysis of the Vestalia, we should also note that the last two notices for the Kalends of June commemorate the temple of Mars beside the Porta Capena (191-92) and the Aedes Tempestatis (*te quoque, Tempestas, meritam delubra fatemur*, 193), which L. Cornelius Scipio dedicated after a storm had nearly sunk the Roman fleet off the coast of Corsica. Whereas the book’s intimations of *discordia* have thus far been restricted mostly to the human realm, that is domestic and political *discordia*, Tempestas is an instance of elemental *discordia*.\textsuperscript{888}

\textsuperscript{887} For the epic connotations of Juno’s speech, see Mazurek (2010) 132-4.

\textsuperscript{888} Lucretius uses *tempestas* as a metaphor to describe the state of chaos before the birth of the world: it is a “strange sort of storm” (*nova tempestas*, 5.436). This state of chaos is also characterized by *discordia* (5.437) and *proelia* (5.439).
Yet, political control is often figured as control over the elements, as is exemplified in the story of Numa’s reception of the ancile in Fasti 3 or Neptune’s calming of the discordant tempest in Aeneid 1, which is famously compared to a statesman calming an angry mob (1.142-56). Therefore, the mention of Tempest in Fasti 6 continues the theme of the threat of discordia in the beginning of the book, which had been introduced in the form of Juno’s ira. This specter of discordia had in some sense been carried over from book 5, since that book began with the shocking disagreement or discordia of the Muses (cf. dissensere deae, 5.9). That too had been implicitly linked to elemental discordia, since Polyhymnia’s ensuing song begins from chaos (5.12), which, as we know from the Metamorphoses, is characterized by the discord of the elements (discordia semina, 1.9). Since the theme of discordia has been so closely linked to Juno in Fasti 6, the notice about Tempestas should perhaps make us remember that ancient critics interpreted the goddess Juno allegorically via her Greek name Hera as the element aer. Tempest can perhaps be seen as the Roman equivalent to the Greek cult of the winds. After recalling the temple of Tempestas, the poet says that haec hominum monimenta patent (6.195), reminding us once again of the motif of memory and perhaps specifically of the poet’s commemoration of Juno Moneta less than fifteen lines before (183-90). Tempestas can remind us that Juno is an elemental goddess, as well, and that the discordia she embodies has cosmic implications. The fragility of concordia and the concomitant threat of discordia in the opening section of Fasti 6 is a major concern of the Vestalia, as well. As we will see, that episode more clearly projects the poetic and political issues raised there onto a cosmic plane.

889 So Littlewood (2006) ad loc., although she offers no support for this statement.
6.3 Janus, Vesta and the Natural-Philosophical Frame of the *Fasti*

My focus for the remainder of the chapter will be Ovid’s remarkable poetic celebration of the goddess Vesta’s festival, the Vestalia, on June 9th (6.249-460). It is easily the longest panel in book 6 and one of the longest in the entire poem, second in length only to Ovid’s treatment of Janus on the Kalends of January. Unlike Janus, however, who suddenly appears to the poet in his study (1.93-6) and becomes the first divine interlocutor in the poem, Vesta will make no epiphany (6.253-4): *non equidem vidi (valeant mendacia vatum) / te, dea, nec fueras aspicienda viro* (“not indeed, goddess, did I see you (farewell to the lies of poets), nor was it right for a man to see you”). As we saw, Janus responds to the opening queries of the poet by narrating a cosmogony in which the four elements separate out from an initial elemental Chaos, with which Janus surprisingly identifies himself (1.103). Janus continues along these cosmological lines, explaining his functions as a cosmic deity: the four great masses of the world corresponding to the four elements open and close by his hand (117-8), he is the doorkeeper of the universe (*vasti custodia mundi*, 119), and he oversees the release of Peace and War into the world (121-24), in an allusion to his earthly function as the keeper of the Janus Geminus temple, the *indicem pacis belli*(e) (Livy 1.19.2). As we saw, Peace and War can be taken as a version of Empedoclean Philia and Neikos.

The prominence of the Janus Geminus temple at the opening of the Janus episode in *Fasti* 1 is matched by the prominence of the Vesta temple at the beginning of the Vestalia: like the Janus Geminus temple, the Vesta temple has a cosmic setting: whereas

890 Littlewood (2006) 104 is to the point: “...the Vestalia is clearly the most important passage in *Fasti* 6.”
891 Williams (1991) also contrasts this to Juno’s appearance to the poet at *Fasti* 6.13ff.
the universe reflects the function of the Janus Geminus, it is implied that the Vesta temple is built to reflect the geocentric mundus, as we will see shortly. Therefore, the two temples are paired through their natural-philosophical associations. The temples also form a pair in as much as ancient authors attributed the foundation of both temples to Numa. Ovid tells us this explicitly in regard to the Vesta temple (6.257-60), where Ovid commemorates the reception of Vesta (flammas custos, 258) into her shrine (aede, 258) in the Forum and tells us it was the work of the peaceful King, whom he identifies as Numa through allusion to his Sabine origin (terra Sabina tuit, 260). We get no such statement from Ovid about the Janus Geminus, but the story of Numa’s foundation of the temple is well attested.

In this respect, Janus and Vesta form a significant pairing in the poem. Emma Gee has discussed this complementary pair in some detail. Her discussion builds upon Barchiesi’s suggestion that it is probably not a coincidence that Janus is the most prominent figure in Fasti 1 and Vesta in Fasti 6, since this would reflect the structure of a Roman prayer. Both Barchiesi and Gee think that this may inform the structure of the

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892 The building dedicated to Vesta in the Forum is not strictly a templum, but an aedes (“shrine”). Nevertheless I will follow convention by referring to it in English as a “temple.”
893 The name NUMa may also be alluded in the similar-sounding NUMinis of line 260.
894 Livy 1.19.2: Ianum ad infimum Argiletum indicem pacis belliique [Numa] fecit, apertus ut in armis esse civitatem, clausus pacatos circa omnes populos significaret. See also Plutarch, Numa 20.1-2. Numa is connected to Janus elsewhere in the Fasti. Ovid says that Numa added two months to the calendar, January and February, in order not to neglect Janus and the ancestral shades: at Numa nec Ianum nec avitas praeterit umbras, / mensibus antiquis praeposuique duos (1.43-4).
896 Barchiesi (1997a) 206.
897 According to Cicero, Janus is invoked first and Vesta last (De natura deorum 2.67): cumque in omnibus rebus vim haberent maxamam prima et extrema, principem in sacrificando Ianum esse voluerunt, quod ab eundo nomen est ducum, ex quo transitions perviae iani foresque in liminibus profanarum aedium ianuae nominantur. nam Vestae nomen a Graecis (ea est enim quae ab illis Ηστία dicitur); vis autem eius ad aras et focos pertinet, itaque in ea dea, quod est rerum custos intumarum, omnis et precatio et sacrificio extrema est.
Fasti in spite of Ovid’s paradoxical claim that Vesta is in fact first in prayers.\footnote{Fasti. 6.303-4: hinc quoque vestibulum dici reor; inde precando / praefamur Vestam, quae loca prima tenet. According to Ovid, Vesta is first in prayers because the vestibulum is the first room in the house. Therefore, although Vesta is last in a Roman prayer according to Cicero and appears in the last book of Ovid’s poem, Ovid nevertheless emphasizes her first position in the house (the vestibulum) and claims from this that she is fact first in prayers. Gee (2000) 121 attempts to explain this tension by arguing that the two conflicting structures (a beginning/end opposition with Janus in Book 1 and Vesta in Book 6 and a beginning/beginning correlation with both Janus and Vesta being first in prayers and ianuae and vestibulae both being places where one enters a house) are exactly the point: “this may reflect the nature of the poem, obsessed with beginnings, and ambiguous in its finished/unfinished quality.”} Gee, however, also argues that the two are philosophically paired: “Vesta and Janus are an allegorical as well as a liturgical pair, representing between them the two aspects of a Stoicising cosmos, Vesta the earth, Janus the mundus encompassing it”\footnote{Gee (2000) 118.} As we will see, Vesta is identified as Tellus/Terra in Fasti 6 (267, 460). Gee bases her identification of Janus as the mundus both on the suggestion in Fasti 1.101-26 that he is an embodiment of the cosmos and on the testimony of Macrobius, who says that natural philosophers explicitly identify Janus as the mundus.\footnote{Macrobius Saturnalia 1.9.11: alli mundum id est caelum esse voluerunt Ianumque ab eundo dictum, quod mundus semper est, dum in orbem volvitur et ex se initium faciens in se reperetur.} Gee sees other associations between the god and goddess, but their philosophical complementarity is primary.\footnote{Gee (2000) 120.} While the Stoic associations that Gee assigns to both Janus and Vesta are tenuous,\footnote{See especially Volk’s (2001) review of Gee (2000). For her supposition that Janus’ chaos-cosmogony in Fasti 1 is Stoic, Gee simply cites Bömer (1957-8) ad Fasti 1.103, but even Bömer acknowledges that there are Empedoclean and Lucretian elements in the cosmogony. Gee also seems to be unaware of Pfligersdorffer (1973), published after Bömer’s commentary, in which P. makes a compelling case that Ovid’s Janus is an Empedoclean deity. Hardie (1991) 50 also notes certain affinities between Janus and Empedoclean cosmology.} I am not going to argue against her reading, but instead to argue that other philosophical contexts should be considered, as well. These will help to illuminate the relationship of the Vesta episode both structurally and thematically to other important philosophical passages in the Fasti and Metamorphoses.
6.4 The Vestalia and the Speech of Pythagoras

We have already seen that Vesta’s temple is attributed to Numa, whose philosophical associations in Ovid’s poetry are explicitly stated. In spite of the chronological impossibility, Numa is said to be a disciple of Pythagoras in both the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*. Therefore, when Ovid compares the Vesta temple to both a philosophical picture of the earth resting at the center of the universe and to the sphere of the ancient scientist Archimedes, it is tempting to make a connection between the philosophical background of the temple’s founder, Numa, and Ovid’s philosophizing description of the temple. Fortunately, there is evidence that ancient authors did make such a connection. In his *Life of Numa* Plutarch reports that there are those who believe that Numa constructed the temple according to Pythagorean cosmology (11.1-2):

(1.) Νομάς δὲ λέγεται καὶ τὸ τῆς Ἑστίας ἱερὸν ἐγκύκλιον περιβαλέσθαι τῷ ἀσβέστῳ πυρὶ φρουράν, ἀπομιμοῦμενος οὐ τὸ σχῆμα τῆς γῆς ὡς Ἑστίας οὐσίας, ἀλλὰ τὸ σύμπαντος κόσμου, οὐ μέσον οἱ Πυθαγορικοὶ τὸ πῦρ ἱδρύσθαι νομίζομεν, (2.) καὶ τοῦτο Ἑστίαν καλοῦσι καὶ μονάδα· τὴν δὲ γῆν οὔτε ἀκίνητον οὔτε ἐν μέσῳ τῆς περιφορᾶς οὔσαν, ἀλλὰ κύκλῳ περὶ τὸ πῦρ αἰωρουμένην οὐ τὸν τιμωτάτων οὐδὲ τῶν πρῶτων τοῦ κόσμου μορίων ὑπάρχειν. ταῦτα δὲ καὶ Πλάτωνα φασὶ πρεσβύτην γενόμενον διανενόησθαι περὶ τῆς γῆς ὡς ἐν ἐτέρᾳ χώρᾳ καθεστώσις, τὴν δὲ μέσην καὶ κυριωτάτην ἐτέρῳ τινὶ κρείττοτι προσήκουσαν.

They say that Numa also built the circular shrine of Hestia [Vesta] around the sacred fire as protection for it, in the image not of the earth on the supposition that Hestia was the Earth, but in the image of the entire universe, in the middle of which the Pythagoreans think fire is placed, and they call this Hestia and Monad; and they think that the earth is neither motionless nor located in the center of the universe, but revolves around the fire and is not really one of the most-honored or primary parts of the universe. They say that Plato too in his old age held these beliefs about the earth, thinking that it was located in another position and that the central and noblest position belonged to some other greater element.

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904 *Met.* 15.479-81; *Fasti* 3.151-4.
Ovid’s philosophical account of the temple obviously differs from Plutarch’s, but the fact that both writers speculate that the temple was somehow modeled on the universe is unlikely to be coincidental. There was probably a tradition of philosophical speculation about the temple’s shape on which both Ovid and Plutarch are drawing, even though they offer differing accounts of the natural philosophical model for the temple’s construction: either the Earth resting at the center of the universe or the enigmatic Pythagorean central fire. Plutarch, in fact, seems to allude to the tradition on which Ovid is drawing (though not, of course, to Ovid himself) when he specifically says that the temple is not an image of the earth, but rather of the cosmos (ἀπομιμούμενος οὐ τὸ σχῆμα τῆς γῆς ὡς Ἑστίας οὐσῆς, ἀλλὰ τὸ σύμπαντος κόσμου).

Plutarch’s rejection of the first explanation only makes sense if there really existed accounts explaining Vesta’s shape as an imitation of the Earth’s circular shape, such as that found in the Fasti. Varro is a source for much of Plutarch’s Numa and is also, of course, an important source for Ovid. It is possible that the philosophical associations of the temple were found in Varro, whom we know elsewhere identifies Vesta as the Earth. It is even possible that Varro recorded both explanations of the temple’s shape, since his aetiological method, like Ovid’s in the Fasti, featured multiple explanations. Regardless of whether Varro is the source for Ovid and Plutarch, it is likely that philosophical speculation concerning the temple’s form was prompted by Numa’s own philosophical associations with Pythagoreanism; and before we entirely

905 See Pasco-Pranger (2002) 291-312 on Varro as a source for both Ovid and Plutarch, although nowhere does she discuss the differing accounts of the Vesta temple.
906 Rerum Divinarum, Cardauns 268; Verrius Flaccus, recorded by Festus (320L) also identifies Vesta with Terra.
exclude any Pythagorean associations from Ovid’s account of the Vesta temple on the basis of its difference from the Pythagorean account found in Plutarch, we should remember that there was doubt in antiquity over the location of the so-called Pythagorean central fire, that is, whether it was an independent celestial body around which the earth revolved or was in fact inside the earth.\footnote{While the ancient testimony about the Pythagorean central fire being inside the earth is confined to relatively late Neoplatonists (Simplicius, \textit{Cael.} 512.9-20; Proclus, \textit{Tim.} 3.143.24-144.8; Damascius, \textit{Phd.} 1.534-6), Peter Kingsley (1995) 182 has argued that these testimonia represent an earlier, genuine Pythagorean tradition: “the overall probability must remain that in origin the Pythagorean central fire did occupy the middle of the earth. However, the evidence produced so far is not strong enough to allow us to pinpoint the reason why this central fire should have been projected out of the earth and into the heavens.” See Kingsley (1995) 172-94 for further bibliography on the question of the Pythagorean central fire.}

As I will discuss in more detail later, it is also the case that Ovid compares his abstract picture of the universe to Archimedes’ armillary sphere. Archimedes is not identified by name but rather through the statement that “Syracusan art or skill” (\textit{arte Syracosia}, 6.277) created the sphere. The temple’s attribution to Numa and this mention of Archimedes’ native city imparts a distinctively Southern Italian and Sicilian frame of reference to the philosophy in the episode.\footnote{Archimedes’ philosophical associations are a topic of debate among scholars, although Pythagoreanism has been among those offered as a possibility. See Gee (2000) 100, n. 21. She argues that Archimedes’ sphere has predominantly Stoic associations. I should note too that Empedocles had Syracusan associations, as well, if we believe the report of Diogenes Laertius (8.52), who says that Empedocles left his native Acragas in exile for Syracuse.} In this context, Ovid’s reference to subterranean fires (\textit{subest vigil ignis utrique} [i.e. both the temple and the earth], 6.267) perhaps makes us think especially of Sicily’s famed volcanic activity. We should keep in mind that another famous Sicilian, Empedocles, seems to have made Sicily’s subterranean fires an important part of his philosophy (cf. fr. 45/52, πολλὰ ἐνερθ’ οὐδέος πυρὰ καίεται, “and many fires burn underneath the earth”) and was well known in
antiquity for theories related to the island’s volcanic activity.\textsuperscript{910} Be that as it may, we will see that there are a number of other indications that a Pythagorean (and Empedoclean) context is important for interpreting the Vesta episode, the foremost being its structural relationship to the discourse of Pythagoras in Metamorphoses 15.

The philosophical and scientific associations of the Vesta temple suggest that it can be seen as forming a frame with the Janus episode in Fasti 1.\textsuperscript{911} This is significant not least because the Metamorphoses has long been recognized to have a philosophical frame,\textsuperscript{912} as well, since it is bracketed by a cosmogony that includes a description of the spherical, geocentric mundus arising out of elemental chaos in book 1 (5-75) and by Pythagoras’ philosophical discourse on universal change in book 15 (60-478). It seems, then, that the Fasti mirrors the structure of the Metamorphoses in this respect. But while the interplay between the cosmogonies in books 1 of the Metamorphoses and Fasti is quite obvious,\textsuperscript{913} it is less clear how the philosophical discourse of Pythagoras and the Vestalia are in dialogue with one another. I have already suggested, however, that the fact that Vesta’s temple is founded by Numa (Fast. 6.257-64), a reputed student of Pythagoras (Met. 15.479-81), strengthens the idea of a link between the two episodes. We have also seen that the testimony of Plutarch suggests that there was speculation in antiquity about

\textsuperscript{910} See Kingsley (1995) on fire and especially subterranean fire in Empedocles. Sen, Q.N. 3.24.1-3, for example, discusses Empedocles’ explanation of the way that fires in the earth heat the underground rivers flowing above them to produce hot springs.

\textsuperscript{911} While she never uses the expression “philosophical frame,” Gee (2000) 117-21 does see Janus and Vesta as philosophically complementary pairs, Janus as the Stoic mundus, Vesta as the earth, or, in other words, two components of the globe of Archimedes. Gee (2000) 120 suggests that this has structural significance: “The Fasti might be a kind of poetic version of this globe, framed by components of the universe.” She does not, however, connect this to the philosophical frame of the Metamorphoses.


a possible relationship between Numa’s purported Pythagoreanism and the architecture of the Vesta temple. These hints seem promising enough to encourage a closer look at the Vesta episode and especially at the philosophical account of the temple’s shape in order to see if there are additional points of contact.

Since I will be referring often to Ovid’s description of the temple, it will be useful to quote the passage in its entirety here (Fast. 6.249-82):

Vesta, fave: tibi nunc operata resolvimus ora,  
ad tua si nobis sacra venire licet.  
in prece totus eram: caelestia numina sensi,  
laetaque purpurea luce refulsit humus.  
non equidem vidi (valeant mendacia vatum)  
te, dea, nec fueras aspicienda viro;  
sed quae nescieram quorumque errore tenebar  
cognita sunt nullo praecipiente mihi.  
dena quater memorant habuisse Parilia Romam,  
cum flammas custos aede recepta dea est,  
regis opus placidi, quo non metuentius  
umninis ingenium terra Sabina tuli.  
quae nunc aere vides, stipula tum tecta videres,  
et paries lento vimine textus erat.  
hic locus exiguus, qui sustinet Atria Vestae,  
tunc erat intonsi regia magna Numae;  
forma tamen templi, quae nunc manet, ante fuisse  
dicitur, et formae causa probanda subest.  
Vesta eadem est et terra: subest vigil ignis utrique:  
significant sedem terra focusque suam.\footnote{914}  
terra pilae similis, nullo fulcimine nixa,  
aëre subiecto tam grave pendet onus:  
ipsa volubilitas libratum sustinet orbem,  
quique premat partes angulus omnis abest:  
cumque sit in media rerum regione locata,  
uttangat nullum plusve minusve latus,  
ni convexa foret, parti vicinior esset,  
nec medium terram mundus haberet onus.  

\footnote{914} The sense of this line is obscure. I have rendered it literally because none of the other more elegant translations I have seen goes any further towards making sense of the line. Littlewood (2006) \textit{ad loc.} says that “Ovid seems to imply that the \textit{sedes} of both Earth and the hearth, being central, is symbolic of their importance in the universe and the house respectively.”
arte Syracosia suspensus in aëre clauso
stat globus, immensi parva figura poli,
et quantum a summis, tantum secessit ab imis
terra; quod ut fiat forma rotunda facit.
par facies templi, nullus procurrit in illo
angulus, a pluvio vindicat imbre tholus.

Listen kindly, Vesta: my speech is now devoted to you, if I am permitted to approach your sacred rites. I was lost in prayer: I sensed heavenly deity, and the joyful ground shone with a purple light. Not, indeed, goddess, did I see you (so long to the lies of poets), nor should you be seen by a man; but without anyone instructing me I realized my ignorance and the confusion that possessed me. They say that Rome had celebrated the Parilia forty times when the goddess who is the guardian of the flame was received into her shrine, the work of a peaceful king, than whom the Sabine land has never brought forth a more god-fearing man. The bronze roofs you now see, you might have seen then made of dried stalks, and the wall was woven with pliant wicker-work. This small place here that holds the Atria of Vesta, then was the great palace of unshorn Numa; nevertheless, they say that the shape which the temple now has existed before, and a sound reason is behind the form. Vesta and the earth are the same: an always-burning fire underlies both: earth and hearth signify their own seat. The earth is like a ball, resting on no support, so great a weight hangs with the air placed underneath: the very rotation holds the sphere in balance: and since it lies in the center of the universe, so that it touches no side more or less, if it were not convex, it would be nearer to one part, and the universe would not have the earth as a central weight. There is a globe that has been suspended in enclosed air by Syracusan art, a small figure of the immeasurable world, and the earth is as far from the height as it is from the depths; its round shape makes this possible. The appearance of the temple is the same, no angle protrudes on it, and a dome protects it from rain.

In my discussion of the proem to *Fasti* 6 I observed that the poet’s status as a *vates* is especially prominent. Therefore it is something of a surprise when, at the beginning of the Vesta episode, the poet makes it a point to dismiss the lies of *vates* (*valeant mendacia vatum*, 254) in his account of Vesta. However, to simultaneously assume a vatic status for one’s self and to reject the claims of other *vates* is a rhetorical maneuver that Hardie

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915 The poet also claims to not have had any human instruction on information related to Vesta’s cult (6.255-6). As Williams (1991) 183-4 points out, this claim is ironized by his subsequent appeals to tradition: *memorant* (6.257); *dicitur* (266).
has called the “the Lucretian tactic of snatching the high ground from the enemy.”

Hardie is alluding specifically to Lucretius’ famous attack on the lies of the *vates* concerning the afterlife in book 1 (102-35); yet, Lucretius later “arrogates to himself the alternative *uates*-like stance of that most vatic of philosophers Empedocles.”

Importantly for our purposes, Hardie’s observation about Lucretius comes in the context of his discussion of the speech of Pythagoras, which, according to Hardie, shows Ovid’s grasp of this same Lucretian tactic. For the Ovidian Pythagoras, like Lucretius, attacks the stories of the *vates* about the afterlife, which cause a debilitating and unnecessary fear of death in their hearers (15.153-5):

> ‘O genus attonitum gelidae formidine mortis, quid Styga, quid tenebras et nomina vana timetis, materiem *vatum*, falsique pericula mundi?

O people struck by fear of cold death, why are you afraid of the Styx, shades and empty names, the stuff of poet-prophets, and the dangers of a universe that does not exist?

Yet, Pythagoras only a little later essentially identifies himself as a *vates* when explaining his injunction against the eating of flesh (174-5): *parcite, vaticinor, cognatas caede nefanda / exturbare animas* (“Refrain, I warn you as a prophet, from thrusting out kindred souls by impious slaughter”). Hardie rightly argues that the contradiction between this passage and Pythagoras’ earlier attack on *vates* is only apparent; it instead shows Ovid’s awareness of the Lucretian strategy. Therefore, it is possible to explain the

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917 Ibid.
918 Myers (1994) 142-4 discusses Pythagoras as *vates* in *Metamorphoses* 15, focusing on the difference between the *persona* of Pythagoras and that of Lucretius. She discusses P.’s rejection of the lies of *vates*, but only as an inversion of Lucretius’ similar attack on *vates*, since Pythagoras is adopting a Lucretian pose while at the same time asserting an anti-Lucretian doctrine, the immortality of the soul.
seeming contradiction between the poet’s emphatic identification of himself as a vates in the proem to Fasti 6 and his own disparagement of the lies of vates at the start of the Vestalia in a similar way. More specifically, by criticizing the lies of vates at the start of the Vestalia, just as Pythagoras does in his discourse, Ovid strengthens the correspondence between the Vesta episode and the speech of Pythagoras.

This dialogue between the two passages continues in Ovid’s account of the shape of the Vesta temple. Early in the description he says — or rather reports — (dicitur, 266) that the temple’s form has in fact never changed; it is the same as it was before (forma tamen templi, quae nunc manet, ante fuisse, 265). Forma, of course, is a key word in the Metamorphoses (in nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas, 1.1). In one of the many ways that Pythagoras’ speech reflects the subject of the Metamorphoses, the doctrine he expounds at greatest length is that of universal change, the idea that no form ever remains the same (15.252-3): nec species sua cuique manet, rerumque novatrix / ex aliis alias reparat natura figuras (“Nothing keeps its appearance, and nature, renewer of the universe, remakes some forms out of others”). Commentators have also observed that this statement and others made by Pythagoras about his doctrine of change recall Ovid’s description of chaos at the beginning of the poem (1.17) nulli sua forma manebat (“nothing kept its own form”). As Richard Tarrant has said of the two passages, “What appeared there [in book 1] as an aberrant pre-cosmic state is now alleged to be the constant and universal condition of nature.”

919 Does the distancing effect of dicitur cast doubt on the assertion from the start?
Pythagoras’ explanation of the changes undergone by the soul in metensomatosis is also very close to his more general theory of change and, in turn, to Ovid’s sketch of chaos (15.170): *nec manet, ut fuerat, nec formas servat easdem* (“nor does it remain, as it had been, nor keep the same form”). Here Pythagoras compares the soul to wax, whose material remains the same, but whose form is constantly changing. Stephen Wheeler has rightly said that “The implication is that reincarnation, like chaos, is an ongoing process that is repetitive and does not have a sequential or teleological structure.”

The Vesta temple’s persistent form (*forma...manet*, 6.265), on the other hand, although framed in much the same terms as these other passages, seems to contradict both Pythagoras’ doctrine of change and the image of chaos, where, once again, nothing kept its own form (*nulli sua forma manebat*, *Met*. 1.17). This idea is strengthened by the observation that the abstract picture of the universe in the Vesta episode recalls the description of the features of the world that did not exist during chaos at the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*. Compare the two passages:

*Fasti* 6.269-71

\begin{verbatim}
terra pilae similis, nullo fulcimine nixa,
aere subiecto tam grave pendet onus:
ipsa volubilitas libratum sustinet orbem...
\end{verbatim}

The earth is like a ball, resting on no support, so great a weight hangs with the air placed underneath: its very rotation holds the sphere in balance...

*Met*. 1.12-3

\begin{verbatim}
nec circumfuso pendebat in aere Tellus
ponderibus librata sui...
\end{verbatim}

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922 Wheeler (2000) 120.
923 Cf. the comments of Goux (1983) 92-3 on the hearth and Hestia/Vesta, “The hearth is a symbol of permanence, of fixity, of immutability, of centrality, all equally characteristic of Hestia,” and “Above all, Hestia signifies stability and permanence.”
924 Peter (1907) compares *Fasti* 6.270 to *Met*. 1.12.
Nor was Earth suspended in the surrounding air, balanced by its own weight...

The philosophical picture of the universe in the aition of the temple’s form thus seems to be the converse of the cosmos in a state of chaos at the beginning of the Metamorphoses.

This dialogue involving stability and change takes place on a more basic level, since the goddess Vesta and her temple have strong elemental associations. Vesta is identified as Terra/terra (Vesta eadem est et terra, “Vesta and earth are the same,” 6.267) and her temple is assimilated to the Earth; moreover, she is later identified somewhat paradoxically as the element fire, as well (6.291): nec tu aliud Vestam quam vivam intellege flammam, 291 (“know that Vesta is none other than living flame”). The other two elements, while not nearly as prominent as earth and fire, also occur in the description of the temple (aer, 6.270, 277; imber, 6.282). The four elements, in turn, are the material basis for Pythagoras’ doctrine of universal change in the Metamorphoses. He describes how they continually morph into one another (15.236-51), specifically including earth (241, 245, 251) and fire (243, 248, 250). The impermanence of the elements is underlined by the contrast with the eternal mundus that contains them (15.238-9): quattuor aeternus genitalia corpora mundus / continet (the eternal universe contains four generative elements”). However, as related to Vesta and her temple, it is the permanence of earth and fire that is emphasized. The poet had claimed that the Vesta temple’s form has never changed and he had explained this fact by appealing to Vesta’s identity with earth (6.267) — implicitly assuming the permanence of the geocentric mundus — and fire (6.267-8; cf. especially vigil ignis, 268). Ovid later adds that the Vestal fire is inextinguishable (ignis inexstinctus templo celatur in illo, 297), unstinting
(tuetur / Vesta, quod *assiduo lumine* cuncta videt, 6.435-6) and eternal (*ignis in Iliacis nunc erit estque focis*, 456). Indeed, the eternal or unchanging quality of the Vestal fire is a repeated point of emphasis in the poem.

In fact, there are good ideological reasons for this to be so. The Vesta temple held several *pignora imperii* or “pledges of empire,” the Vestal fire being one, on which the welfare of the Roman state depended, as we can see from Ovid’s commemoration of Augustus’ appointment as Pontifex Maximus on 6 March 12 B.C. (3.415-28):

Sextus ubi Oceano clivosum scandit Olympum  
Phoebus et alatis aethera carpit equis,  
quisquis ades castaeque colis penetralia Vestae,  
gratate, Iliacis turaque pone focis.  
Caesaris innumeris, quos maluit ille mereri,  
accessit titulis pontificalis honor.  
ignibus aeternis aeterni numina praesunt  
Caesaris: imperii pignora iuncta vides.  
di veteris Troiae, dignissima praedae ferenti,  
qua gravis Aeneas tutus ab hoste fuit,  
ortus ab Aenea tangit cognata sacerdos  
umina: cognatum, Vesta, tuere caput.  
quos sancta fovet ille manu, bene vivitis, ignes:  
vivite inexstincti, flammaque duxque, precor.

When for the sixth time Phoebus scales sloping Olympus from the Ocean and traverses the air on winged horses, whoever you are who approaches and worships at the inner chamber of chaste Vesta, give thanks and offer incense on the Ilian hearth. To the countless titles of Caesar that he has preferred to earn the honor of the pontificate has come as well. The deity of eternal Caesar presides over the eternal fires: you see pledges of empire have been joined. Gods of ancient Troy, a prize most deserving of its bearer, weighted down with which Aeneas was safe from the enemy, a priest from the stock of Aeneas touches kindred deities: Vesta guard the life of your relative. You thrive, fires, whom that man [Caesar] fosters with his sacred hand: live on unextinguished, flame and leader both, I pray.

The Vestal fire is both eternal (*ignibus aeternis*, 421) and one of the pledges of empire (*imperii pignora*, 422). This passage also shows just how closely the Vestal fire had
become identified with Augustus. Ovid’s diction suggests a near equivalence between them: the divinity of aeterni Caesaris presides over the ignibus aeternis; Caesar and Vesta effectively merge together (iuncta) as eternal pignora imperii. The dependence of the Vestal fire on the princeps is again emphasized at the end of the Vestalia (6.455-6): nunc bene lucetis sacrae sub Caesare flammae: / ignis in Iliacis nunc erit estque focis; (“You sacred flames now burn safely under the guardianship of Caesar: the fire is now and will be in the future on Ilian hearths”). The ambiguity inherent in Caesar makes possible a dynastic reading of guardianship over the Vestal flame.925 Theoretically, at least, it displaces responsibility for the protection of the flame and therefore the Roman state from Augustus’ person alone and onto his line of Caesares. This gives political point to the question of stability and change raised by the philosophy of the Vesta episode.926

Therefore, the immutable nature of the elements as related to Vesta and her temple initially appear to be an exception to Pythagoras’ philosophy of change. Before proceeding, however, it is important to be clear that the philosophy of Empedocles has been identified as the source of a number of the doctrines in Pythagoras’ speech discussed so far. As we know, in an influential article Philip Hardie has argued that the

926 On the tension between stability and change in the Metamorphoses see Wheeler (1995b) 203, who argues that in the cosmogony of the Metamorphoses “Ovid...strikes a tension momentarily between teleological and anti-teleological views of the universe, opening the difficult, and perhaps unanswerable, question of the ‘philosophy’ of the Metamorphoses.” The tension is even more obvious in the Speech of Pythagoras at the end of the Metamorphoses, since Pythagoras provocatively ends his long discourse on universal change with a celebration of the rise of Rome. As Hardie (1992) 60-1 observes, Pythagoras does not allude to the eternity of Rome and “it is hard to see why the impetus of change should suddenly stop once Rome has reached her peak.”
speech in fact suggests a view of the Latin epic tradition as “Empedoclean *epos*.”

Long before Hardie, however, scholars had recognized numerous parallels in Pythagoras’ speech to the fragments of Empedocles. A parallel that is particularly close and important is from the Ovidian Pythagoras’ “central statement” of his theory of universal change, part of which I quoted earlier and the rest of which I will quote here:

(15.252-8):

```latex
nec species sua cuique manet, rerumque novatrix ex alis alias reparat natura figuras:  
nec perit in toto quidquam, mihi credite, mundo,  
sed variat faciemque novat, nascique vocatur 255  
incipere esse aliud quam quod fuit ante, morique,  
desinere illud idem. cum sint huc forsitan illa,  
haec translata illuc, summa tamen omnia constant.
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Nothing keeps its appearance, and nature, renewer of the universe, remakes some forms out of others: nor, trust me, does anything in the entire universe perish, but it changes and makes its form anew, and what is called being born is to begin to be something other than what was before and dying to cease to be the same thing. While those things may perhaps be transferred here and these there, nevertheless do all things endure with regard to their totality.

Pythagoras here very clearly states his basic premise that nothing in nature retains its own form. He builds upon this by saying that there is properly speaking no birth or death: what we refer to by these terms is really just a coming to be something other than what one was before and a cessation of a former state. Commentators have pointed out that this is remarkably close to a (probably programmatic) statement made by Empedocles.

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928 See Hardie (1995) 205, nn. 6-7 for a list of the parallels and bibliography.
930 Most editions of Empedocles place this fragment relatively early in the *Peri Phuseos*. 
about his own theory of change and his rejection of the conventional terms of φύσις and θάνατος (fr. 21./8):\

\[ \text{ἄλλο δὲ τοι ἑρέω: φύσις οὐδενός ἐστιν ἃπάντων θηνήτων, οὐδὲ τις οὐλομένου θανάτου τελευτή ἀλλὰ μόνον μίζες τε διάλλαξις τε μιγέντων ἐστι, φύσις δ᾽ ἐπὶ τοῖς ὄνομαζεται ἀνθρώποισιν.} \]

I will tell you another thing; there is no birth of any of all mortal things, nor is there any end in destructive death but only a mixing and an interchange of the things mixed, and birth is the name given to these by men.

The likelihood that this is an important model for 15.252-8 is made greater by the fact that Pythagoras’ statement there about universal change immediately follows upon his discussion of the four elements as the primary materials of the universe (15.239-51), a theory, that, as we know, was closely associated with Empedocles in antiquity, and indeed is often coupled by Ovid with other Empedoclean themes in the Metamorphoses and Fasti.\(^\text{932}\) Therefore, following Hardie, it seems reasonable to call the theory of universal change articulated in Pythagoras’ speech “Empedoclean.”\(^\text{933}\) In that case, does the Vesta temple’s resistance to change render it in the context of its dialogue with Metamorphoses 15 an “anti-Empedoclean” monument and therefore a counter-image to the Empedoclean temple of Janus Geminus in book 1?

In the remainder of the chapter, I will argue that if this idea is put to the test by a close examination of the Vestalia, especially in relation to Pythagoras’ Empedoclean discourse in Metamorphoses 15, the idea of change and instability will be seen to

\(^{933}\) Hardie (2009a) notes that Met. 15.252-8 also alludes to “a formulaic Lucretian couplet, De Rerum Natura 1.670-1 (=1.792-3, 2753-4, 3.519-20) that asserts the mortality of principles or phenomena other than the unchanging sum of the immortal atoms.”
resurface continually in the Vesta episode in spite of the strong statements made about the temple’s unchanging form and the eternal nature of Vesta *qua* earth and fire. Vesta and her temple’s instability is suggested not only through its extensive dialogue with Pythagoras’ Empedoclean doctrine of change in *Metamorphoses* 15, but also through dialogue with the similarly Empedoclean elemental drama of the early books of the *Metamorphoses*. As we will see, the Vesta episode’s allusions to books 1 and 2 of the *Metamorphoses* is another way that it resembles the speech of Pythagoras, since that too looks back to the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*.

We saw that the poet’s opening description of the temple had boldly asserted the permanence of its form (6.265), which was especially striking in light of the Pythagorean/Empedoclean doctrine of change in the corresponding episode in the *Metamorphoses*. If we return to the passage, however, we will see that this statement about the temple’s unchanging form had been almost immediately preceded by a comment about the *change* in the temple’s building materials, from straw and wicker work, to bronze (6.261-2): *quae nunce aerē vides, stipula tum tecta videres, / et paries lento vimine textus erat* (“The bronze roofs you now see, you might have seen then made of dried stalks, and the wall was woven with pliant wicker-work”). On one level, this contributes to the idea of the temple’s stability, since the more durable metal replaces the older plant-based building materials. Indeed, the durability of bronze seems to have been proverbial, judging by Horace’s use of it as a suitably long-lasting material with which to compare his poetic “monument” (*exegi monumentum aerē perennius*, *Odes* 3.30.1). But Horace’s statement, of course, is also based on the ultimate transience of bronze, which
distinguishes it from his poetic fame. The *Fasti* poet’s statement that the temple is made from bronze, where formerly it had consisted of straw and wicker, can be seen as similarly double-edged: it both points to the temple’s greater durability, but at the same time it introduces the idea of the temple as mutable, and therefore creates a certain tension with the later statement about the temple’s permanent *forma.*

Whereas lines 261-2 had described a transformation from old-fashioned, less durable materials like wicker to a more modern, sturdier one like bronze, the very next couplet describes a perhaps more unexpected change from great to small (6.263-4): *hic locus exigus, qui sustinet Atria Vestae, / tunc erat regia magna Numae* (“this small place that holds the Atria of Vesta, used to be the great palace of unshorn Numa”). This is the reverse of what one typically expects in these kinds of aetiological contrasts between early and modern Rome. More common are statements like the series of contrasts made by Mars in book 3, where he says that “Rome was small...but in smallness was nevertheless the hope of this” (*parva fuit...Roma, sed in parva spes tamen huius erat*, 3.179-80), and that his son Romulus’ “palace” was reed and straw (*si quaeris regia nati, / aspice de canna straminibusque domum*, 3.183-4), implying a comparison to the magnificent buildings of the poet’s Rome. This last comparison is nearly the exact opposite of the transformation described in *Fasti* 6 from *regia magna* (6.264) to *exiguus locus* (6.263). This surprising reversal quietly introduces the idea that things change not only by becoming newer, more durable, more modern, greater but also...*smaller*. This bi-

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934 I owe this point to Cynthia Damon. Joseph Farrell has also suggested to me an intriguing connection between this discussion of the temple’s materials and *forma* and Pythagoras’ doctrine, namely that the temple’s persistence, albeit in different forms, can perhaps be related to Pythagoras’ statement that while parts of the universe come and go, they nevertheless are constant in their totality (15.257-8).
directional model of change also strikingly appears near the end of Pythagoras’ speech, where the philosopher describes famous cities and empires, like Troy, which, although once great (*sic magna fuit*, 15.422; *magnae viguere Mycenae*, 426) are now humble (*humilis*, 424), before turning to Rome, whose transformation, unlike the catalogue of cities preceding it, is due to its *growth* (15.434-5): *haec igitur formam crescendo mutat et olim / inmensi caput orbis erit* (“This city, therefore, changes by growing and one day will be the head of the immeasurable world”). Pythagoras’ provocative juxtaposition has been interpreted in various ways, but it is indeed “hard to see why the impetus of change should suddenly stop once Rome has reached her peak.” Therefore, the couplet in *Fasti* 6, like Pythagoras’ discourse, introduces that idea that things not only become greater, but also smaller, an anti-teleological or non-linear notion of time and history that further problematizes the claims made about the Vesta and her temple’s formal stability.

Indeed, before proceeding to Vesta’s elemental identity, we might also briefly suggest that the temple’s transformation from wicker to bronze has an additional layer of significance, since in the *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses* the idea of a material change to bronze is most prominently featured in the Myth of the Ages, where bronze, far from representing a change for the better, marks a further stage in humanity’s degeneration. The Myth of Ages is a prominent part of Pythagoras’ speech in the *Metamorphoses* — he uses it both as part of his diatribe against meat-eating (15.95-110) and as an illustration of his doctrine of change (15.260-1) — and, as we will see in more detail in a moment, the

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935 See recently Wheeler (2000) 123-4 for the argument that this sequence does not suggest the future collapse of Rome. Wheeler (2000) 123, n. 78 also usefully collects the bibliography on the subject.  
poet’s description of Numa as founder of the Vesta temple, which immediately precedes his comment on the temple’s change from wicker to bronze, alludes to Deucalion and Pyrrha and thus the Myth of the Ages in the *Metamorphoses*.

As we saw, related to the Vesta temple’s permanent form is the similarly unchanging nature of the elements, earth and fire, with which she is identified. This too, however, may be complicated precisely because of Vesta’s identification as *both* elements, an apparent paradox that scholars have explained in various, not altogether satisfactory, ways.\(^{937}\) Vesta’s ambiguous identity as earth and fire may become more intelligible, however, if we consider it in terms of Pythagoras’ theory of elemental change. As we saw, Ovid’s account of Vesta moves rather fluidly from her identification as earth to that as fire. Early in the episode she is said to be the same as earth (*Vesta eadem est et terra*, 267) and only a little later fire (*nec tu aliud Vestam quam vivam intellege flammam*, 291). Near the end of the episode, Vesta is again identified as fire (*nunc bene lucetis sacrae sub Caesare flammae*, 455), but then almost immediately equated to Earth (*est Tellus Vestaque numen idem*, 460).

While the respective elements with which Vesta is identified appear to be granted an eternal quality that contradicts the elemental philosophy in Pythagoras’ speech, the fluid movement between these identities, on the other hand, resembles the fluid transformation of the elements into one another in Pythagoras’ doctrine. According to Pythagoras, fire is condensed and passes into air, then into water, and finally into earth

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\(^{937}\) Barchiesi (1997a) 205 remarks on Vesta’s “double and mysterious identity, as both Earth and Fire.” Gee (2000) 115 cites a comment by Servius *ad Aeneid* 2.296, in which Servius explains that Vesta is both earth and fire because the earth contains fires inside of it. However, Gee (2000) fits the ambiguity into her more general argument that in the *Fasti* Ovidian polysemy has replaced the stable relationship between sign and signifier in the *Phaenomena* of Aratus.
In a sense, then, Vesta constitutes the two *termini*, fire and earth, of Pythagoras’ order (*inde retro redeunt, idemque retextit ordo*, 249) of elemental transformation. The fluid nature of the elements may be underscored by Vesta’s identification as these two elements in particular, fire and earth, since they are respectively the highest and lowest elements, the lightest and most dense. In *Met.* 15 Ovid skillfully reflects the cycle of transformation by a loosely chiastic arrangement of the elements over the seven lines of his description: earth transforms into water (245-46), water into air (246-7) and finally air into fire (248); the process is then reversed, fire passing into air (250), air into water (250-1) and finally water back into earth (251), the process ending precisely where it had begun. Vesta’s changing elemental identifications over the course of the Vestalia manifests a similarly chiastic arrangement: at the episode’s beginning Vesta is identified first as earth (267) and then fire (291); at the end of the episode, she is identified as fire once again (455), before returning finally to earth (460). Therefore Vesta too *qua* elemental deity may have a closer resemblance to Pythagoras’ philosophy of change than initially appeared. This fluidity or confusion of boundaries between earth and fire also suggests that Vesta’s nature has an unexpectedly “chaotic” aspect, since a similar confusion of boundaries between the elements and qualities obtained in chaos (*Met.* 1.5-20). In this respect she can be compared — rather than contrasted — to her structural counterpart in book 1, Janus, whose biform appearance is, we learn, a “small reminder” of his former chaotic state (*Fasti* 1.113-4):

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938 This enclosure of references to Vesta’s identity as fire inside the opening and closing references to her identity as earth, creating a ring structure, reflects the image of the earth at the beginning of the episode.
nunc quoque, confusae quondam nota parva figurae, / ante quod est in me postque videtur idem (“now also, a small reminder of my once confused shape, my front and back both look the same”). As we know, biformality in Ovid is often connected to Empedocles’ own hybrid creatures, and Vesta as a bi-form elemental being makes her doubly Empedoclean.

The thematic dialogue I have identified so far is admittedly general and has thus far lacked the specific verbal parallels that are typically used to establish these kinds of intertextual exchanges in Latin poetry. While I believe that the structural correspondence between the two episodes — as philosophizing discourses situated in the final books of their respective poems — strongly urges us to read them in this way, and that this urging is reinforced by both the Fasti poet and Pythagoras’ dismissal of the lies of vates, there is a further thematic parallel that is grounded not only in similar thought, but also diction, and that can therefore help to strengthen my overall case. Immediately after Pythagoras’ programmatic and central statement of his Empedoclean philosophy of universal change (15.252-8), which we discussed above, he begins a catalogue of mirabilia that serve to illustrate this doctrine. His opening series of examples which he claims to have seen himelf (vidi, 15.262), focuses on natural changes in the landscape from earth to bodies of water and vice versa. Two related contrasts dominate the passage, that between land and sea (or other bodies of water) and the dry and the wet (15.259-69):

‘nil equidem durare diu sub imagine eadem crediderim. sic ad ferrum venistis ab auro, saecula, sic totiens versa est fortuna locorum. vidi ego, quod fuerat quondam solidissima tellus, esse fretum, vidi factas ex aequore terras; et procul a pelago conchae iacuere marinae,
et vetus inventa est in montibus ancora summis; quodque fuit campus, vallem decursus aquarum fecit, et eluvie mons est deductus in aequor; eque paludosa siccis humus aret harenis, quaeque sitim tulerant, stagnata paludibus uement.’

Nothing I truly believe continues under the same appearance. Thus you ages have gone from gold to iron, thus so often has the condition of places been changed. I have seen what was the firmest earth become sea, and I have seen lands made out of sea; and sea shells have come to rest far from the sea, and an old anchor has been found on a mountain peak; what was a field, the downward course of water has made a valley, and a mountain has been drawn down into the sea by flood; from a marshy area the earth becomes parched, dry sand, and what once was thirsty, is a marshy pool.

In as much as this involves changes from earth to water and vice versa, it should also be seen as a continuation or further illustration of Pythagoras’ doctrine of the transmutation of the elements which was articulated only a few lines earlier (15.239-51). If we turn to the Vesta episode, it too contains a passage that is structured around precisely the same contrast or change from water to land and from wet to dry. The poet, on his return from celebrating the Vestalia (festis Vestalibus, 6.395) says that he witnessed (vidi, 6.397) a woman descending barefoot, perhaps from the steps of Vesta’s shrine. An old woman, noticing the poet’s astonishment, takes it upon herself to explain the reason for the matron’s bare feet, namely that the precinct of Vesta and the surrounding area used to be a watery, marshy area, although now it is dry land. Indeed, she emphasizes the change repeatedly, as if to draw special attention to it (6.395-416):

Forte revertebar festis Vestalibus illa quae Nova Romano nunc Via iuncta foro est: huc pede matronam nudo descendere vidi; obstipui tacitus sustinuque gradum. sensit anus vicina loci, iussumque sedere adloquitur, quatiens voce tremente caput:

'hoc, ubi nunc fora sunt, udae tenuere paludes;
  amne redundatis fossa madebat aquis.
Curtius ille lacus, siccus qui sustinet aras,
  nunc solida est tellus, sed lacus ante fuit;
qua Velabra solent in Circum ducere pompas,
  nil praeter salices cassaque canna fuit:
saepe suburbanas rediens conviva per undas
cantat et ad nautas ebraia verba iacit.
nondum conveniens diversis iste figuris
  nomen ab averso ceperat amne deus.
hic quoque lucus940 erat iuncis et harundine densus
  et pede velato non adeunda palus.
  stagna recesserunt et aquas sua ripa coercet,
siccque nunc tellus: mos tamen ille manet.'
reddiderat causam. 'valeas, anus optima' dixi;
  quod superest aevi molle sit omne tui.'

I happened to be returning from Vesta’s festival by that path where the Via Nova joins the Roman Forum: I saw a woman in bare feet coming down in my direction: I stopped in stunned silence. An old woman nearby noticed me. After ordering me to sit, she said in a faltering voice, her head shaking: “dank marshes used to occupy this place where the forums now are; the ditch was soaked by a flooding stream. The Lacus Curtius there, which now supports dry altars, is now solid earth, but was a lake before; where the Velabrum often leads parades to the Circus, was nothing but willows and hollow reed. Often a party returning over the suburbs waters sang and hurled drunken words at the sailors. Not yet had that shape-shifting god taken his name from averting the stream. Here also was a grove filled with bulrushes and reeds and a swamp that could not be crossed in shoes. The marshes have receded and their own banks keep the waters in check, and the land is now dry: nevertheless the custom remains.” She had given me the cause. “Farewell, old woman,” I said; “may all of your life that remains be kind to you.”

As we can see, both passages begin with a claim of autopsy, first by Pythgoras (vidi, 15.262) and then by the Fasti poet (vidi, 6.397).941 As the Fasti passage changes from the poet as speaker to the old woman, the linguistic echoes of Pythagoras’ speech are

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940 Bömer (1957-8) ad loc. identifies this lucus as a sacred grove next to the Atrium Vestae, based on a mention of it in Cicero (Div. 1.101). As Littlewood (2006) ad loc. notes, both Merkel (1841) and AWC read lacus, although manuscript U has lacus. Littlewood accepts lucus, but also suggests an argument for lacus. The reading of lucus does not weaken my argument and lacus only strengthens it.

941 This claim of autopsy is actually rather rare in the Fasti. The poet twice appeals to what he himself has seen in the Vesta episode (6.397, 423), but only two other times in the entire poem (1.389, 2.27).
numerous (Fasti 6.401, paludes; 412, palus ~ Met. 15.268, paludosa; 269, paludibus; Fasti 6.404, solida...tellus ~ Met. 15.262, solidissima tellus; Fasti 6.411-2 palus...stagna ~ Met. 15.269, stagnata paludibus; Fasti 6.414, sicca...tellus ~ Met. 15.268, siccis...harenis).\textsuperscript{942} To this list of parallels we might be able to add a similar word-play.

As Michalopoulous has noted of Met. 15.268, siccis humus aret harenis alludes to the etymological association of harena with arere and ariditas: “the line-end coupling of aret and harenis highlights Ovid’s etymological purpose, while siccis intensifies the effect.”\textsuperscript{943} Ovid may likewise be alluding to an etymological association between ara and ariditas or arere by the collocation of siccas...aras at Fasti 6.403, since he elsewhere exploits a similar association between ara and ardor, the latter of which, of course, is semantically related to ariditas or arere.\textsuperscript{944}

Therefore, the two passages contain a number of verbal echoes, but they resemble one another even more closely in thought; both passages, once again, are built on the contrast between solid earth and liquid water, dry earth and wetlands. We can compare the change from body of water to solid earth at Fasti 6.404, nunc solida est tellus, sed lacus ante fuit, to the reverse change, from “firmest earth” to sea at Met. 15.261-2, vidi ego, quod fuerat quondam solidissima tellus, / esse fretum. And we can compare the change from water to land, specifically a notable feature of Roman topography (fora) at Fasti 6.401, hoc, ubi fora sunt, udae tenuere paludes to the change from a campus (also a

\textsuperscript{942} Bömer (1957-8) does not note these parallels in his Fasti commentary, nor do Haupt (1966) \textit{et al. ad Met.} 15.259-69.
\textsuperscript{943} Michalopoulous (2001) 87-8.
\textsuperscript{944} See Michalopoulous (2001) 34 on ara and ardor. He also notes that ara is frequently juxtaposed by Ovid with ignis, which may have etymological connotations as well. On the old woman’s use of etymologies elsewhere in the episode see Williams (1991) 189-90.
feature of Roman topography) to valley at Met. 15.265-6, *quodque fuit campus*, *vallem decursus aquarum / fecit*. Finally, compare the transformation from moist to dry (land) at Fasti 6.403-4, *Curtius ille lacus, siccus qui sustinet aras, / nunc est solida tellus, sed lacus ante fuit* and at Fasti 6.413-4, *stagna recesserunt et aquas sua ripa coercet, / siccaque nunc tellus* to Met. 15.268-9, *eque paludosa siccis humus aret harenis, / quaeque sitim tulerant, stagnata paludibus ument.*

We might suggest one further point of contact between this episode in the *Fasti* and Pythagoras’ speech. Upon seeing the Roman woman barefoot the poet tells us he was stunned into silence (*obstipui tacitus*, 6.398). This may be an arch comment on Ovid’s fabrication of this *aetion*, since there is no indication outside the *Fasti* that going shoeless was part of Vesta’s festival.945 Well might someone be stunned to see an imaginary rite. But this kind of wondering silence is precisely the reaction that Pythagoras’ speech is described as producing in his audience (15.65-6): *in medium discenda dabat coetusque silentum dictaque mirantum magni primordia mundi* (“he used to offer precepts in the midst of gatherings of people, hushed and wondering at his discourse on the beginning of the cosmos”). The *Fasti* poet, therefore, assumes a posture similar to a member of Pythagoras’ audience right before he hears a discourse resembling a passage from Pythagoras’ speech! In a nice twist, however, the woman’s *aetion* is not meant to invoke wonder — one of the important goals of Pythagoras’ speech946 — but to remove the poet’s stunned silence. However, with characteristic Ovidian wit, the old woman’s

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945 See Williams (1991) 188: “there is...no evidence to suggest it was customary for married woman...to walk barefoot in the forum as a ritualistic part of the festival, or that going barefoot to negotiate Rome’s ancient marshes had any religious significance whatsoever.”

explanation corresponds to the very beginning of Pythagoras’ list of *admiranda* or *mirabilia* of nature.

In any case, it is clear from both the lexical and thematic parallels that the two passages are meant to recall one another. Once again, this can reinforce the less obvious thematic parallels that I identified earlier, and go a long way towards confirming my basic assertion that the Vesta episode and the speech of Pythagoras are not only structurally parallel but are also engaged in an extensive dialogue centered on the question of stability versus the Empedoclean model of universal change that is put into the mouth of Pythagoras. What do we make of the old woman’s *action* of the transformation of the urban landscape from marshy floodplain to city center? Pythagoras’ parallel description of natural changes in the landscape clearly implies a cycle, in which water will not only transform into land, but *eventually* back into water, given enough time. We might consider again *Metamorphoses* 15.268-9: *eque paludosa siccis humus aret harenis, / quaeque sitim tulerant, stagnata paludibus ument* (“formerly a marsh, the ground is parched, dry sand, and land that had been thirsty is marshy pool”). The chiastic arrangement of the two lines again, as we saw in Pythagoras’ description of the transmutation of the elements, suggests a cycle going from water (*eque paludosa*) to dry earth and back to water (*paludibus ument*). Moreover, the fluidity of the boundaries between the elements of earth and water is reflected verbally in the resemblance between *humus* and *umor*, even though the former refers here to dry earth and the latter to the wetness of a marsh.947 We might say that both *humus* and *umor* contain the seeds of their transformation into the opposite element. This lack of boundaries between earth and

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water, both verbally and conceptually, is another reflection of the similarity between
Pythagoras’ philosophy of change and the chaos that pertained at the beginning of the
world, which was characterized above all by a confusion of boundaries. The old woman’s
action in the Vesta episode, unlike Pythagoras’ speech, emphasizes only a unidirectional
transformation from water to earth, from marshy floodplain to urban center, but the
subtext of its parallel in Pythagoras’ mirabilia of change may suggest that it is only a
matter of time before these fora are once again flooded. Indeed, not so long ago,
according to Horace Odes 1.2, Romans had anxiously feared that the flooding of Vesta’s
precinct portended the return of the mythical Flood (1.2.1-20).

 Appropriately for an episode that emphasizes change and alludes to the
Metamorphoses, this action includes mention of the shape-shifting god Vertumnus, who
is also a character in Ovid’s epic. Vertumnus is mentioned in passing at Fasti 6.409-10
(nondum conveniens diversis iste figuris / nomen ab averso ceperat amne deus); and in a
brief but provocative discussion of this action, Barchiesi has observed that it archly
alludes to Propertius’ Vertumnus elegy, whose speaker is the god himself. Barchiesi
notes that “the god, who was so loquacious in Propertius, does not seem to have been
allowed access to the Fasti,” but then Barchiesi suggests, given the fact that Vertumnus
turns himself into a chatty old woman in the Metamorphoses, that Ovid’s aged female
informant may be the god himself in disguise!948 Who better to describe to the poet these
natural changes in the landscape than the shape-shifting Vertumnus? The presence of
Vertumnus only underscores the importance of the theme of change or metamorphosis in
the action and contributes to the growing sense of a “philosophical” affinity between the

948 Barchiesi (1997a) 189.
Vestalia and the speech of Pythagoras, in spite of claims made about the stability and permanence of Vesta and her temple.

As I have had occasion to mention several times, one of the notable features of Pythagoras’ Empedoclean theory of change is its similarity to the state of chaos existing at the beginning of the world in the *Metamorphoses*. We also saw that, far from being suppressed in the *Metamorphoses*, chaos or at least its threat continues to recur throughout the poem, culminating perhaps in Pythagoras’ speech, where what had seemed to be “an aberrant pre-cosmic state is now alleged to be the constant and universal condition of nature.” Indeed, Pythagoras’ programmatic statement of his theory (15.252-8) clearly recalls the description of chaos. Moreover, his list of *mirabilia* involving dramatic natural changes in the landscape recalls the early books of the *Metamorphoses* and specifically Deucalion’s flood and Phaethon’s fire, which themselves had threatened to return the world to primordial chaos. The confusion of boundaries between earth and water which we discussed recalls the conditions created by the flood in a general way, but the similarity is confirmed by verbal parallels. Particularly notable is the appearance of *campus* and *aquarum* in the same line at 15.266, which had been paired in the description of the Flood at 1.315 (*campus aquarum*), and the collocation of *stagnata paludibus* at 15.269, which virtually repeats 1.324, *stagnare paludibus*. This repetition extends not only to the elemental catastrophe of the flood, but also to Phaethon’s fire, since, as

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949 Tarrant (351).
950 Ibid.
951 Bömer (1969-86) *ad Met.* 1.324 notes that *stagnare* only occurs in these two places in the poem, and that the two contexts are similar.
Wheeler has observed, “Ovid catalogs in similar fashion to Pythagoras the springs
and rivers affected by fire in the Phaethon episode.” ⁹⁵²

These iterations of the chaotic elemental catastrophes from books 1 and 2 of the
Metamorphoses underscore the fundamentally unstable picture of the world inherent in
Pythagoras’ philosophy of change in book 15. Like the speech of Pythagoras, its
structural counterpart, the Vesta episode also alludes to books 1 and 2 of the
Metamorphoses and suggests that the early Roman world, which is identified closely with
Vesta or Tellus/Terra and her temple, an imago mundi, betrays a similar instability to that
of the world in the Metamorphoses. ⁹⁵³

6.5 The Vestalia and Metamorphoses 1 and 2

There is an accumulation of hints near the beginning of the Vestalia that the early books
of the Metamorphoses are an important intertext for the episode. I can begin by observing
that one of the brief astronomical notices leading up to the Vestalia refers to both Lycaon
and Callisto, who are prominent characters in books 1 and 2 of the Metamorphoses
respectively. In the notice for June ⁷th — the Vestalia occurs just two days later — the
poet refers to the constellation Arcturus somewhat surprisingly as Lycaon (6.235-6):

tertia post Nona removere Lycaona Phoebe / fertur, et a tergo non habet Ursa metum

(“On the third morning after the Nones they say that Phoebe drives off Lycaon, and the
Bear fears nothing behind her”). ⁹⁵⁴ As we know, fertur often acts as a tacit

⁹⁵³ Cf. the mutability of tellus asserted in Pythagoras’ speech (15.454-5): caelum et quodcumque sub illo est
\ immutat formas \ tellusque et quidquid in illa est.
⁹⁵⁴ Arcas (=Arcturus), son of Callisto (= Ursa), is the grandson of Lycaon. Callisto is not uncommonly
referred to by her patronymic (see Bömer (1957-8) ad Fasti 2.153), but I can find no parallel for referring
to Arcas by his grandfather’s name.
acknowledgment of allusion. Can it here be a nod towards Jupiter’s erasure (cf. *removere*, *Fasti* 6.235) of Lycaon and his race from the earth? Of course, the “Bear” or Callisto, daughter of Lycaon, also appears early in the *Metamorphoses*, in book 2. As I will argue, the upcoming Vesta episode alludes not only to book 1 and the Flood, but also to Phaethon’s fire in book 2. This astronomical notice, then, may begin to prepare us for these later echoes.

If we turn to the beginning of the Vesta episode, there is a stronger echo of the early books of the *Metamorphoses* in Ovid’s description of the piety of Numa, the founder of Vesta’s temple. The temple was the work of the peaceful king, “a more god-fearing man than whom the Sabine land has never brought forth” (*quo non metuentius ullum / numinis ingenium terra Sabina tulit*, 6.259-60). Use of comparative forms of the present participle in poetry is rare, and therefore it is notable that *metuentius ullum numinis* is virtually repeated in the description of the piety of Deucalion and Pyrrha in the *Metamorphoses* (1.322-3): *non illo melior quisquam nec amantior aequi / vir fuit aut illa metuentior ulla deorum* (“no man was better or more passionate about right than he [Deucalion] nor any woman more god-fearing than her [Pyrrha]”). I might note too that Terra, in the form of the Sabine land, bore or “gave birth” to Numa (*terra Sabina tulit*,

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955 See Hinds (1998) on *fertur* and the so-called “Alexandrian footnote.”
956 Anderson (1997) *ad Met.* 1.322-3. Other than in these two passages, the comparative participle of *metuo* occurs only one other time in Ovid’s corpus, at *Heroides* 19.83-4: *quid tamen evenit, cur sis metuentior undae / contemptumque prius nunc vereare fretum?* Bömer (1957-8) *ad Fasti* 6.259 cross-references his earlier note *ad Fasti* 5.431, where he compares these three uses of the comparative participle of *metuo* taking an objective genitive to *timidusque deorum*. Haupt et al. (1966) *ad Met.* 1.323 also compares the line to *Fasti* 6.259-60. Ursini (2008) 50-1, in the context of discussing parallels between the story of Deucalion and Pyrrha in *Met.* 1 and Numa’s reception of the ancile in *Fasti* 3, also notes the parallel between *Met.* 1.322-3 and *Fasti* 6.259-60. Ursini’s suggestion that Numa had already in book 3 been compared to Deucalion and Pyrrha reinforces my own argument about the parallels in book 6. Ursini rightly recognizes that the idea of “refoundation” is common to the stories of both Deucalion and Pyrrha and Numa.
6.260), while, of course, in the *Metamorphoses* it is Deucalion and Pyrrha’s realization that Terra is their “great parent” (*magna parens terra est*, 1.393) that is the key to solving Themis’ riddling oracle and the repopulation of the human race.

This is an important parallel, since Numa is often depicted as a second founder of Rome after Romulus; and it seems plausible for Ovid to implicitly compare Numa’s refoundation, here symbolized by his establishment of the Vesta temple, to the recreation of the human race by Deucalion and Pyrrha. Indeed, such a striking change takes place in Rome under Numa that comparison of his reign to an event like the flood seems hardly exaggerated. As we saw, the transition is encapsulated in Ovid’s *aetion* for the *ancile* in *Fasti* 3 where he describes Romulean Rome as a city of war and Numan Rome as a city of peace, in an allusion to the Homeric Shield of Achilles, whose representation of two such cities ancient critics interpreted as a prefiguration of the Empedoclean principles of Neikos and Philia. Furthermore, Romulus is closely identified with his father Mars, an allegorical representation of Neikos, and Numa with Venus, an allegorical representation of Philia. This furnishes a schematic interpretation of early Roman history as the transition from the reign of strife to that of love comparable to the two halves of the Empedoclean cosmic cycle.

Moreover, as I argued, the early history of the *Metamorphoses* is framed in Empedoclean terms, the degeneration in the Myth of the Ages corresponding to the period of increasing strife, which ultimately ended in cosmic dissolution (the flood), and the regeneration of the world after the flood corresponding to the start of love’s half of the cycle, represented by the survival of Deucalion and Pyrrha (“many into one”) and the

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introduction of Amor into the poem (cf. also the description of Deucalion as a great lover of justice, amantior aequi 1.322). In light of the allusions to Deucalion and Pyrrha in Ovid’s description of Numa’s foundation of Vesta’s temple, the contrast between Numa and Romulus is similar to the one between Deucalion and Pyrrha’s piety and the savagery of the degenerate race destroyed in the flood. Indeed, piety is the point of comparison between Numa and Deucalion/Pyrrha at the start of the Vestalia, whereas in the city of war/city of peace passage the reign of Romulus is described in similar terms to the degenerate races of the Myth of Ages in the Metamorphoses. The race of bronze is “readier to take up arms” (ad horrida promptior arma, 1.126), just as the Roman had been “too ready to wage war” (nimium promptos ad bella Quirites, 3.277) before Numa’s reforms; Lycaon’s bestial nature (notus feritate Lycaon, 1.198; eadem feritatis imago est, 1.239) is matched by the ferocity of the Romans under Romulus before Numa softened their natures (exuitur feritas, 3.281). Moreover, not only civil strife, but specifically fraternal strife (fratrum quoque gratia rara est, 1.145) typifies the race of iron; in the Fasti, the fact that civil strife is no longer a problem under Numa implies that it had been under Romulus (cum cive pudet consersuisse manus, 3.282).

Therefore, the city of war/city of peace passage in Fasti 3 and the comparison of Numa to Deucalion and Pyrrha — both featuring Empedoclean themes — encourage us to see Numa’s foundation of the Vesta temple in similar terms, namely a recreation of the world corresponding to love’s half of the cycle in Empedocles. The introduction of Amor in Metamorphoses 1 is translated into a Roman context in the Fasti as Numan Peace or Concord. And just as Numa’s foundation of Vesta’s temple is placed in a cosmic setting
by the following comparison of the temple to an abstract picture of the universe, so
Deucalion and Pyrrha’s anthropogony leads into a natural-philosophical zoogony
generated by the *discors concordia* of fire and water.

But why point to the parallel between the reign of Numa and the recreation of the world after the flood specifically at the commemoration of Numa’s foundation of the Vesta temple, which, according to one means of dating, occurred three years into Numa’s reign?\(^{958}\) The comparison of the Vesta temple both to a philosophical picture of the earth and to the sphere of Archimedes makes it an *imago mundi*. It also contains inside its *penus* a number of the *pignora imperii* — including the Vestal fire — on which Rome’s political welfare depended; in this sense the temple stands in for Rome itself and Numa’s foundation of the temple is a refoundation of the city; and in as much as the temple is an *imago mundi*, Numa is depicted as a demiurgic figure; he recreates the world in the building of the temple. This is likely the impetus behind the comparison of the temple to the sphere of Archimedes and therefore the comparison between Numa and Archimedes, the one the architect of the temple and the other of the sphere, since it seems that Archimedes’ construction of the sphere came to be seen as a reflection of the activity of the cosmic demiurge (Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* 1.63):

\[\text{nam cum Archimedes lunae, solis quinque errantium motus in sphaeram illigavit, effecit idem quod ille qui in Timaeo mundum aedificavit Platonis deus, ut tarditate et celeritate dissimillimos motus una regeret conversio. quod si in hoc mundo fieri sine deo non potest, ne in sphaera quidem eosdem motus Archimedes sine divino ingenio potuisset imitari.}\]

For when Archimedes added the motions of the moon, the sun and the five wandering stars to the sphere, he accomplished the same thing as Plato’s god, who constructed the universe in the *Timaeus*, so that a single revolution might control

\(^{958}\) For an attempt to date the foundation of the temple, see Littlewood (2006) *ad Fasti* 6.259.
motions quite different in terms of slowness and quickness. If this cannot happen in the universe without a god, indeed Archimedes could not have been able to copy these motions in his sphere without divine inspiration.

The implicit comparison between Numa and Archimedes, then, suggests that Numa is a demiurgic figure, since he founds the temple of Vesta, an *imago mundi* like the sphere of Archimedes.959

Numa’s establishment (or re-establishment) of cosmic order by founding the temple of Vesta is underscored by what we earlier saw is an allusion in Ovid’s description of the universe in *Fasti 6* to the counterimage of chaos at the beginning of the *Metamorphoses* (*Fasti* 6.269-71 ~ *Met.* 1.12-3). In the latter Ovid describes chaos negatively in terms of what features of the world did not yet exist, before this negative image is realized by the demiurge’s binding of the elements in *concordia* (*concordi pace ligavit*, *Met.* 1.25). Moreover, as Littlewood has noted, the adjective *placidus* applied to Numa as architect of the Vesta temple connects him to Augustus and Servius Tullius, both of whom receive this appellation in *Fasti 6* (lines 92 and 582).960 It also connects the Vesta temple to Concordia, which at line 92 had been called the *placidi numen opusque ducis* (cf. 6.259 of the Vesta temple, *regis opus placidi*). We therefore get the impression that the Vesta temple is a model of an ordered, concordant universe. In the *Metamorphoses*, however, as scholars have demonstrated, this similarly ordered, concordant universe created by the demiurge turns out to be unstable at best and the threat of chaos is a recurrent motif in the poem. Moreover, we have already seen that the similarities between the “philosophy” of the Vesta episode and that of Pythagoras in

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959 For a recent treatment of the figure of Archimedes in the Roman imagination, see Jaeger (2008).
Metamorphoses 15 suggests that the Roman world, embodied in the Vesta temple and Vesta as Terra/Tellus, is less stable than it first appeared. This impression grows stronger as we realize that the theme of chaos surfaces in the Vesta episode via allusion to Deucalion’s Flood and Phaethon’s fire in the Metamorphoses, both of which involve elemental imbalance and discord similar to the original state of chaos in the poem. The flood and fire in the Metamorphoses “form part of a larger cyclic pattern of creation and destruction”\(^{961}\) which I will argue is a subtext in the Vesta episode. However, before we consider the pattern of flood and fire in the Vestalia, I can begin to flesh out the discordant associations of the Vesta temple by comparing it to the ancile, which we are encouraged to do by Ovid himself.

The Vesta temple is not the first *imago mundi* with which Numa is associated. As we know, the king had received the ancile in book 3; and the ancile, like its literary antecedents the Shields of Achilles and Aeneas, has cosmological associations. We also saw that the status of the ancile as an *imago mundi* is confirmed by a verbal parallel to the description of the earth resting at the center of the universe in Fasti 6, indeed the same description of the universe to which the shape of the Vesta temple is compared.\(^{962}\) In book 3 the ancile has no angles, i.e. is round (*idque ancile vocat, quod ab omni parte recisum est, / quemque notes oculis, angulus omnis abest*, 3.377-8), the exact same expression that Ovid later uses to describe the spherical earth in the Vesta episode (*ipsa

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\(^{962}\) I call the ancile an *imago mundi*, but there is also a sense in which the description of the universe in Fasti 6 is an image of the ancile, since the description of the ancile in Fasti 3 precedes that of the universe in Fasti 6. This inversion of the typical relationship between artistic object and nature is also present at the beginning of the Metamorphoses, where Wheeler (1995a) has demonstrated that Ovid’s description of creation is based in part on Homer’s ecphrasis of the Shield of Achilles.
volubilitas librum sustinet orbem, / quique premat partes, angulus omnis abest,

6.271-2). Therefore, the Vesta temple and the ancile are implicitly linked as human artifacts that are also images of the earth or of the universe. The Vesta temple and ancile are further connected by the fact that the sacred shield and the Vestal flame housed inside the temple are both pignora imperii. 963 Although not kept, like other pignora imperii, inside the temple of Vesta itself, the ancile did reside in the Regia, 964 one of the three main buildings (in addition to the temple of Vesta and the Atrium Vestae) in the precinct of Vesta; the Regia was the residence of the Pontifex Maximus and thought originally to be the palace of Numa. 965 We should remember too that Numa accepted the ancile from Jupiter after a period of elemental imbalance, in the form of extreme rain and lightning strikes.

As we saw, the ancile is a complex symbol and its comparison to the Vesta temple can help to bring out the temple’s own ambiguities. Although Numa is strongly connected in the Fasti to pax and concordia, the literary genealogy of the ancile goes back to epic shields of war such as those of Achilles and Aeneas, although as several scholars have pointed out, it is more properly a cultic object than a martial one. On the other hand, seeing it simply as a ritual object obscures its connection to Mars and strife. Indeed, the ancilia are introduced as the caelestia arma Martis (3.259); and like the sacred spear of Mars, Roman military commanders symbolically took up the ancile before setting out on campaign. 966 Moreover, Numa in the course of gaining the ancile

963 Ancile as pignus imperii: 3.346; Vestal fire: 3.422.
964 DNP s.v ancile.
966 DNP s.v ancile.
undertakes a number of acts strongly connected in the Fasti to strife, such as the
violent binding of Picus and Faunus (*nec sine vi tradent: adhibe tu vincula captis*, 3.293),
the sacrifice of a sheep (*Numa mactat ovem*, 3.300) and cow (*tollit humo munus caesa
prius ille [Numa] iuvenca*), both victims whose sacrifice the poet had connected to the
fall from the Golden Age and the cosmic principle of strife in the “Aristaeus” in Fasti 1, a
precursor to Numa’s binding of Picus and Faunus. Moreover, Numa’s order that many
shields be made from the one in order to thwart potential thieves (3.381) alludes to the
period of strife in Empedocles’ cosmic cycle. These associations help to make the point
that the *ancile*, although a cultic object and not strictly a shield of war, is nevertheless a
*pignus imperii*, that is, a guarantor of an empire gained largely though war and the
subjugation of conquered peoples.

The connection made between the *ancile* and the Vesta temple thus raises the
question of whether it too, although the work of a peaceful king (6.259), is a complex
monument of both peace and war, love and strife. Indeed, we saw in the previous chapter
that Vesta is often associated with strife, especially civil discord, in the poem, of which
there is a potent reminder at the end of the Vesta episode, which she closes by promising
that Augustus as *ultor* will avenge the murder of Crassus by the Parthians (6.467-8): *dixit
da [Vesta] ‘signa remittes, / quique necem Crassi vindicet ultor erit.” This use of
*vindico* at the close of the Vestalia looks back to an occurrence of the same verb at the
beginning of the episode, in the poet’s philosophizing description of the temple (6.282): *a
pluvio vindicat imbre tholus*. The roof of the temple therefore “protects” it from
rainshowers, but in light of the subsequent use of *vindico* in the context of war and
“revenge” might we not also see the temple, which is closely identified with earth and fire, as engaged in a kind of battle with the element water; in other words, the temple’s exterior, compared to the element earth, as an elemental vindex that keeps the virginal fire of Vesta, (nataque de flamma corpora nulla vides, 6.292), from meeting water (imber, 6.282) in the act of creation? We saw too that from an elemental perspective, Vesta’s identity as both earth and fire resembles the confusion of boundaries and elemental discord of chaos. While these hints at discord are muted at best, the Vesta temple as a site of elemental discord will become fully apparent later in the book during Ovid’s description of the temple fire.

As we saw earlier, the elements prominently recur in the old woman’s explanation at Fasti 6.395-416 for why Roman matronae go barefoot during Vesta’s festival. We also saw that this passage contains numerous echoes of Pythagoras’ description of similar transformations in the natural landscape in his speech, a passage that in turn looked back to the primordial flood in book 1. This passage in the Fasti seems to combine allusion to both Pythagoras’ speech and the primordial flood (411-4):

hic quoque lucus erat iuncis et harundine densus
et pede velato non adeunda palus.
stagna recesserunt et aquas sua ripa coercet,
siccaque nunc tellus: mos tamen ille manet.

Here also was a sacred grove filled with bulrushes and reeds and a swamp which could not be crossed in shoes. The standing waters have receded and the their own banks hold the waters in check, and the earth is now dry: nevertheless that custom remains.

We can compare this language to Ovid’s description in the Metamorphoses of the floodwaters that retreat at Triton’s call (1.341-2): omnibus audita telluris et aequoris
undis / et quibus est undis audita coercuit omnes (“[Triton’s call] was heard by all the waters of land and sea, and it held in check all the waters by which it was heard”).

While the repetition of coerco may simply be a coincidence, we can also compare the collocation of palus at the end of line 412 and stagna at the beginning of the next verse (et pede velato non adeunda palus. / stagna recesserunt to Met. 1.324, stagnare paludibus. Especially close, however, is Fasti 6.401, udae tenuere paludes, to Met. 1.418-9, udaeque paludes / intumuere, describing the conditions of the earth after the flood.

While this description of the change undergone by the precinct of Vesta and its surrounding area is not located at a specific time in Roman history, the parallels between Numa and Deucalion suggest that it can be placed in terms of the “time” of the Fasti immediately preceding Numa’s reign.

According to this analogy between early Roman history and the flood in the Metamorphoses, this elemental imbalance facing Numa should be seen as a result of Romulus’ reign, which, as we saw, is described in terms that are in fact very similar to the description of the degenerate races in the Metamorphoses, the last of which was the target of Jupiter’s punitive flood. One of the most egregious sins of Romulus’ reign, especially in light of recent Roman history, was civil strife. According to Ovid, the

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967 The coincidence of coerco alone in both passages is not enough to establish a connection, since coerco is commonly used of water, especially of water that encloses land or, conversely, as in the Fasti passage, of rivers vel sim. that are enclosed by their banks. See TLL s.v. coerco. The verb is not all that frequent in Ovid, occurring 18 times in his entire corpus, mostly in the Met. (9x); it occurs only twice in the Fasti (1.715; 6.413). Of these occurrences, only four are in connection to water: Met. 1.31, where it describes water encircling the solid earth; Met. 1.342; Fasti 6.413; and Heroides 17.48.

968 Bömer (1969-86) ad Met. 1.418-9 notes the parallel at Fasti 6.401. Based on a search of the Packard Humanities Institute database, udae paludes occurs as an adjective noun-pairing only in these two passages. The collocation of the two terms, regardless of grammatical agreement, appears to be rare, as well. They appear in proximity only at Heroides 6.107-108, illa sibi a Tanai Scythiaeque paludibus udae / quaeurat, and Lucan, BC 3.85, of the Pontine marshes, et qua Pomptinas via dividit udae paludes. Although no such etymology is attested (at least according to Maltby (1991)), Ovid and Lucan may be glossing an ancient etymological connection between the assonant UDus -a-um and palus, palUDis.
rejection of civil discord is one of the reforms made during the reign of Numa (*et cum
cive pudet conservisse manus*, 3.282). It is tempting to connect the elemental imbalance
of the flooding encountered by Numa to sins such as civil strife under Romulus. Indeed,
the anger of the gods and the disturbance of the *pax deorum* is often figured as elemental
imbalance. One particularly good comparison is again Horace, *Odes* 1.2, where extreme
meteorological conditions are interpreted as a sign of the gods’ displeasure at the *scelus*
(1.2.29) of civil war. Horace complains at the start of the poem that Jupiter has sent
enough of snow, hail and lightning strikes (1.2.1-3) and that the people are afraid that the
“age of Pyrrha” (*saeculum Pyrrhae*, 1.2.6), i.e. the mythical flood, is about to return.
Horace segues immediately from this image of the flood of Deucalion and Pyrrha to a
contemporary flood where the Tiber overran its banks and destroyed the *mounumenta
regis* (Numa), including the temple of Vesta (*templaque Vestae*, 16); Horace thus
implicitly compares the mythical flood to this recent flooding and destruction of the *regia
and temple of Vesta. Philip Hardie has said of this ode that Horace’s “flood imagery
adopts the Lucretian and Virgilian trick of moving from the local disaster to the universal
cataclysm.” This nicely describes what I am arguing is one of Ovid’s strategies in the
Vesta episode: that is, by establishing Vesta as Terra (6.267)/Tellus (6.460) — an
important character from the beginning of the *Metamorphoses* — and her temple as an
*imago mundi*, Ovid prepares the way for comparing Roman historical *topoi* to cosmic
processes. The location of a “flood” in Roman history comparable to the Flood in the

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969 Commager (1967) 179-82. Horace uses *scelus* of Romulus’ fratricide at *Epodes* 7.18 (*scelusque
fraternae necis*). It has also been suggested that the *horrida tempestas* in *Epodes* 13 alludes to the civil
wars. Cf. ibid. 180
970 Hardie (1986) 379.
*Metamorphoses* also imparts a sense of instability or vulnerability to the early Roman world and implicates it in the pattern of creation and destruction from that poem.

This notion that the Vesta episode is reproducing the pattern of creation and destruction from the *Metamorphoses* is strengthened by the episode appearing shortly after the old woman’s *aition*. If Ovid is adapting the cosmic and elemental history of the opening books of the *Metamorphoses* in the Vestalia, we might expect a version of Phaethon’s fire to follow this “flood,” and indeed the next episode in the *Fasti* recounts the burning of Vesta’s shrine in 241 B.C. Ovid suggests that the temple fire resulted from arson, describing a chaotic mixture of polluted flames and sacred flames (6.439-40):

*flagrabant sancti sceleratis ignibus ignes / mixtaque erat flammae flamma profana piae*  
(“Sacred fires were ablaze with wicked fires and impious flame was mixed with holy flame”).⁹⁷¹ The verse-ending *ignibus ignes* (6.439) is securely attested elsewhere in Ovid only in *Metamorphoses* 2, where it refers to the fire of Jupiter’s thunderbolt striking Phaethon (2.311-3): 

*intonat et dextra libratum fulmen ab aure / misit in aurigam pariterque animaque rotisque / expulit et saevis compescuit ignibus ignes*  
(“He thundered and hurled from his right hand a spear, balanced behind his ear, upon the chariot, separating [Phaethon] from his life and his car both and quenching the fire with his own terrible fire”).⁹⁷² This echo can encourage us to make further connections between the two contexts. Vesta, who is said to be equivalent to Tellus right after the account of the fire (*est Tellus Vestaque numen idem*, 6.460), burns as her personified

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⁹⁷² It may also occur at *Met*. 11.523 during the storm that wrecks Ceyx’s ship, which is modeled on the cosmic storm in *Aeneid* 1. Among recent editors, Tarrant prefers the reading of *ignibus ignes*, but Anderson *ignibus undae*. 
shrine (Vesta / arsit, 6.437-8), just as the personified Tellus does in the
Metamorphoses (2.272-303). This collocation between the two goddesses seems clear
enough, but, as if to emphasize the point, the role of Tellus from the Metamorphoses
seems distributed in the Fasti over the goddess Vesta/Tellus and the man who saves her
shrine, Lucius Caecilius Metellus, who pleads to the ministers of Vesta to rescue
from the burning shrine the sacra on which Rome’s safety depends (6.443-52).973 The
plea of Metellus is not unlike the plea of Tellus to Jupiter to stop the world from
descending back into its former chaos (2.279-300).974

As Tarrant has said, “Ovid’s chaos is marked above all by instability of form and
confusion of boundaries.”975 The formation of the ordered cosmos, on the other hand, is
defined by the demiurge’s separation of the elements (1.22-5) and establishment of each
component in its proper place (cf. especially 1.69). However, as Tarrant and others show,
events like Deucalion’s flood and Phaethon’s fire reverse this cosmogonic transformation
by reintroducing a confusion of elemental boundaries.976 The Flood, for instance,
collapses the distinction between earth and water (1.291) and Phaethon’s fire threatens, in
the words of Tellus, to throw everything into confusion and return the world to ancient

973 Metellus’ rescue of the sacra is attested in other sources (Cic. Scaur. 23.48; Plin. Nat. 7.139-41). Cf.
Littlewood (2006) ad Fasti 6.437-8. Therefore, Ovid seems to have taken advantage of traditional elements
in the story to forge associations between the temple fire and Phaethon’s fire.
974 It is tempting to see echoes of the topography of the Roman Forum and specifically of the precinct of
Vesta in Tellus’ speech. Tellus says to Jupiter that if he lets the fire burn out of control, it will weaken the
poles of the earth and Jupiter’s atria will be destroyed (atria vestra ruerent, 2.296), in which we might hear
an echo of Atrium Vestae. A fire in the Vesta temple would have threatened this building too, since it was
just a few steps away from the temple. Tellus also mentions the possible destruction of the regia caeli
(2.298), which could allude to the “house of the king,” the regia, which was the third building in the
precinct of Vesta, along with the atrium and the temple. Of course, Ovid had already encouraged us to see
the urban topography of Rome reflected in heaven (haud timeam magni dixisse Palatia caeli, Met. 1.176).
See Littlewood (2006) 125 for a map of the precinct of Vesta.
976 See also Wheeler (2000).
chaos (*in Chaos antiquum confundimur*, 2.299). Ovid cleverly and effectively varies this elemental confusion of boundaries in his description of the Vesta temple fire by erasing the distinction not between two different elements, but two kinds of the *same* element: sacred fires mix indiscriminately with wicked fires, impious flame with holy flame (6.439-40). Indeed Tarrant has also observed that iterations of chaos in the *Metamorphoses* extend to examples of moral “chaos,” which become increasingly prominent as Ovid begins to focus on human actions in the second third of the poem, and which he often describes in terms that recall his earlier descriptions of elemental chaos.977 Tarrant uses the tale of Procne, Tereus and Philomela as his chief example, where one finds such statements as Procne “rushes on to confuse right and wrong” (*fasque nefasque / confusura ruit*, 6.585-86).978 Examples abound, such as Cadmus in book 3 whose actions make him both *pius* and *sceleratus* (3.5).979 The chaotic confusion of boundaries symbolized in the impious flame mixing with holy flame in the temple fire of *Fasti* 6 is underscored throughout the passage by the theme of the transgression of boundaries and by ethical paradoxes similar to Cadmus being simultaneously “pious” and “impious”. Metellus, a man, has to enter a temple that it is expressly forbidden to men to enter, in order to rescue the *sacra*, and thereby literally transgresses a sacred boundary (6.450): *vir intrabo non adeunda viro* (“a man I will enter where it is forbidden for a man to go”). Metellus acknowledges his actions may be a *scelus* (6.451), but it is also his civic duty to commit this “crime”: he grandly proclaims “may Rome be saved by my loss of life (in

978 Ibid.
979 Anderson (1997) ad loc. says “a careful pairing to emphasize a favorite Ovidian theme: family loyalty can also be criminal.”
anticipation of his punishment for violating the temple)” (sit capitis damno Roma soluta mei, 6.452).

Adding to this sense of confusion is Ovid’s repeated use of sexual vocabulary and imagery for Metellus’ act of entering the temple of the virgin goddess Vesta and rescuing the sacra.

Moreover, as Stephen Hinds has demonstrated, in cases of parallel episodes in the Fasti and Metamorphoses — and I am arguing that the temple fire in Fasti 6 and Phaethon’s fire in Met. 2 is such a one — there is a heightened possibility for the exploration of generic boundaries. Therefore, we might see the theme of a confusion of boundaries reflected on a metalinguistic level, as well. Metellus, although a character in an elegiac poem, trangresses his generic affiliations (in the sense that elegy is etymologically associated with funereal lament) by rejecting in a “great” (or epic) voice the usefulness of the Vestal Virgins’ (elegiac) tears (provolat in medium, et magna ‘succurrite’ voce, / ‘non est auxilium flere’ Metellus ait, 6.443-4), but then, only a few lines later, himself utters the programmatically elegiac cry me miserum (6.447).

Therefore, the threat of chaos raised by allusion to Phaethon’s fire in the Metamorphoses is underscored by the episode’s emphasis on the moral and literary-generic “chaos” that results from the Vesta temple fire. The impression left by the scene is that the Vesta temple is an elementally, morally, sexually and generically unstable monument.

980 Williams (1991) 193 compares the mixture of pious and impious flame to Metellus’ paradoxical status as both sanctus and sceleratus. This is part of his argument that Metellus in the Fasti is “a more complex, paradoxical figure than the paragon of heroic virtue paraded in schoolboy legend.”
981 See Newlands (1995) 137.
The temple fire takes on an almost universal importance not only through allusion to the universal conflagration in *Metamorphoses* 2, but also from its juxtaposition to the destruction of Troy, another catastrophic fire. For immediately before the account of the temple fire, the poet had told the story of the Palladium, the *armiferae signum caeleste Minervae* (6.421), whose preservation had been a guarantee of Troy’s *imperium*. In this respect, the Palladium is the Trojan predecessor of the *ancile*, another *caeleste signum* given as a *pignus imperii*. As the poet says, however, the Palladium was not well preserved during Priam’s reign (*sub Priamo servata parum*, 6.431), alluding to the destruction of Troy. The Palladium came to Rome as a sign of the *translatio imperii* from Troy to Rome (cf. *imperium secum transferet illa loci*, 6.428). The poet then explains the relevance of the Palladium to Vesta. Like the *ancilia* and the Vestal flame, both *pignora imperii*, the Palladium, kept inside the Regia, comes under the aegis of Vesta who, like the Sun, sees all things by an unfailing light (6.435-36): *tuetur / Vesta, quod assiduo lumine cuncta videt*. This confident assertion of Vesta’s guardianship of the *pignora imperii*, however, is immediately undercut by the story of the temple fire, which, as we saw, is universalized through its echoes of Phaethon’s fire. The immediate transition from the destruction of Troy to the near-destruction of the Vesta temple (and Rome, in the sense that the fire threatened the *pignora imperii*) provocatively suggests the fragility of Rome’s own *imperium*. Is it too subject to the cycle of creation and destruction?

Therefore, the Vesta temple, like the *ancile* (and the Palladium, for that matter), is linked to elemental imbalance. Remember that Numa receives the *ancile* from Jupiter as a
pignus imperii during an anxious time of extreme meteorological conditions, punctuated especially by the extraordinary frequency of lightning bolts, a sign of divine displeasure (3.285-6).\textsuperscript{985} The ancile functions to quell this anxiety over the instability of Rome, although at the same time it is paradoxically a source of anxiety, as we can see from Numa’s order that many copies of the ancile be made in anticipation of future threats to Rome’s imperium.\textsuperscript{986} The Vesta temple too is a similarly ambivalent object, containing inside it the pignus imperii of the Vestal flame but precisely because of this the temple’s welfare causes anxiety about the welfare of Rome. In some sense, Vesta has always been a locus for anxiety about change and instability — figured as elemental disaster — through the myth that Aeneas brought the Vestal flame from the fires of Troy.\textsuperscript{987} The elemental instability of Vesta reflects anxieties about Rome’s own permanence. As the instability and chaos of the early history of the world in the Metamorphoses finally yields to Augustus’ mastery at the end of the poem, so the closing image of the Vestalia is of Augustus’ guardianship over the Vestal flame, one that is and always will be burning on Ilian hearths (6.455-6): nunc bene lucetis sacrae sub Caesare flammae: / ignis in Iliacis nunc erit estque focis.

However, as we saw earlier, this reference to Rome’s immutability, tied to the eternal nature of Vesta’s flame (erit estque, 6.456) is accompanied by allusion to Vesta and Augustus’ key role in the civil wars. The final image of the Vestalia, expressed by

\textsuperscript{985} The fiery destruction of Troy can also be seen as a sign of divine displeasure, since, as the poet says (6.431-32), Athena/Minerva wished Troy to be destroyed because of the judgment of Paris.
\textsuperscript{986} Cf. Williams (1991) 191: “...the lesson to be learnt from Troy is that the imperium vouchsafed by the Palladium is all too easily lost.”
\textsuperscript{987} Vesta’s Trojan origins are made explicit at Fasti 3.415-28 (especially line 418, Iliacis...focis). Cf. Fasti 1.528.
Vesta herself, is of Augustus as ultor (6.467-8): “Parthe, quid exsultas?” dixit dea "signa remittes, / quique necem Crassi vindicet, ultor erit". While this will be vengeance exacted upon a foreign enemy, it is also a reminder of Augustus’ role as avenger of his father in the civil wars, a point underscored by the mention just a few lines earlier of an ancestor of one of Caesar’s assassins (D. Junius Brutus, 6.461). This allusion to the earth-shaking events of the civil war, after which Rome underwent a metamorphosis from Republic to principate, militates against the immutability of the Vestal flame and Rome itself. So too perhaps does the allusion to Vesta’s Trojan origins in Iliacis...focis (6.456), since this looks back to the destruction of Ilium and the translation of empire to Rome that had been recounted by the poet only a little earlier in the Vesta episode. While a certain degree of continuity can be maintained between Ilium and Rome, the theme of translatio imperii also brings to mind the cycle of creation and destruction to which great cities and empires are subject, according to Pythagoras’ philosophy of change (Met. 15.418-30), perhaps one final point of contact between the Vestalia and the speech of Pythagoras.

Conclusion

Philip Hardie in an essay on the Augustan poets’ treatment of the “mutability of Rome” has said in reference to the idea of parallels between the cosmic flux described in the Janus episode and the doctrine of Pythagoras that “in the Fasti there is a much stronger attempt to assert the stability of Rome against the forces making for further radical change in the future,” but at the same time he recognizes that “the two-facedness of Janus

988 Cf. Williams (1991) 191: “...the suggestive, even disconcerting similarities between Trojan and Roman experience are more telling than the differences.”
stains this ideology of fixity with an indelible mark of uncertainty and liability.”

We saw in the Vesta episode several assertions of the stability of Rome, especially in reference to the permanent *forma* of Vesta’s temple and the eternal flame of the Vestal hearth. Both of these contribute to the idea of Rome’s own resistance to change, since the temple, as an *imago mundi*, and the flame, as a guarantee of Rome’s *imperium*, reflect the idea of a stable Rome under the leadership of Augustus. However, the tension that Hardie identifies between the idea of an *urbs aeterna* (*Fasti* 3.72) and the programmatic doubleness of Janus is perhaps even more pronounced in the Vesta episode, since it is engaged in an extensive intertextual dialogue with Pythagoras’ Empedoclean philosophy of change in book 15 of the *Metamorphoses*. Via Pythagoras’ speech, Vesta and her temple appear much more unstable than they had at first, to the extent that they can almost be seen as monuments to instability and *discordia*. As we saw, like the Earth or Terra in the early books of the *Metamorphoses*, Vesta/Terra and her temple are implicated in the Empedoclean pattern of creation and destruction characterizing the early history of the world. However, just as the world in the *Metamorphoses* comes under the guardianship of Augustus in the *Metamorphoses*, Augustus’ guardianship of this elementally unstable goddess and her temple is asserted at the end of the Vesta episode in the *Fasti*. From this perspective the pattern of creation and destruction manifested in early Roman history is attributable, like the same pattern in the *Metamorphoses*, simply to the vulnerability of the Roman world in its early period before it reaches its *telos* in Augustus. However, the speech of Pythagoras offers an alternate view of time and

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989 Hardie (1992) 74.
990 See Tarrant (2002) 351 on the early vulnerability of the cosmos in the *Metamorphoses*. 
history that cannot simply be dismissed. The presence of this Pythagorean and
Empedoclean subtext in the Vesta episode in Fasti 6 functions in a similar way, as an
alternative to the statements about the urbs aeterna and the lasting concordia established
by Augustus. Indeed, the Empedoclean and anti-teleological model of time that I have
argued arises time and again in the Fasti militates against an easy acceptance of these
claims to permanence. Like the Metamorphoses, the Fasti does not offer a final answer to
this question, but perhaps the question’s open-endedness, like that of the “fragmentary”
state of the Fasti itself, is a powerful statement of the poem’s philosophy.
CONCLUSION

As a coda to his discussion of the presence of Empedocles in Pythagoras’ speech in *Metamorphoses* 15, Philip Hardie notes that the influence of Empedocles can be seen elsewhere in Ovid and he offers Ovid’s imitation of Empedoclean wordplay at *Ars Amatoria* 2.24, *semibovemque virum semivirumque bovem*, “as final token of the sympathy between the portentous pre-Socratic and the playful poet of love.”\(^{991}\) Indeed, one of my starting points for this dissertation was the hypothesis that the influence of Empedocles on Ovid extended beyond the *Metamorphoses* to Ovid’s elegiac poetry, especially to the *Fasti*, even though at the time I began this project, very little Empedoclean material had been found in his elegy outside a single passage in the *Fasti* and that single, extraordinary line in the *Ars Amatoria*.\(^{992}\) However, we might now say that the passages with an Empedoclean frame of reference in Ovid’s elegy — to adapt a phrase from Empedocles himself — “grew to be many” from these two (cf. διέφυ πλέον ἐξ ἑνὸς εἰναι, fr. 25/17.2).

While Empedoclean material is most dense in the *Fasti*, I have also demonstrated that Ovid locates both the *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria* in relation to a poetic tradition in which Empedocles had a prominent role, especially from the point of view of Ovidian elegy. Scholars including Philip Hardie and Damien Nelis have already begun to illuminate Empedocles’ place in the epic tradition, but one of the important results of my project has been to show that Ovid contributes to what Hardie and Nelis have identified as the “Empedoclean tradition” of poetry by suggesting that certain features of elegy can

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be — often, although not always, humorously — incorporated into this tradition. In this respect, Hardie’s suggestion of the “sympathy” between Empedocles and Ovid has turned out to be more true than he might have realized.

As we saw, Ovid relates the *Amores* to the epic tradition by coopting the first word of Vergil’s epic *Aeneid* as the *incipit* of his first collection of elegies. While the god Amor is said to have frustrated the poet’s burgeoning epic project, this is not just a clever Ovidian version of *recusatio*: it in fact announces a very real engagement with epic poetry in the *Amores*, including the Empedoclean themes of love and strife that had already been strikingly adapted by Latin epic poets such as Ennius, Lucretius and Vergil. It is Ovid’s contribution to connect the themes of love and strife in his erotic elegy to Empedocles, since neither of the other principal surviving Roman elegists, Tibullus and Propertius, seem to develop these themes in much detail along Empedoclean lines. One important indication of this is the relative unimportance of the pair of Mars and Venus in the elegies of Tibullus and Propertius, deities that had been perhaps the most important vehicle for the reception of Empedoclean poetry and philosophy in the Greco-Roman literary tradition; instead of being prominent in the erotic elegies of Tibullus and Propertius, where one might expect them to be given the erotic nature of the myth, the divine lovers are instead featured in the proem of the first book of Lucretius’ philosophical epic *De rerum natura*, and more briefly, but still significantly, in the song of Clymene in *Georgics* 4, once again in a philosophical-allegorical context. After having

993 For example, Garani (2011a) argues persuasively that Ovid, in his version of the story of Tarpeia’s betrayal in the *Fasti*, develops Empedoclean elements that are latent in Propertius’ account. On the other hand, Fabre-Serris (2011) has suggested that the elegist Cornelius Gallus connected elegiac themes like love and war to Empedoclean cosmology and that traces of this can be seen in the poetry of Tibullus and Propertius.
migrated from the beginning of the *DRN* to the end of the *Georgics*, Mars and Venus come to rest at the center of Ovid’s first book of *Amores*, appearing prominently in poems 1.8 and 1.9. As I argued, the *lena* Dipsas, who is the principal speaker of *Am. 1.8*, is a hybrid figure embodying a serio-comic synthesis of the epic and elegiac traditions — she is described in similar terms to the Vergilian *Fama* or “Tradition” — and represents certain Empedoclean aspects of this tradition, such as hybridity, metamorphosis, didacticism and, above all, the centrality of Mars and Venus and their relationship to the tradition of cosmological poetry, which is symbolized by their status as celestial bodies in Dipsas’ speech.

At the same time, however, Mars and Venus can be easily accommodated within erotic elegy, as is especially apparent in *Am. 1.9*, which can be seen as a response to the generically complex “song” of Dipsas in the prior poem. In 1.9 Ovid brilliantly connects Mars and Venus to the fundamental elegiac trope of *militia amoris*; yet, the poet of the *Amores* also “rises” to the mock-epic and mock-philosophical register of Dipsas’ speech by himself connecting Mars and Venus to “metaphysical and political oppositions and fusions of love and war, peace and war.”994 In this elegy Ovid assimilates the “rise” and “fall” of the elegiac couplet to larger cosmic and historical processes such as creation and destruction, growth and decay, which will become especially prominent in the *Fasti*.

Therefore, while the *Amores* does not extensively engage cosmological and Empedoclean themes, in important respects it anticipates the detailed engagement with them in the *Ars Amatoria* and *Fasti*.

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994 Hardie (2009c) 108, n. 50.
Empedocles was seen, certainly by Lucretius, and probably by Vergil, as well, as an important forerunner in the tradition of didactic poetry. Therefore, the didactic elegy *Ars Amatoria*, which Ovid positions as a successor to previous didactic poems like the *DRN* and *Georgics*, responds directly to a poetic tradition of which Empedocles was one of the earliest and most prominent practitioners. Book 2 of the *Ars* contains considerable allusion to the philosophical epics of Empedocles and Lucretius and undertakes a playful polemic against Lucretius concerning the largely negative portrayal of Venus and sex in *DRN* 4, in which Ovid uses Lucretius against himself by appealing to the more generous depiction of Venus in the proem to *DRN* 1 and to one of Lucretius’ chief models for his proemial Venus, Empedocles. The culmination of this dialogue with both Lucretius and Empedocles comes in the form of Ovid’s adaptation of the Homeric myth of the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite, which Empedocles himself had interpreted allegorically as the interaction of the principles of Neikos and Philia. As in the first book of the *Amores*, the centrality of Mars and Venus in Ovid’s poetry is symbolized by their position in the central book of the three-book *Ars*. This is part of a complex sequence in the middle of book 2 where Ovid playfully counters the Callimachean Apollo’s interruption of his foray into Lucretian-style cosmological poetry by suggesting that the myth of Mars and Venus enables him to have it both ways, as it were, since the myth is well-suited to an erotic elegy such as the *Ars Amatoria*, but, at the same time, can function as an allegory of Empedoclean cosmology. While Ovid emphasizes the ludic aspects of the Homeric myth rather than its cosmological associations, the significance of the myth for aspects of Augustan cultural discourse — such as Augustus’ marriage
laws and the genealogical connections of the ruling family to Mars and Venus — is emblematic of the way that the *Ars* as a whole is engaged in the serious project of exploring what it means to live in a Rome where the *discordia* of the civil wars has ended and a descendant of Venus, Augustus, is *ascendant*. The shifting interplay of love and strife, peace and war, Mars and Venus that is so important to the discourse of Augustan Rome makes the poetry and philosophy of Empedocles especially relevant to a poet working in this milieu.

Ovid’s incorporation of Empedoclean themes into his elegy culminates in the *Fasti*, where the Empedoclean Mars and Venus once again occupy a central position in the structure of the poem as the patron deities of the months of March and April respectively. To a greater degree even than in his earlier elegy, in the *Fasti* Ovid explores the dynamic interaction of epic and elegy, which are represented by the figures of Mars and Venus: for example, in book 3 the poet undertakes a book-long project of “disarming” the epic god Mars in order to accommodate him into his elegiac poem, the culmination of which is the celebration of the elegiac goddess Venus in the proem to book 4. Ovid connects these literary-generic concerns to the wider philosophical and political discourse concerning love and strife, peace and war. At the same time, I demonstrated that Ovid’s use in the *Fasti* of Empedoclean themes extends well beyond the figures of Mars and Venus.

As scholars before me have suggested, the god Janus reflects many of the features of the *Fasti* itself, such as its privileging of peace over war and perhaps its elegiac

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995 On this see Sharrock (1994a) 114-7 with bibliography.
996 Hinds (1992a).
form, the programmatic nature of Janus, however, also underscores the importance of Empedocles to the poem, since Janus is depicted as a deeply Empedoclean deity: his double form recalls that of Empedocles’ monsters “with two faces and two chests” (fr. 66/61), and his temple, the Janus Geminus, with its capacity for symbolizing the alternation of peace and war, can be seen as a distinctively Empedoclean monument.

Janus also sets the tone for the poem’s extensive dialogue with Empedocles by narrating an Empedoclean cosmogony in which the god himself is implicated as the material (specifically the four Empedoclean elements) out of which the universe arises. The importance of the four elements in the Fasti as constitutive of the cosmos and the seasons adds a further dimension to Ovid’s engagement with Empedoclean themes.

As we saw, Ovid characterizes the Fasti as a successor to earlier didactic poems on natural philosophy, which is signalled first of all by the opening word (disce, 1.101) of Janus’ programmatic speech featuring cosmological material, and then in more elaborate fashion in the poet’s praise of his predecessors in cosmological poetry, including Empedocles, at 1.295-314. This combination of didactic poetry and natural philosophy is one of the reasons for Empedocles’ attraction as a model in the Fasti, an attraction that could have only been increased by the religious aspects of Empedoclean doctrine, making Empedocles’ poem(s) an important precedent for Ovid’s own combination of physical and religious material in the Fasti. Indeed, the picture of Empedocles’ persona that emerges from the fragments — a poet-prophet possessing knowledge of the workings of the universe and a prominent position in his city — also makes him a model for the

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image of the *vates* developed during the Augustan period by poets including Horace and Vergil. While it has been argued that the term *vates* no longer had the same force for Ovid, Molly Pasco-Pranger in particular has demonstrated that the poet’s status as a *vates* in the sense adumbrated by Vergil and Horace is still important in the *Fasti*, even if it is often used as a foil for Ovid’s interrogation of poetic authority and “truth.”

Ovid adapts aspects of the Empedoclean vatic *persona* — often to humorous effect — in constructing the *persona* of the *Fasti* poet and those of important poetological figures in the poem such as Numa.

Finally, I demonstrated that one of the dominant temporal patterns in the *Fasti* is the cycle, which is dictated in large part by the fact that the annual round of the year and calendar is the basic structural framework of the poem. Empedocles, as a poet positing a cyclical model of time and affording a central role to Ares and Aphrodite, would have been a highly attractive model for Ovid as he set out to write a poem on the cyclical Roman calendar in which Mars and Venus likewise featured prominently. Time is a highly charged subject in the *Fasti*, since Julius Caesar and especially Augustus had ostentatiously put their stamp on Roman time, fundamentally reorganizing the calendar...

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999 On the *vates*-concept in Vergil and Horace see Newman (1967) 13-43. See also Hardie (1986) 16-22, who focuses on Lucretius’ relationship to the *vates*-concept. He also argues that certain aspects of Empedocles’ poetic *persona* as transmitted through Lucretius became important in the formation of the concept.

1000 Newman (1967) 100-114. To be fair, Newman does suggest that in the *Fasti* Ovid revives the flagging *vates*-concept, but he also says (p. 6) that “Ovid is too much on his best behaviour here for his conversion [i.e. to the *vates*-concept] to appear at all natural,” referring to the idea that Ovid only assumed this pose during the exilic revisions of the *Fasti* as part of his attempt to secure a return to Rome. Cf. Newman (ibid.) 105: “In the revised version of the earlier books of the *Fasti*, when he hoped in his exile that Germanicus might do something for him, he was anxious enough to be a *vates* in the old sense...”

1001 Pasco-Pranger (2000) and (2002b).

1002 On Empedocles as a model for Numa in the *Fasti* see Garani (forthcoming b).
and adding numerous Julian celebrations to the Republican festival calendar. Indeed, a distinctively Augustan representation of time and history emerges from literature and iconography of the period, in which the reign of Augustus represents the telos of Roman history and the return of a new Golden Age in a city whose imperium under the ruling family was without end. This view of time and history can be seen in the Fasti, as well, but as I have demonstrated, the cycle, which is often connected in the poem to Empedoclean cosmology, exists as an alternative model. It is difficult to tell whether the poem privileges one temporal model or the other and this can be seen as part of a wider tendency in Ovid towards “what may be called ambiguity, paradox, indeterminacy, or in simpler terms offering at least two ways of looking at most issues.”

Therefore, I have shown that Ovid’s allusions to Empedocles are neither minor nor occasional. On the contrary, there is a considerable degree of “sympathy” between the two poets, which may seem surprising in light of the stereotypical characterizations of Empedocles and Ovid to which Hardie alludes in my opening quotation, calling them respectively the “portentous pre-Socratic and the playful poet of love.” Of course, these stereotypes have some basis. Many of the fragments of Empedocles, for example, encourage the image of the “portentous pre-Socratic.” The speaker of the poem(s), who is conventionally identified as “Empedocles,” says that he is — at least in the eyes of others

1003 Cf. Fasti 1.9 (the poet addressing Germanicus), invenies illic et festa domestica vobis and 1.13-4, Caesaris arma canant alii: nos Caesaris aras / et quoscumque sacris addidit ille dies.

1004 The most famous representation of Rome’s eternal imperium in literature is of course Jupiter’s speech to Venus in book 1 of the Aeneid (cf. 1.278-9, his ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono; / imperium sine fine dedi). For the idea of the urbs aeterna see recently Méthy (2000) with bibliography. On the return of an aurea aetas in iconography from the Augustan period, see especially Zanker (1988) 167-92.

— a “god” rather than a mortal (1/112.4), a source of oracular knowledge (1/112.11),
truth (2/114.1-2); he is concerned to speak only what is holy (cf. 9/3.1-5), and self-
righteously fulminates against the evils of animal sacrifice and meat-eating (e.g 124/139,
126/136, 128/137). All of these pronouncements seem to merit the adjective
“portentous,” if not “bloated.” It was undoubtedly statements such as these that led to
satiric depictions of Empedocles in antiquity like the one at the end of Horace’s Ars
Poetica (463-6) or humorous applications of this grandiose persona such as we saw in
Ovid’s Ars Amatoria.

However, this picture of Empedocles should be balanced by an acknowledgment
of “lighter” — perhaps even humorous — aspects of his poetry. For example, I have
given several examples of Empedoclean wordplay over the course of the dissertation: the
ingenuity of the chiastically arranged βουγενη άνδρόπρφρα...άνδροφυ βούκρανα (fr.
66/61) which is the model for Ovid’s own ingenious semibovemque virum semivirumque
bovem (Ars 2.24); Empedocles’ announcement at the beginning of the important fr. 25/17
that “I will tell a double tale” (δίπλ᾽ερέω), which alludes to not only the two halves of his
cosmic cycle, but also — archly — to his didactic technique of repetition. It is also
possible that Empedocles puns cleverly on his own name in a fragment (77-8 Diels-
Kranz)\textsuperscript{1006} that begins with two unique compound adjectives $<\text{δένδρεα \ έµπεδοφυλάκα και έµπεδόκαρπα} \ \tauέθη\nu\text{έν;}>$\textsuperscript{1007} this appears even wittier when we know
that such compound adjectives are already a kind of Empedoclean “signature.” One can

\textsuperscript{1006} The line is supplied in DK from a reconstruction by Karsten. However, only the second line of the
fragment is given by Wright (1981) and Inwood (2001).
\textsuperscript{1007} Both Wright (1981) \textit{ad loc.} and Sedley (1998) 25, n. 91 suggest Empedocles is punning on his name
here. Also see Gale (2001) for the suggestion that Lucretius imitated these puns in alluding to Empedocles
in the \textit{DRN}. 
compare this to Ovid’s predilection for punning on his own cognomen, Naso. Also ingenious, although more in conception than expression, are Empedocles’ famous “homologies,” in which he suggests similarities between plant and animal structures, by which Ovid may have been inspired in his similarly ingenious comparisons of plant and animal features in the transformations of the Metamorphoses. It is not unreasonable to think that descriptions in Empedocles such as that of the sea as “earth’s sweat” (fr. 59/55) or statements such as “tall trees lay olive eggs” (fr. 79/79) could be not only striking, but also funny. I think it would be ungenerous to Empedocles to assume that such expressions might only be unintentionally funny. The same might be said of Empedocles’ hybrid monsters, which were much imitated by subsequent authors; again, I do not think there is any good reason to reject the possibility that Empedocles intended his audience to be amused by his description of Janus-like creatures, androgynes and those “oxkind with man-faces, and...androids with ox-heads (fr. 66/61),” just as Plato surely expected his readers to laugh at his own imitation of Empedocles’ creatures in the speech that he put into the mouth of the comic poet Aristophanes in the Symposium (189C—193D).

Plato may be poking fun at Empedocles or he could be building upon the comic presentation of Empedocles’ monsters already present in the Peri Phuseos. Indeed,

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1009 For the influence of Empedocles’ monstrous creatures on later poets, see Nelis (2009), Hardie (2009a) 141-42.
1010 Trans. B. Inwood (slightly adapted).
1012 For the view that Aristophanes’ speech is primarily meant to be a parody of philosophical ideas, including those of Empedocles, see the bibliography collected in Dover (1988) 108, n. 28, although Dover himself, while recognizing the similarity between Aristophanes’ bi-form humans and Empedocles’ monsters, is skeptical that Plato is specifically parodying Empedocles. He attributes the resemblance to folkloric sources common to both Empedocles and Plato. For an overview of parodic elements in Aristophanes’ speech see Dover (1988) 107-10.
Plato’s dialogues are only the most prominent example in the Greco-Roman literary tradition of the fact that humor and philosophy are hardly incompatible; although the humor often takes the form of mocking or parodying the views of one’s opponents, other types of humor are represented, as well.\(^{1013}\)

I offer these possible examples of Empedocles’ wit and humor as further tokens both of the sympathy between Empedocles and Ovid and the idea that the humorous and the philosophical are not mutually exclusive categories. Ovid, of course, is famous, not to say infamous, for his wit and humor. However, if the picture of Empedocles as the “portentous pre-Socratic” should be revised, so should the conception of Ovid as merely the “playful poet of love.” It is this latter image of Ovid that can make it difficult to accept that he is using philosophy for reasons other than parody or humor. Related to this is the prejudice that Ovid’s concerns are merely “literary,” encapsulated in the motto of “art for art’s sake,” although happily this view is increasingly in the minority.\(^{1014}\) We need to acknowledge Ovid’s humor, as well as the importance of literary-generic concerns to his poetry, but this does not entail a dismissal of the idea of his serious engagement with contemporary political and philosophical issues. The political implications of Ovid’s literary choices have been ably discussed by Stephen Hinds and

\(^{1013}\) Humor of course runs throughout the Platonic dialogues, much of this coming from Socrates himself, who can be seen in many respects as a “comic” figure. An early example of one philosopher mocking the views of another comes from Xenophanes (born c. 570 B.C.), who pokes fun at Pythagoras’ theory of reincarnation (KR1 260): “Once they say that he [Pythagoras] was passing by when a puppy was being whipped, and he took pity and said: ‘Stop, do not beat it; for it is the soul of a friend that I recognized when I heard it giving tongue’.” Humor is also an important element in the philosophical diatribe, on which see DNP s.v. “Diatribe.” For the diatribe’s influence on Lucretius, see Wallach (1976). specifically p. 7, for the mixture of humor and seriousness that is characteristic of the diatribe.

\(^{1014}\) See O’Hara’s (2007) 109-110 comments on the approach that Ovid’s concerns are simply “literary.”
others, so I will limit myself here to a few, brief comments about the approach I have taken to Ovid’s use of philosophy.

I have not argued in this dissertation that Ovid’s use of philosophy is humorless, and, in fact, I have included a number of examples of his playful application of philosophical material, such as his use of Lucretian and Empedoclean material in Ars 2 to make the argument that the furor of sex can produce Epicurean quies or his use of the Empedoclean and Lucretian Mars and Venus in the ridiculous tale of Mars’ “marriage” to Minerva in Fasti 3. This last is an especially useful example for considering whether Ovid’s use of philosophy is ever only humorous, since it is immediately followed by commemoration of Augustus’ defeat of Caesar’s assassins in the civil wars, which the poet ironically calls Augustus’ prima elementa or his first “school-lessons.” As I argued in chapter 5, the immediate juxtaposition of these two scenes indicates that more is at stake in the allusion to Empedoclean philosophy in the tale of Mars and Anna than the ridiculous context might otherwise suggest. Indeed, the Empedoclean themes relate to several issues that were probably of considerable interest to Ovid’s readers: Has Mars, whose identity as Ultor represents not only Augustus’ filial piety in avenging his father’s murder, but also the larger discordia of the civil wars, truly been disarmed — in a realization of Lucretius’ prayer to the Empedoclean Venus at the start of the DRN — or is the resumption of discordia still a real threat? Has the peaceful reign of Venus started in the form of her descendant Augustus’ rule, or is the “sacrifice” of the civil wars instead

1015 Hinds (1992b). Cf. O’Hara (2007) 110: “We must always ask...what might be the thematic or interpretive or even political consequences of the mixing of genres, and combination of multiple models (emphasis mine).”

1016 Cf. OLD s.v. elementum (4).
the beginning of a period of strife? Is the Roman universe governed by a rational god (Augustus) capable of maintaining a delicate balance of opposed elements, a *discors concordia*, or is it eventually going to succumb once again to *discordia* as part of the inexorable and endless cycle of destruction and creation.\(^{1017}\) In this light, Empedoclean cosmology appears especially relevant to the Roman audience for which Ovid was writing — as aspects of Stoic and Epicurean cosmology, for example, surely were, as well. Although the seriousness of Ovid’s playful allusions to Empedoclean philosophy is particularly apparent in this example from *Fasti* 3 because of the striking conjunction of the ludic tale of Anna Perenna with Caesar’s assassination, I would nevertheless argue that even in cases where we might be more inclined to see Ovid’s use of philosophy as simply humorous, (to paraphrase James J. O’Hara) we should always ask what might be the thematic or interpretive or even political consequences of Ovid’s use of philosophy.\(^{1018}\)

While I have argued for the widespread influence of Empedocles on Ovid, an influence that has to be understood in the context of the use of his philosophy in Ovid’s predecessors, it is an open question whether Empedocles remains a significant presence in Latin poetry after Ovid. Any satisfactory answer to this question would require a much lengthier discussion than I can undertake here, but, nevertheless, some of the evidence seems to point to an answer in the negative. The predominantly Stoic framework of the *Astronomica* of Manilius, who was probably a younger contemporary of Ovid’s, can

\(^{1017}\) I am indebted here to O’Hara’s (2007) 108-14 discussion of the questions raised by the philosophy at the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*. His treatment, although brief, is to my mind one of the best and most judicious recent accounts of Ovid’s use of philosophy.

\(^{1018}\) O’Hara (2007) 110.
perhaps be seen as predictive of what was to come.\textsuperscript{1019} As with Manilius, the philosophical material in Lucan, upon whom Ovid otherwise had a considerable influence,\textsuperscript{1020} is thought to be largely indebted to Stoicism.\textsuperscript{1021} Of course, Lucan’s uncle, Seneca the Younger, identifies himself as a Stoic and scholars have demonstrated the influence of Stoic cosmology on his dramatic works.\textsuperscript{1022} The presence of Stoic ideas has also been traced in the three major Flavian epics, Statius’ \textit{Thebaid}, Silius Italicus’ \textit{Punica}, and Valerius Flaccus’ \textit{Argonautica}.\textsuperscript{1023} It is perhaps significant that in his study of Stoic cosmology in Latin literature Michael Lapidge focuses primarily on writers of the first three centuries A.D., beginning with Manilius.\textsuperscript{1024} While Stoic philosophy had been a part of Roman intellectual culture from at least the mid-second century B.C. and had made its appearance in the philosophical works of Cicero and in the poetry of Vergil,\textsuperscript{1025} Lapidge’s study gives the impression that it only really takes hold in poetry and literature after Ovid.

At the same time, points of contact between Empedoclean and Stoic cosmology muddy the waters considerably, making it difficult on occasion to determine the philosophical valence of certain concepts. To use just one example, we know that the Latin terms \textit{discordia} and \textit{concordia} were used to gloss Empedocles’ principles of

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item On the relevant evidence for the dating of the \textit{Astronomica} see Goold (1977) xii. See Volk (2009) 226 with bibliography on Manilius’ Stoic associations: “Within Manilian scholarship, it is the majority opinion that the world view expressed in the \textit{Astronomica} is predominantly Stoic.” Volk (ibid.), n. 13 also lists a few dissenters and she is willing to see Manilius as more of a philosophical eclectic than is typically supposed.
\item See Wheeler (2002) with bibliography.
\item See, e.g., Lapidge (1979) and (1989) with bibliography. See also Roche (2009) 31, n. 59 for an updated bibliography on Lucan’s Stoicism and pp. 30-6 on Stoic elements in book 1 specifically.
\item See, e.g., Rosenmeyer (1989).
\item Billerbeck (1985).
\item Lapidge (1989).
\item Lapidge (1989) 1385-92.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Neikos and Philia,\textsuperscript{1026} but they could also express the Stoic idea that “opposing forces are essential to the concordia of the universe,”\textsuperscript{1027} as in Seneca (\textit{Q. Nat.} 7.27.4): \textit{tota haec mundi concordia ex discordibus constat}. The philosophical ambiguity of these terms can be traced by a very brief survey of the use in Latin literature of the epigrammatic expressions \textit{concordia discors} and \textit{discordia concors}. As we saw, the former expression first occurs in one of Horace’s epistles, where it is immediately followed by a reference to Empedocles (\textit{Epist.} 1.12.19-20): \textit{quid velit et possit rerum concordia discors, / Empedocles an Stertinium deliret acumen}. This fact has naturally led scholars to assume that it alludes to Empedocles’ principles of Neikos and Philia;\textsuperscript{1028} at the same time, however, the less famous Stertinius, a Stoic, also appears in close proximity, so it is difficult to be completely sure that the phrase should not instead (or perhaps also) be connected to Stoic philosophy. Ovid’s adoption of the expression at \textit{Met.} 1.433 has been connected to several different philosophers and schools, Empedocles and the Stoics among them,\textsuperscript{1029} although the other Empedoclean material in the surrounding context, as I have argued, strongly encourages a promotion of the Empedoclean valence of the expression. The presumed Stoic Manilius uses a variation of the Horatian phrase, \textit{discordia concors} (1.142), to describe the interaction of the four elements in a doxography on theories of matter at the beginning of the \textit{Astronomica}; in his edition of

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\textsuperscript{1026} As at Cicero \textit{Laelius} 23-4.
\textsuperscript{1027} Roberts (2002) 412.
\textsuperscript{1029} Bömer (1969-86) \textit{ad loc.} cross-references his comments \textit{ad Met.} 1.9, where he traces the notion to Heraclitus and Empedocles, but acknowledges its adoption by the Stoics. See also Roberts (2002) 412. Barchiesi (2005) \textit{ad loc.} acknowledges that it may refer to the Empedoclean conception of Neikos and Philia, but \textit{solo molto vagamente}. He instead stresses the philosophical eclecticism of the context and seems to think that Lucretius, if anyone, is privileged as a model. Nelis (2009) argues strongly that it is a gloss on Empedocles’ principles of Neikos and Philia.
Manilius G.P. Goold assumes that this expression refers to the doctrine of Empedocles, but again one cannot be entirely sure. It comes in the context of Manilius’ discussion of the four-element theory, a fact that contributes to the ambiguity rather than its resolution, since Empedocles and the Stoics both posit the four elements as the primary materials of the universe. Lucan too adopts the expression, at a point in the beginning of his poem that is densely packed with Ovidian allusion (1.98): temporis angusti mansit concordia discors. Given the conventional view that Lucan’s philosophical affiliations are primarily Stoic, one might be inclined to consider his use of the phrase as a reference to Stoic doctrine, but, once again, the complicated literary and philosophical genealogy of the term should give us pause.

One possible way of approaching the reception of Empedoclean ideas after Ovid is to say that certain of these ideas, such as the interaction of discordia and concordia and the four elements, more or less disappeared into the rapidly developing Stoic current represented by poets such as Manilius and Lucan. A slightly different but perhaps more interesting possibility is that the opportunity for finding similarity between Stoic orthodoxy and Empedoclean doctrine enabled Stoic poets to tendentiously recast certain “Empedoclean” aspects of the epic tradition as Stoic, a practice that might be seen as analogous to the Stoic principle of “accommodation” (συνοικείον) described by Peter Kingsley as “the principle deliberately used by Stoics to turn earlier writers into

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1030 Goold (1977) ad loc.
1031 To take just two examples, BC 1.67, fert animus = Met. 1.1, fert animus; BC 1.74, antiquum repetens iterum chaos ~ Met. 2.299, in chaos antiquum confundimur.
1032 For the idea that the phrase refers to Stoic doctrine, see Leigh (1997) 72, n. 69 with bibliography.
mouthpieces for their own ideas.” Of course, it is also within the realm of possibility that Empedoclean poetry and philosophy are in fact more important in Manilius, Lucan and other imperial poets than hitherto realized, a fact that could have escaped the notice of scholars either because Empedocles’ significance as a poet in the Greco-Roman literary tradition has only recently begun to be realized or because of other factors, such as the relative neglect of Manilius or over-confidence in the predominantly Stoic orientation of Lucan’s philosophy. I can offer no definitive answer here, however, and it remains for someone else to explore if or how poets after Ovid contribute to the “Empedoclean tradition” tradition in Latin poetry.

In this dissertation, however, I have demonstrated that Ovid, reacting both to the use of Empedocles by previous Latin poets such as Ennius, Lucretius and Vergil and, at the same time, innovatively forging connections between his own poetics and the philosophy of Empedocles, used the ideas and images of the Presocratic philosopher as an important part of the “universe” of his elegiac poetry, above all the Fasti. To recognize this is to see both the “portentous pre-Socratic” and the “playful poet of love” in a rather different light.

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APPENDIX A: Some Collocations of the Four Elements in Latin Prose

Collocations of the four primary terms:

1. Cic. Acad. 1.26

itaque aer (hoc quoque utimur iam pro Latino) et ignis et aqua et terra prima sunt.

2. Cic. Acad. 1.26

ergo illa initia et ut e Graeco vertam elementa dicuntur; e quibus aer et ignis movendi vim habent et efficiendi, reliquae partes accipiendi et quasi patiendi, aquam dico et terram.

3. Cic. Acad. 2.118

post eius auditor Anaximenes infinitum aera, sed ea quae ex eo orerentur definita; gigni autem terram, aquam, ignem, tum ex his omnia.

4. Cic. ND 1.19

quem ad modum autem oboedire et parere uoluntati architecti aer ignis aqua terra potuerunt?

5. Cic. ND 1.103

nam locus quidem iis etiam naturis quae sine animis sunt suus est cuique proprius, ut terra infimum teneat, hanc inundet aqua, superior aer, aetheris ignibus altissima ora reddatur.

6. Cic. ND 3.30-1

etenim omne corpus aut aqua aut aer aut ignis aut terra est, aut id quod est concretum ex his aut ex aliqua parte eorum...praetereaque omnia haec tum intereunt cum in naturam aliam convuertuntur, quod fit cum terra in aquam se vertit et cum aqua oritur aer, ex aere aether, cumque eadem vicissim retro commeant...

7. Serv. auct. Ecl. 6.31

de his itaque duobus principiis volunt quattuor ista procreari, ignem, aerem, aquam, terram...

8. Serv. auct. Aen. 3.359
Varro autem quattuor divinationum dicit: terram, aerem, aquam, ignem: geomantis, aeromantis, pyromantis, hydromantis. Vergilius tria genera complexus est: per lauros geomantis, per sidera pyromantis, per praepetes aeromantis.

9. Sen. dial. 4.19.1

cum elementa sint quattuor, ignis aquae aeris terrae, potestates pares his sunt, fervida frigida, arida atque umida.

10. Vitr. 2.2.1

Thales primum aquam putavit omnium rerum esse principium; Heraclitus Ephesi, qui propter obscuritatem scriptorum a Graecis scoteinos est appellatus, ignem; Democritus quique est cum securus Epicurus atomos, quas nostri insecabilia corpora, nonnulli individua vocitaverunt; Pythagoreorum vero disciplina adiecit ad aquam et ignem aera et terrenum.

11. Vitr. 8 praef. 1

Pythagoras vero, Empedocles, Epicharmus alisque physici et philosophi haec principia esse quattuor proposuerunt: aerem, ignem, terram, aquam.

12. Seneca, De ira 2.19.1

nam cum elementa sint quattuor, ignis aquae aeris terrae, potestates pares his sunt, fervida frigida arida atque umida…

13. Seneca Q.N. 3.10.1

adicias etiam licet quod fiunt omnia ex omnibus, ex aqua aer, ex aere aqua, ignis ex aer, ex igne aer: quare ergo non ex terra fiat aqua? quae si in alia mutabilis, est etiam in aquam, immo maxime in hanc: utraque enim cognata res est, utraque gravis, utraque densa, utraque in extremum mundi compulsa. ex aqua terra fit: cur non aqua fiat et terra?


Paulo repetamus hoc altius, si videtur, et scies te non habere quod quaeras, cum ad veram amnium originem accesseris. flumen nempe facit copia cursusque aquae perennis. ergo quaeas a me quomodo aqua fiat: interrogabo invicem quomodo aer fiat aut terra.

15. Seneca Q.N. 3.12.2-14.2 (This passage is especially interesting because it suggests that other common words for the elements are properly kinds or types of the basic


element, the words for which are almost always the “primary” terms; one exception is that S. uses umor for water several times)

[12,2] sed si in rerum natura elementa sunt quattuor, non potes interrogare unde aqua sit: quarta enim pars naturae est. quid ergo miraris, si rerum naturae tam magna portio potest aliquid ex se semper effundere? [12,3] quomodo aer, et ipse quarta pars mundi, ventos et auras movet, sic aqua rivos et flumina: si ventus est fluens aer, et flumen est fluens aqua. satis et mutum illi virium dedi, cum dixi: "elementum est": intellegis quod ab illo proficiscitur non posse deficere.

[13,1] adiciam, ut Thales ait, "valentissimum elementum est." hoc fuisse primum putat, ex hoc surrexisse omnia. Sed nos quoque in eadem sententia aut in vicinia eius sumus: dicimus enim ignem esse qui occupet mundum et in se cuncta convertat, hunc evanidum languentemque considere et nihil relinqui alid in rerum natura igne restincto quam umorem, in hoc futuri mundi spem latere: [13,2] ita ignis exitus mundi est, umor primordium. miraris ex hoc posse amnes semper exire, qui pro omnibus fuit et ex quo sunt omnia? hic umor in diductione rerum ad quartas redactus est, sic positus, ut sufficere fluminibus edendis, ut rivis, ut fontibus posset.

[14,1] quae sequitur Thaletis inepta sententia est. ait enim terrarum orbem aquam sustineri et vehi more navigii mobilitateque eius fluxuare tune, cum dicitur tremere: non est ergo mirum, si abundat umor ad flumina profundenda, cum mundus in umore sit totus. [14,2] hanc veterem et rudem sententiam explode: nec est quod credas in hunc orbem aquam subire per rimas et facere sentinam. Aegyptii quattuor elementa fecerunt, deinde ex singulis bina paria: aera marem iudicant qua ventus est, feminam qua nebulosus et iners; aquam virilem vocant mare, muliebrem omnem aliam; ignem uocant masculum, qua ardet flamma, et feminam, qua lucet innoxius tactu; terram fortiorum marem vocant, saxa cautesque, feminae nomen assignant huic tractabili et cultae.

16. Paul. Fest. s.v. geniales
deos dixerunt aquam, terram, ignem, aerem: ea enim sunt semina rerum.

17. Apuleius De Plat. 1.7 (Apuleius continues to use these terms exclusively for the four elements in this section)
hinc prima elementa esse progenita, ignem et aquam et terram et aera.

18. Apuleius De Plat. 1.8

sed de primis elementis, igni et aqua ceterisque, et illa constare particularitam animalium et inanimantium corpora; mundumque omnem ex omni aqua totoque igni et aeris universitate cunctaque terra esse factum, et non solum nullam horum partem extra orbem relinqui, sed <ne> uim quidem eius [et] extrinsecus inueniri. haec autem invicem ex se intra se apta et conex esse; idcircoque in igne atque terra aquae et aeri est situs, et, sicut ignis aeri cognitione coniungitur, ita humor addinitati terrenae iugatur.
19. Apuleius De Mundo 5

elementorum inter se mutui nexus artis adfinitatibus implicatur, et quinque coniuges copulae his ordinatae vicibus adtinentur, ut adhaereant et gravioribus leviora: **aquam** in habet **tellus** aut **aqua**, ut ali i putant, vehit **terram**; **aer** ex **aqua** gignitur, **ignis aeria** densitate conflatur; **aether** vicissim **ignes**que illi inmortales dei vivacitate flammantur.

20. Macrobius Comm. 1.6.26ff.

terra est sicca et frigida, **aqua** uero frigida et umecta est. haec duo elementa, licet sibi per siccum umectumque contraria sint, per frigidum tamen commune iunguntur. **aer** umectus et calidus est, et cum aquae frigidae contrarius sit calore, conciliatone tamen socii copulatur umoris. super hunc **ignis** cum sit calidus et siccus, umorem quidem aeris respuit siccitate, sed conectitutur per sociatem caloris... (M. continues to use these terms exclusively for the four elements)


nam quantum interest inter **aquam** et **aerem** causa densitatis et ponderis, tantundem inter **aerem** et **ignem** est; et rursus quod interest inter **aerem** et **aquam** causa levitatis et raritatis, hoc interest inter **aquam** et **terram**; item quod interest inter **terram** et **aquam** causa densitatis et ponderis, hoc interest inter **aquam** et **aerem**; et quod inter **aquam** et **aerem**, hoc inter **aerem** et **ignem**; et contra quod interest inter **ignem** et **aerem** tenuitatis et levitatis cause, hoc inter **aerem** et **aquam** est...(again Macrobius continues to use these terms exclusively)

23. Macr. Comm. 1.6.36

item cum **quattuor sint elementa ex quibus constant corpora**: **terra** **aqua** **aer** et **ignis**...(again Macrobius continues to use these terms exclusively)

24. Macr. Comm. 1.11.8

maluerunt enim mundum alii in elementa ter quaterna dividere, ut in primo numerentur ordine **terra**, **aqua**, **aer**, **ignis**. qui est pars liquidior aeris vicina lunae: supræ haec rursum totidem numero, sed naturae purioris elementa, ut sit luna pro **terra**, quam aetheriam terram a physicis diximus nominatam, **aqua** sit sphaera Mercurii, **aer** Veneris, **ignis** in sole, tertius uero elementorum ordo ita ad nos conversus habeatut ur terram ultimam faciat, et ceteris in medium redactis in terras desinat tam ima quam summa postremitas: igitur sphaera Martia **ignis** habeatut, **aer** Iovis, Saturni **aqua**, **terra** uero ἀπλανής, in qua Elysios esse campos puris animis deputatos antiquitas nobis intellegendum reliquit.
Collocations with at least one secondary term:


eam porro naturam esse quattuor omnia gignentium corporum, ut, quasi partita habeant
inter se ae divisa momenta, *terrena et umida* suopte nutu et suo pondere ad paris angulos
in *terram et in mare* ferantur, reliquae duae partes, una *ignea* altera *animalis*…

2. Cic. *DND* 2.84

et cum quattuor genera sint corporum, vicissitudine eorum mundi continuata natura est.
nam ex *terra aquae* ex *aqua* oritur *aer* ex *aere aether*, deinde retrorsum vicissim ex
*aethere aer* inde *aqua* ex *aqua terra* infima.

3. Serv. auct. *Ecl.* 6.31

ergo ‘uti magnum per inane coacta semina’ canebat, inquit, mundi principium, id est
quemadmodum coactae et collectae atomi per magnum inane fuissent origo *ignis, aeris*,
terrarum et maris.

4. Vitr. 1.4.5

namque e principis quae Graeci *stoicheia* appellant, ut omnia corpora sunt conposita, id
est e *calore et umore, terreno et aere*, et ita mixtionibus naturali temperatura figurantur
omnia animalium in mundo generatim qualitates.

5. Sen. dial. 7.27.4 (S. refer to the four elements by their qualities)

contraria inter se elementa…grauia et leuia, frigida et calida, umida et sicca.

6. Plin. *Nat.* 2.10

nec de elementis video dubitari quattuor esse ea: *ignium* summum, unde tot *stellarum*
oculos, proxumum *spiritus*, quem Graeci…*aera* appellant…, cum quarto *aquarum*
elemento...*tellurem*.

7. Arnob. nat. 1.53 p. 36, 24

universa mundi…elementa…, *tellus…mare…aer…igneus orbis solis*.

8. Lact. inst. 2.13.12

adorimant elementa mundi, *caelum, solem, terram, mare* (ira, 2.4)

quattuor...elementa adseruntur, **caeli terrae maris** et **inferorum**.

*ibid.*

addidit *Vergilius* duo, quae in parte sunt caeli, solem et lunam.
APPENDIX B: Norden, Discordia and the Paluda Virago

Eduard Norden first combined Ennius 220-5 Sk. in sequence and first connected Discordia to the *paluda virago*. These fragments refer to the opening of the Gates of War by a Fury and then her return to the Underworld from whence she came. As will become clear, I find Norden’s argument persuasive, even though it requires assuming that events in Vergil’s *Aeneid* 7 are based closely, although also with considerable allusive *variatio*, on Ennius’ *Annales* 7. It is beyond dispute that Juno’s opening of the Gates of War in *Aen.* 7 is based on the opening of the same Gates by Discordia in the *Annales*. The other fragments in this sequence appear to describe an Underworld figure, the *paluda virago* (who has a Tartarean body), and geography related to the entrance to the Underworld. Norden connects these to the Discordia fragment based on the presence of Juno’s summoning of Allecto from the Underworld (and her return) in *Aeneid* 7, which is closely connected to the start of the war in Latium — Allecto is Juno’s main agent in fomenting the war, even though Juno herself opens the Gates. It is also clear from internal evidence that Allecto is a version of Discordia; and Discordia elsewhere in the *Aeneid* is linked closely to Furies such as Allecto. Therefore, Norden argues that, since a Fury is summoned from the Underworld to start the war in Latium in *Aeneid* 7, actions which are closely tied to the breaking open of the Gates of War by Juno, this is likely to be modeled on similar events in *Annales* 7. Therefore not only the opening of the Gates by Discordia, but also the description of an underworld female deity and the entrance to the Underworld, should be placed in book 7 of the *Annales*. This is relatively uncontroversial

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1034 Norden (1915) 10-40.
and seems likely to be right. Norden, however, also identifies the Ennian Discordia and the *paluda virago* and argues that these are a personification of Empedoclean Neikos. This has been widely accepted and is now more or less taken for granted, in spite of its speculative nature. Ennius’ description of the *paluda virago* is undoubtedly modeled on a fragment of Empedocles describing Neikos. Norden is therefore on solid ground in identifying the *paluda virago* as a version of Empedoclean Neikos. She is an Empedoclean deity equal in some way to the four elements and is associated with the Underworld. But why connect her to Discordia in fr. 225 Sk.? In the list of the four elements, opposites are paired, fire and water, air and earth. Norden compares this to descriptions in subsequent Latin poetry of opposite pairs of elements or qualities at war with one another, in which either *discordia* or the adjective *discors* is used to describe them. He uses this as evidence that Discordia from fr. 225 should be connected to the *paluda virago*. This, however, seems based on a misunderstanding of the Ennian line comparing the *virago* to the four elements.¹⁰³⁶ Norden also argues based on testimony from Varro (*LL* 7.37) that *paluda* is a version of *paludata* and therefore a descriptor rather than a proper name, *paludata* being from *paludamentum*, “military cloak.” This dress links the *virago* to war — Discordia is of course also closely associated with war. If *paluda* is a descriptor one would like this *virago* to have a name, and Norden sees Discordia as a good candidate among the extant fragments. These arguments, on the whole, are not especially compelling. The most forceful aspects of Norden’s argument come from his reconstruction of *Annales 7* from the events in *Aeneid 7*, which I outlined above. In his argument, the Underworld Fury Allecto is analogous to the Tartarean...

This argument is strengthened by Hardie’s observation that the description of Allecto at Aen. 7.325-6 appears to allude to Ennius’ description of the paluda virago at Annales 221 Sk.\(^{1037}\) It is even more clear that Allecto is also a version of Ennian Discordia.\(^{1038}\) Therefore, one reasonable conclusion is that Allecto combines qualities of both Ennian Discordia and the paluda virago because the two were one and the same being in Ennius’ Annales. Various arguments have been offered as to why Allecto does not open the Gates of War in the Aeneid, while the fury Discordia does in the Annales, some more convincing than others,\(^{1039}\) but it would be entirely in keeping with Vergil’s practice of allusive variatio for Allecto to embody Ennian Discordia/paluda virago, but not open the Gates. It is also the case that Vergil consistently associates personifications of Discordia with Furies (like Allecto) in the Aeneid. At Aen. 6.279-81, Discordia is part of a description of Underworld (!) deities including the Furies. Then, in the ecphrasis of the Shield of Aeneas, Discordia again appears alongside Furies (8.700-703). And once again the Underworld Fury Allecto essentially identifies herself as discordia incarnate at Aeneid 7.545. In light of this close association between Discordia and Underworld Furies in the Aeneid, Norden’s conclusion that Ennian Discordia is an Underworld Fury to be identified with the Tartarean paluda virago (= Empedoclean Neikos) seems quite plausible. The appearance of Discordia in the middle of the Shield of Aeneas may help here too. As Hardie has demonstrated, Vergil exploits the interpretation of the Shield of Achilles, the model for the Shield of Aeneas, as an Empedoclean allegory in his ecphrasis. Discordia might therefore be said to be a version of Empedoclean Neikos.

\(^{1037}\) Hardie (2009) 100.
\(^{1039}\) See Skutsch (1985) 393 with bibliography.
Once again, it is quite possible that a precedent for the Empedoclean associations of Discordia occurred in the *Annales*. At the very least we can confidently assert that the *paluda virago* is a personification of Empedoclean Neikos. Norden’s subsequent argument that Discordia and the *paluda virago* are the same being is less certain, but, as I have tried to demonstrate, there are in fact a number of good reasons to believe it is right.


