

Laura J. Baldwin
M.A. Paper
6/9/95

AMORES 2.6: OVID'S PARROT *QUA* POET

Amores 2.6, a poem reflecting upon the life, death and burial of Corinna's pet parrot, has sparked much debate among scholars,¹ has several ascribed literary precursors,² and has developed an active *Nachleben*.³ A desire to "fit" it into the framework of the *Amores*,⁴ to dismiss it, or to read it in relation to only one of its literary forebears are all evidenced in the recent scholarship. In the works of Ovid, however, as in the works of all true artists, there is no one dimension, no one interpretation, no singular model and no rigid intent to which the author limits his work. *Amores* 2.6 is no exception to this truism. This poem, rather, positions itself in a net of communication between other existing literary texts.⁵ In this literary network, Ovid identifies areas between texts which can be called *liminal*. In these places he heralds a connection which becomes a communication between diverse stories, where one text can lose itself, so to speak, in another.⁶ At least three such identifiable points of contact exist in *Amores* 2.6, and these connections will be explored in depth later in this paper.

A productive tension is created between the poem at hand, its models, and its metalinguistic counterparts. Thus, the poem allows for a connotative as well as a denotative semiotic. Ovid, coming as he does after a long and self-conscious elegiac

¹ Most recently, B.W. Boyd (1987); L. Cahoon, (1984); K.S. Myers (1990); and E. Thomas (1965).

² Notable precursors include Alexandrian and Neoteric models found in the *Greek Anthology*, Callimachus, and the love poetry of Catullus. Each will be discussed in turn. For the proposed origins of love elegy itself from these sources see A. Day (1938). Even though we may speak of an individual poet imitating a given model it is important to keep in mind that elegy, as a broad genre, imitates these precursors though its own unique voice, too.

³ Two striking examples are: Statius *Silv.* 2.4, Mart. 1.7

⁴ In particular, scholars have attempted to read 2.6 mostly in its connection to 3.9, a poem on the death of the poet Tibullus and have tried to determine how 2.6 & 3.9 should be read based solely on their relationship to each other.

⁵ An alternative analogy is that each poem is a faceted adamantine gem reflecting many points of light in several directions at once. The reader serves as a sort of single-source spectral light and his/her views refract like light from the facets according to the orientation of the reader him/herself.

⁶ This is derived from the theory of A. Barchiesi, who calls the way Ovid involves/implicates his models "a poetics of retelling." For a fuller description see, A. Barchiesi (1986) 77-108.

tradition, is not only able to, but is fully expected to, employ literary links between his new texts and those of the tradition.⁷

As Conte⁸ stresses, any writer is first a reader. Readers are able to appreciate new works by placing them within a personal literary taxonomic structure created through--and only through--a wide and expansive reading of other texts. Conte defines the art of poetic composition as both a process of creating⁹ and of referencing one's own work within the established tradition. Texts are, therefore, understood only in their relation to other texts.¹⁰ In this way, the foregoing literary tradition both conditions new compositions and, indeed, makes them possible in the first place.¹¹ Much of the difficulty in literary interpretation stems from an imperfect understanding of which elements are, in a given work, individual "choices" (i.e., innovation), and which are codifications stipulated by the larger institution. An examination of a text's historical precedents and the "poetic memory"¹² of the author is essential to the understanding of any given work.

It is the goal of this paper to read *Amores* 2.6 as it exists in its literary web of communication. The poem's relationship to its literary models and to Ovid's corpus will be examined. Later works which connect themselves to *Amores* 2.6 and extend the boundaries of that web will also be addressed. Insights into the funerary epitaph from Classical times on, the ancient view of birds, the connections of birds with death and poetry, and the notion of pets for the ancients must inform our reading of this poem. By tracing literary 'tags', or points of contact between 2.6 and the existing literary corpus, the

⁷C. Segal in his foreword to G.B. Conte (1986) 11, and in reference to M. Fried (1984), maintains that "poetic 'memory'--the recall of past forms, styles, mood, and atmosphere as well as of specific phrases or images--is not a casual but a ubiquitous and a necessary feature of the arts."

⁸G.B. Conte (1986) 30.

⁹*ibid.* Conte stresses that relationship between one text and another is one of transformation.

¹⁰G.B. Conte (1986) 29, "It is therefore not difficult today to accept the idea that a text can be read only in connection with, and in opposition to, other texts. These texts form a grid through which the text is perceived according to the expectations of a reader capable of organizing its sense."

¹¹*ibid.* p. 30, Tradition is defined as "the simultaneous projection of literary models and codifications, a single organic body of once individual but now institutionalized choices, a system of rules and prescriptions."

¹²*ibid.*

reader is better able to understand the innovations Ovid has made, the limits of the tradition at the point of composition, and the literary trajectory set for later authors.

I. ESTABLISHING THE LITERARY CONTEXT

Not only is *Amores* 2.6 made possible by the preceding tradition, not only is it shaped by the previous tradition, but the poem is required, by its reading public, to respond unequivocally to this tradition. Romans look back ultimately to the Hellenistic period--and to Alexandrian poetry in particular--as the inspiration for their genre. Since Callimachus is generally acknowledged as the prime innovator within the Alexandrian tradition, his case must be addressed first in this inquiry. Ovid, reflecting this tradition, makes overt allusions to Callimachus in many of his works. The *Amores* is no exception, and Sara Myers¹³ reads 2.6 in this way:

"The programmatic aspect of the poem is there to be enjoyed by those who cared to look for such things. Indeed, once one looks at the poem in this light, the programmatic language is almost humorously blatant. Calling *Amores* 2.6 a 'parody' of the genre Hellenistic pet epigram or of programmatic poetry would be mistaken, but it is not wrong, I think, to understand that Ovid is having fun with his own literariness, his *tecta ars*. Ovid aligns himself with the Alexandrian tradition of learned poetry, but defines his own humorous reworking of that tradition in the *Amores*."

The association between 2.6 and Callimachus is so strong that Myers can argue for a *purely* "programmatic" reading of this poem. In this way, she differs from Boyd who offers a literary reading but not a programmatic one. Boyd describes the relationship between the parrot and the poet as "linguistic emulation"¹⁴. This paper will argue that beyond the programmatic statement inherent in Myers' reading and beyond the emulation Boyd describes that Ovid actually hints in the poem that the parrot is a literary fiction and a symbol for Ovid himself. Myers adduces, among other things, several humorous references to Callimachus "through the conceit of this avian imagery".

¹³ K.S.Myers (1990) 368.

¹⁴B.W. Boyd (1987) 200.

Alexandrian poetry supplies the later Roman elegists with metaphors to help delineate their particular kind of poetry. Callimachus and his contemporaries form an important link not only to understanding the language employed in 2.6, but also in providing the topic of the poem. Ovid's parrot, itself, becomes a physical manifestation of Callimachean ideals, with a humorous twist. It will be argued that Ovid is using the image of the parrot in 2.6 to signify his own poetry. The use of a singing pet as a metaphor for poetic craft can be traced back to the singing cicada of Callimachus and to the cicada/locust epigrams of the *Greek Anthology*.

Parrots and cicadas are both small creatures. Callimachus provides images in his celebrated programmatic poem, the prologue to the *Aetia*, employing descriptions of physical size as useful metaphors for poetic styles. Thinness, lightness, narrowness, and "less" illustrate the Callimachean ideal of poetic *leptos*. Metaphors of weight and size continue to flourish in the programmatic language of the Roman elegists.¹⁵ Elegiac meter is commonly described as *light* in contrast with *heavy* epic meter.¹⁶ Tibullus asks in his opening poem to be satisfied with his small share (*iam mihi, iam possim contentus vivere parvo* 1.1.725). In his dedication, Catullus calls his work a *libellum* or 'little book'. And, in his introductory epigram to the *Amores*, Ovid claims to have improved his five *little* books (*quinque libelli*) by making them *lesser* (*fueraimus quinque libelli, tres sumus*) with the result that the readers' pains are made *lighter* (*levior*). Ovid does not discuss the exact modification of the original contents, but the simple math of 5-2=3 in itself seems to demonstrate an improvement, in a literary circle preoccupied with 'spare' proportions. Since 2.6 is a highly programmatic poem, such as those mentioned above, the many

¹⁵Martial, in a poem parodying Catullus 1.3, humorously emphasizes the difference in size between the two birds in question.. "*Stellae delictum mei columba, verona licet audiente dicam vicit, Maxime, passerem Catulli. tanto Stella meus tuo Catullo quanto passere maior est columba.*" (1.7)

¹⁶Ovid 1.1 provides a good example of this contrast.

*Arma gravi numero violentaque bella parabam
edere, materia conveniente modis.* (1-2)

...
nec mihi materia est numeris levioribus apta (19)

metaphors used to stress the size of the parrot and elements associated with the parrot can also be read as indicative of the same kind of Callimachean literary program.

The metaphors of thinness and narrowness are also applied to body shape in the *Aetia*: Callimachus advises to feed the victim as fat as possible, but to keep the Muse thin (*Aet.* 1.23). Other physical objects become subjected to the slimming effects of this metaphor. For example, it is advised to drive one's chariot on the *narrower* unworn paths (*Aet.* 1.28). In this way, physical objects in poetry are made suitable not only to the role they play as visual imagery but also to the role they play as metaphor for poetic ideals. Donald Lateiner has called this the "double frame of reference" and argued that it can be found throughout Ovid's elegy.¹⁷ The physical appearance of a parrot in 2.6 functions well in both of these capacities.

Ovid's small parrot has a meager diet and drinks a kind of "distilled" water appropriate for his attenuated kind of inspiration (*plenus eras minimo, nec...in multos poterant ora vacare cibos... pellebatque sitim simplicis umor aquae.* 29-32). In the choice of bird image, Ovid has established the connections with Callimachus that were *de rigueur* in his circle of readers: his parrot is small, eats the right kind of food (of which he can't even eat much, due to his love of speaking), drinks *aqua simplex*, and receives a little tomb marked with an equally small tombstone.

As we will see later on, size is not the only factor influencing Ovid's choice of the parrot, but it is the strongest thematic link to Callimachus. In the *Aetia* (1.32-36), Callimachus metamorphoses into the thin, delicate cicada who sings as sweetly as the lyre and is nourished by dew. He will, in this incarnation, be able to shed old age that burdens him like a three-cornered island on top of Enceladus. Three important *topoi* are brought to light in this particular passage: death and immortality; the slender art of poetry; and the sweetly-singing animal. It will be shown later that *Amores* 2.6 re-employs exactly these

¹⁷D. Lateiner (1978) 188.

Callimachean themes, but allows a completely new subtext to emerge. Thus, Ovid is able to revisit the existing tradition and simultaneously, as required, to innovate upon it.

The singing cicada appears not only in this well-known passage of Callimachus, but also in the shorter, occasional poetry of the Greek Anthology.¹⁸ The thematic ties between 2.6 and all the funerary poems for dead pets found in book seven of the *Greek Anthology* are striking,¹⁹ and an understanding of epigrammatic style and origin is necessary to appreciate the import of this association. Although these ties may seem merely topical at first, a closer look at the original context of the pet epigram, and that of the literary epitaph, will illuminate some of the conceits, limitations and stylistic norms of this tradition.

Lida Taràn asserts that epigram was an art form noted for the explicit acknowledgment of its models. The extremely rigid constraints of this genre challenged Hellenistic poets to credit original sources through learned allusions, innovate stock themes, and convey the information of an 'epitaph' in a very few number of lines.²⁰ She maintains,

"This constant search for variety is, in fact, at the core of the Hellenistic mind: not only were the ancient masters admired and imitated, but every poet was well acquainted with the work of his immediate predecessors and of his contemporaries--whether literary friends or enemies--and varied what they had done. In no other genre, however, was this so apparent as it was in the epigram, and the clue to the very essence of many compositions lies often in recognizing the poem or poems which inspired them."²¹

¹⁸The twelve poems are 7.189, 7.190, 7.192-201.

¹⁹*AP* 7.189-194, 197-216.

²⁰Walsh (1991) 88 says that epitaphs normally convey at least three items about the deceased. "In order of importance, these are: name, father's name, and homeland." Additional items that may be included are: "who set up the monument or performed the funeral rites; how death occurred; the dead person's age at death; and how survivors felt about losing him or her."

²¹*ibid.* p. 2. L. Taràn (1979) intro., also rightly points out the fact that the later arrangement of epigrams into collections like the *Garland of Meleager* and our *Greek Anthology* were ordered in such a way as to invite comparison between models and variations.

It is precisely this literary connection that brings the programmatic language of Callimachus to bear upon the epitaphs under examination. The impetus for the self-conscious modeling present in literary epigram was transferred directly to later Roman elegy.

Epigram, during the Hellenistic period, was in the process of being freed from the constraints of the physical object upon which it had been traditionally inscribed, and it would eventually evolve into a strictly literary form. The two most common, and most traditional, uses of inscribed epigram--the funerary epitaph and dedicatory inscription--were incorporated into the derivative literary works of the Alexandrians (and, later, of the Romans) as programmatic *topoi*. This origin explains the large number of "mock" epitaphs witnessed in the *Greek Anthology*, for example.

Real-life epitaphs for pets were not completely unheard of in the ancient world, and, surprisingly enough, we actually have the epitaph for a pet parrot recorded in our sources.²² Literary epitaphs, however, unlike inscriptions used on actual grave markers, were metaphorical in nature and expressed poetic and literary ideals. The physical attributes of animals provided fertile ground for poets innovating with this sort of metaphoric language. Thus the "pet epitaph" emerged as a playful and creative way to express poetic affiliations. It will be argued later--but it is worth mentioning at this point--that the dedicatory function of epigram is also incorporated into the later works of the Romans. In fact, it will be shown that the Roman elegists mix *both* funerary and dedicatory themes in a single poem, thereby creating programmatic poems of a dedicatory nature.

George Walsh, in a recent article,²³ has outlined the transformation of funerary epigram from its utilitarian roots in Classical times to the flourishing Hellenistic literary genre mentioned above. He suggests that the consciousness of the written form in epitaph (one might say the *necessity* of the written form) lends itself to learned Alexandrian tastes,

²²CIG III p. 1076.

²³G. Walsh (1991) 77-105.

and that the rhetoric used in the composition of epitaph exerts an influence 'beyond the graveyard', especially on later erotic poetry.²⁴ In this way, the issue of epigram provides not only the unique subject matter for 2.6, but it also provides a backdrop for the whole of Latin elegy.²⁵ It is generally acknowledged that the constraints of 'epitaph rhetoric' affect the poetic composition of elegy *qua* adherent and beneficiary of Hellenistic epitaph. However, the original, more rigid rules of the *epitaph* actually exert a greater force upon the structure of *specific* poems linked closely in theme, such as *Am.* 2.6 and its avowed model, *Cat.* 3. This influence will be illustrated further in the close reading of 2.6 below.

One of the most striking similarities among the existing epigrams (in bk. 7 of the *Greek Anthology*) for dead animals is that, for the most part, the animals have unique vocal qualities which constitute their central description. The absence of vocal quality and ultimate silence upon death are typically stressed. It appears that the pets immortalized in the *Greek Anthology* (aside from the partridge whose head is bitten off by a cat *AP* VII.204 & 205) were valued almost exclusively for their song. This fixation on vocal ability has a long history in metaphors that describe poets. It is also a quality likely to be attractive to a poet, especially a self-conscious *doctus poeta*. By treating the death of a singing pet, the poet is able to describe his art in a way that he can discuss programmatics and poetic craft metaphorically while also presenting the generic *topoi* anticipated by the readers. In creating a literary epitaph for such a 'pet' the poet can both hail the origins of his learned style of poetry and create a metaphor for the poetic craft itself.

In addition to the poet/cicada in the *Aetia* of Callimachus, there are singing cicadas and locusts in the *Greek Anthology* (*AP* 7.195 & 7.196) and they have an added similarity

²⁴He cites *Call. Ep.* 15 (on Timonoe) as a "crucial link" between death and erotic poetry, aligning himself with the recent views of A. Carson (1986). He says, "Callimachus (in *Ep.* 15) borrows this rhetoric of epitaph for his erotic poems because, for him, erotic situations entail a problematic of knowledge."

²⁵This connection between experiment with epigram, in its consciously 'written' format, and the emergence of the Hellenistic *doctus poeta* is also discussed by P. Bing (1988). See also A. Day (1938). On the etymological derivation of elegy from the Greek *e-e legein* and the connection with the Latin *elogium* (epitaph) see *Et. Mag.* 326.48ff. and Varro *De poematis* (*GRF* fr. 303). For a discussion of the ancient etymology of *eleg(e)ia* and modern interpretations see S. Hinds (1987) 103-4, A. M. Keith (1992) 142 n.16.

to the parrot in the fact that they have died. Although these are very different creatures, physically, the valued attributes of cicada and the parrot are strikingly similar.

The Cicada is called a muse (195.2) and the Locust is an αὐτοφυῆς μίμημα λύρας (3) a natural mimic. Ovid's *psittacus*²⁶ is a known mimic (*imitatrix*), but his innate ability is also stressed, *vox mutandis ingeniosa sonis* (18). The parrot is *loquax* (37) and the Locust λάλους (3).²⁷ The Locust is described in poetic detail. He is a ἀπάτημα πόθων, deceiver of loves, Μοῦσα λιγύπτεργε, a shrill-winged muse, μίμημα λύρας, a mimic lyre. He is asked to κρέκε τι ποθεινόν to play (often of this verb, the lyre) something longed for (a love poem?). He is described as μιτωσαμένη φθόγγον ἐρωτοπλάνον, weaving a voice (as a poet). Finally, as a reward for playing the requested music, the Locust will receive δροσεράς στόματι σχιζομένης ψακάδας, drops of dew sprayed from his owner's mouth. Dew drops are a fitting reward for a Callimachean poet and, as it turns out, a parrot drinking *simplex aqua* (2.6. 29-32). Both the Locust in 195 and the Cicada in 196 (δροσεραῖς σταγόνεσσι μεθυσθεῖς) consume dewdrops. Callimachus uses the metaphor of the locust to describe the good poet, probably due to its minute size and light weight coupled with its ability to produce song.²⁸ Once he is able to become a cicada, Callimachus asks to subsist on a diet of dew (29-36).

ΤΕΤΤΙΓΩ]Ν ἐνὶ τοῖς γὰρ ἀείδομεν οἱ λιγὺν ἦχον
 θ]όρυβον δ' οὐκ ἐφίλησαν ὄνων 30
 θηρὶ μὲν οὐατόεντι πανεῖκελον ὀγκήσαιτο
 ἄλλος, ἐγὼ δ' εἶην οὐλαχύς, ὁ πτεροῖς,
 ἃ πάντως, ἵνα γῆρας ἵνα δρόσον ἦν μὲν ἀείδω
 προίκιο]ν ἐκ δίης ἡέρος εἶδαρ ἔδων.

²⁶I will refer to the particular image of the parrot used within the context of Ovid's poem as "Psittacus" as a short-hand for this specific character.

²⁷A fragment of Callimachus describes how, in the beginning of the world, animals had voices but only a few of them were allowed to keep them. Pfeiffer (on Callimachus) says, "*quasi non nobis ipsis vim habentibus etiam ceteris partem dedicandi i n parenthesi; inde verisimile est C. dixisse 'Juppiter animalium quidem adem it vocem transtulit autem in hominum genus iam per se loquacissimum.'*"

²⁸There seems to be a strong literary tie to Callimachus and his system of programmatic (or Callimachus to the epigram) based on the sheer number of singing cicada/locust (often dew-eating or lyre imitating) epitaphs one finds (VII. 189,190, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 200, 201, 213).

It is evident that the constraints of traditional epigram (composed for inscription upon physical objects) affect the style of literary epigram. Callimachus, with his ideals of brevity and conciseness of expression, fits into this tradition and provides the Roman authors with a vocabulary for discussing their particular style of composition. The utilitarian functions of traditional epigram as funerary epitaph and dedicatory inscription remain themes in the new literary-style of epigram. The parrot of 2.6, too, fits into this tradition and can be understood in relation to the models discussed above. The particulars of this relationship will be enumerated in section III.

Although it seems probable that a great deal of Roman elegy finds an original model in epigram, there is a unique and exclusive relationship which exists between the works of Roman authors themselves. These works share the force of generic evolution strengthened by language and a common literary context. For this reason, scholars have turned most readily to the model 2.6 finds in Catullus' *passer* poem (3). Ovid self-consciously invites this comparison, as Stephen Hinds²⁹ has recently shown, in his very choice of the bird and particularly a 'parrot' as mouthpiece. Hinds argues that although the role of a parrot in nature is to mimic, Ovid's parrot is also aptly termed an *imitatrix ales*, "because its role in the Latin erotic tradition is to 'imitate' that particular bird celebrated by Catullus." In this way, Ovid's allusion calls attention to the fact that it is alluding. Myers³⁰ adds that, "Once we see that he is using the parrot as an *imago*³¹ of his elegiac poetry, the poem can be read as Ovid's acknowledgment of Catullus' influence on the *Amores* as a whole."

In this particular context, it is interesting to note that *imago* (used to describe the parrot in line 37) means more than a static "image" be it either a mental or physical

²⁹S. Hinds (1988) 7.

³⁰K.S. Myers (1990) 368.

³¹ 2.6.37

representation; There exists an ancient etymological connection between the *imago*,³² and the active process of imitating. This point strengthens further the connection Myers makes above and presents the 'imitating' of the parrot in a more humorously active role. Paulus Dioconus records, *imago ab imitatione dicta* (*Fest.* 112). As a literary imitation, the *imago* must consist of verbal echo, and Porphyry (on Horace *Carm.* 1.12.3 ...*Cuius recinet iocosa nomen imago*) explains that *imago* in fact can also mean a verbal echo, he says, "*imago...dicitur Echo, quasi imitago* " (*ad. loc.*).

Catullus opens his poem with an imperative, *lugete*. The circle of mourners is defined, *Veneres Cupidinesque, et quantum est hominum venustiorum*. In Catullus the bird and its death are defined entirely by the effect they have on humans (*deliciae meae puellae*--favorite of my mistress; *quem illa amabat*--whom she loved; *mellitus erat suamque norat*--he was her little honey and knew his mistress; *nec sese a gremio illius movebat*--he wouldn't move from her lap). The final two lines are the extreme example of this anthropocentric focus (*tua nunc opera meae puellae flendo turgiduli rubent ocelli*): the worst effect of the bird's death mentioned is that Lesbia's eyes become puffy from crying.

Through these descriptions, the bird is defined solely by its relationship to the human mistress. The bird finds a place in Catullus' book because it has an effect on the mistress who, in turn, has an effect on the poet. The mourners called, presumably the people affected most by this event, are the stock characters of love elegy itself,³³ Venuses and Cupids and lovers. The context then is one of *urbanitas*³⁴ and invites interpretation as

³²The adjective *loquax* (which has caused some scholars consternation in its apparent anti-Callimachean dimension) is merely the adjectival suffix *-ax* formed directly from verbal bases, usually implying wont or ability e.g. *capax*, *dicax*, *pertinax* (OLD *ad loc.*). So, the word is [*loquor* + *-ax*] "having the desire or ability to speak, "*loquor* ". This word is often used to describe the sounds animals make, especially birds (Verg. G. 3.431, Ov. Tr. 3.12.8, Plin. Nat. 11.268, Verg. a. 11.458). But if one examines the ancient etymology for *loquor*, an interesting possibility for further interpretation emerges. Varro states that, *loqui ab loco dictum...; is loquitur, qui suo loco quodque verbum sciens ponit*. Perhaps Ovid's parrot, the *loquax imago*, is not only able to "imitate" but also able to (*-ax*) pinpoint that which he imitates (*ab loco*).

³³Although Catullus is not writing in the later defined generic category of love-elegy, his fundamental contribution as a model to these later elegists, and as a founder of *topoi*, cannot be denied, as Ovid himself alludes to in the poem under consideration.

³⁴K. Quinn (1973) *ad loc* "In Catullus *venustus* becomes one of the key-words associated with the ideal of *urbanitas*; in 4 of the 6 contexts in which the word occurs it is used of men."

a poem well crafted and appropriate to the love affair between Catullus and his mistress. The death of the sparrow affects the mistress adversely which affects the lover and his amatory aims adversely and therefore should be a concern to Cupids, Venuses and lovers. The entire incident is clearly seen from the poet's viewpoint and his focus does not stray from his primary object of interest, his mistress.³⁵

The context of Ovid's poem, as Boyd puts it, is strictly avian.³⁶ Like Catullus, Ovid begins his poem with a call to mourners but they are not Cupids and Loves but *aves*. Instructions for mourning are given suitable to a bird's anatomy (*plangite pectora pinnis et rigido teneras ungue notate genas, horrida lanietur pluma, resonent carmina*) although the consciousness of "substitution" of more typical objects is spelled out (*pro maestis capillis...pro longa tuba*, 5-6). It is not made explicitly clear through whose voice the opening lines are to be heard. As a reader of a collection of poems such as the *Amores* given the personal nature of its subject matter, one would assume the poet himself is narrating, but not until line 19 does the first person *nostrae* provide a quick glance to something outside this bizarre funeral. This use of the first person briefly personalizes the narrator's voice but it is dropped as quickly as it was added, and the avian focus is resumed with a vivid description of the parrot.

Ironically, the *nostrae* may be plural because the *puella* belongs not *only* to the poet but also to the parrot. Indeed 2.6 seems oddly de-personalized for its inclusion in a book of personal love poems. It does not contain a single first person verb, except for *colligor* in line 62 which is itself in the voice of the parrot via his epitaph. So, aside from a single *noster*, which must be shared with the parrot, our poet makes no reference to himself; He does not even hint at a personal involvement in the events described in this poem.³⁷

³⁵*meae puellae* concludes three different lines in the poem (3,4,17)

³⁶B. W. Boyd (1987) 204.

³⁷Every other poem in the *Amores* offers a first person point of view (roughly 65% of them within the first two couplets). Even in book three where there is a greater number of instances of "depersonalized" openings in the form of lengthy descriptions, the result is always, in the end, turned to the first person Ego. 3.10 is a good example of this phenomenon: The poet enumerates the rituals and mythology

Given this unique character, the question of how 2.6 lends itself to the unity of the *Amores* (a book entirely devoted to the first person Ego and his escapades) becomes important to a full understanding of this poem. Why does Ovid devote 62 lines to the death of a bird when 19 lines were sufficient for Catullus? Catullus' *passer* clearly fits into the erotic context of a poet and his mistress, how can Ovid's *psittacus* then imitate Catullus' *passer* and miss the erotic point? A fuller investigation of the literary role of the parrot will be presented in section III to answer these questions.

It is clear that 2.6 is not merely an imitation of epigram since it does not limit itself to the concise expressions of epigram. It does not parallel exactly the short poem of Catullus, being more than twice its length and lacking its erotic subjectivity. Ovid, in his innovation, has blended more *topoi* into his poem than any of his predecessors. This more complex blending of genres is a necessary and general trend in literary history.³⁸ Francis Cairns³⁹ says, "...as the generic patterns became more elaborate and as rhetorical training became more influential, the introduction of new material into an example of a genre inevitably came to mean more and more the use in an example of one genre of a *topos* associated with another genre." The rhetoric of the traditional funeral plays a part in the language of 2.6 and will, therefore, be examined below.

Elizabeth Thomas⁴⁰ has outlined how the basic structure of this poem derives from traditional funeral speeches. She argues that 2.6 employs all the elements of the traditional *epicedion*. It has the following necessary elements: 1) an Introduction (1-16) which contains an address to the mourners; 2) a Laudatio (17-24) in which the dead person is praised and in which there is usually an expression of the good attributes of the deceased that were of no avail in warding off death. Usually following the description of positive

associated with Ceres and after this lengthy exegesis gets to the point (*quod tibi secubitus tristes, dea flava, fuissent, hoc cogor sacris nunc ego ferre tuis?*)

³⁸C. Martindale (1990) presents a premise that there is a way of deducing the changes in literary and artistic history based on the logical assumption that a succeeding author must alter, in some way, the existing tradition. He attempts to define the limits of modification and trends that typically occur.

³⁹F. Cairns (1972) 99.

⁴⁰E. Thomas (1965) 599-609.

attributes comes an outburst at envious or unjust fate, the *sketliasmos*; 3) a Descriptio Morbi et Mortis (43-48), i.e. the deathbed scene; 4) Consolatio (49-58) this section offers hope against the cruelty of fate and often contains a description of future existence; 5) Descriptio Funeris (59-62) physical description of tomb and burial.⁴¹

According to these specifications, 2.6 fits the rhetorical requirements of an *epicedion*. One finds the traditional elements somehow not entirely pitiable; the *laudatio* includes the colorful description of beaks and feathers and the *descriptio morbi* of a struggling tongue and palate. The question inevitably arises why Ovid would go to all the work of writing a full and accurate *epicedion* when none of his models did. I suggest that it was not *merely* for humorous effect (although it does not fall short in this capacity) but perhaps the length and accuracy of description call attention to the absurdity of the allusion itself. In fact the role of the elegiac persona seems to be to constantly call attention to the absurdity of his situation.⁴² Paul Veyne⁴³ says, "Elegy is a pseudo-autobiographical form of poetry in which the poet is in league with his readers at the expense of his own ego." The sheer length and manner of treatment themselves call into question the very identity of Psittacus, an inquiry that may not be spurred by a shorter or less ostentatious treatment. Perhaps the relative "absurdity" of 2.6 can be better assessed when compared to other elegiac laments.

In describing the specifications for his own funeral, Propertius (2.13b) rejects a traditional funeral. His last rites are to be executed according to the conceits of a Latin elegiac poet. Literature, and not a lavish funeral, will be the key to a happy life in the underworld.

*sat mea, sat magna est, si tres sint pompa libelli,
quos ego Persephona maxima dona feram.*

25

⁴¹The terms come from E. Thomas (1965) and A. Day (1938).

⁴²For example, Ovid writes elegiacs because Cupid stole one foot from his heroic meter. He becomes a horse racer, a ring, booty in a triumph, a bull, a slave, a soldier, a gift, and impotent. He talks to a river, consoles a bald girlfriend, and constantly and uncontrollably falls in love.

⁴³P. Veyne (1988) 44.

tu vero nudum pectus lacerata sequeris
nec fueris nomen lassa vocare meum
osculaque in gelidis pones suprema labellis,
cum dabitur Syrio munere plenus onyx 30
deinde, ubi suppositus cinerem me fecerit ardor,
accipiat Manis parvula testa meos.
et sit in exiguo laurus super addita busto,
quae tegat extincti funeris umbra locum,
et duo sint versus, 'QUI NUNC IACET HORRIDA PULVIS, 35
UNIUS HIC QUONDAM SERVUS AMORIS ERAT.'

The poet asks that his little books⁴⁴ be sufficient as his funeral procession. Quite beyond this request, he actually hopes that they will aid him in death as a gift to Persephone, perhaps as they aided him in life as a gift to Cynthia.⁴⁵ He asks for kisses even though he is dead and after *ardor* has consumed him⁴⁶ he longs for a *parvula testa*⁴⁷ and an *exiguo busto*.⁴⁸ Two short versus will serve as an inscription on his tombstone and their primary function is to recapitulate the fate of an elegist, to be a *servus amoris*, and

⁴⁴Roman elegists refer to their books as *libelli* as part of the *recusatio*, stressing an Alexandrian-styled program. Indeed Athenaeus records "Ὅτι Καλλίμαχος ὁ γραμματικὸς τὸ μέγα βιβλίον ἴσον ἔλεγεν εἶναι τῷ μεγάλῳ κακῷ (Pfeif. 465)

⁴⁵A common *topos* in elegy is, that although poetry is the greatest gift a poet can offer a *puella*, it is worth more than money because it will bring fame and immortality. The mistress is asked to trade the concrete for the abstract and thereby exempt the lover from any financial obligations. Cf. Cat. 109:

Hoc tibi, quod potui, confectum carmine munus
pro multis, Alii, redditur officiis,
ne vestrum scabra tangat rubigine nomen
haec atque illa dies atque alia atque alia.

⁴⁶In death *ardor* will consume Propertius, just as a passionate *ardor* consumed him during life. For an interesting parallel to this idea of being consumed by *ardor* in both life and death, cf. Call. Epigram 30, in which an epitaph-like poem is written about a love lost to another. I use Walsh's translation (1991) 98.

θεσσαλικὴ Κλεόνικε τάλαν τάλαν, οὐ μὰ τὸν ὄξυν
 ἥλιον, οὐκ ἔγνων· σχέτλιε, ποῦ γέγονας;
 ὅστέα σοι καὶ μῦνον ἔτι τρίχες· ἦ ῥά σε δαίμων
 οὐμὸς ἔχει, χαλεπῇ δ' ἦντεο θευμορίῃ;
 ἔγνων· Εὐξίθεός σε συνήραπασε, καὶ σὺ γὰρ ἐλθὼν
 τὸν καλόν, ᾧ μόχθηρ', ἔβλεπες ἀμφοτέροις. :
Kleonikos from Thessaly, poor fellow, by the searing
sun, I didn't know you. Wretch, where have you been?
All you have left is bones and hair. So, is it my luck that
takes you, have you met with some harsh dispensation?
I knew it! Euxitheos snapped you up --you, too, looked at
the beauty, you fool, with both eyes.

⁴⁷Catullus (95b1) calls the works of a good poet *parva monumenta*.

⁴⁸*exiguus* being another Callimachean buzzword. On this and other such words see K.S. Myers (1990).

that of an elegiac lover, to be a *servus unius amoris*.⁴⁹ In the final analysis, the persona's poetic art has become syncretized with his physical funeral and description of his death.

When his patron, Messalla, leaves him sick in Phaeacia, Tibullus fantasizes about his own death. 1.3 provides a description of his physical grave and his demise.

fac lapis inscriptis stet super ossa notis:
HIC IACET IMMITI CONSUMPTUS MORTE TIBULLUS, 55
MESSALAM TERRA DUM SEQUITURQUE MARI.
sed me, quod facilis tenero sum semper Amori,
ipsa Venus campos ducet in Elysios.
his choreae cantusque vigent, passimque vagantes
dulce sonant tenui gutture carmen aves;
fert casiam non culta seges, totosque per agros 60
floret odoratis terra benigna rosis;
ac iuvenum series teneris immixta puellis
ludit, et adsidue proelia miscet amor.
illic est, cuicumque rapax Mors venit amanti,
et gerit insigni myrtea sarta coma. 65

The entire description of the final resting place for the poetic persona is like a description of Tibullan elegy itself. Venus leads (58) in death, just as she did in life.⁵⁰ The lover wears garlands of myrtle, a plant often associated with the cult of Venus,⁵¹ and the poet receives this reward of a happy afterlife because he has been *facilis*, or well-suited to *Amor*, i.e. a love elegist. There are *carmina* and girls and boys involved in the playful games of love, just like in elegy. There will be no need for Tibullus to change his type of poetry since the afterlife will also provide the programmatic structure of *militia amoris*⁵² (*assidue proelia miscet amor*). The inscription that the poet wishes to be placed on his tombstone seems more like a dedication of a book to his patron, Messalla, than a summary

⁴⁹For further discussion regarding the common motif of elegiac love as servitude see P. Bing (1991) intro.

⁵⁰She leads the way to the pleasure of the *campos Elysios*. For the possible sexual connotations of Venus and *venit* in this line see, J. N. Adams 1982. *ad. loc.*

⁵¹ Cf. Var. L.5.154 & Plin. Nat. 15.121. For lovers wearing myrtle garlands also see Ov. Ars. 2.734.

⁵²For further discussion of the *militia amoris* see P. Bing (1991) intro.

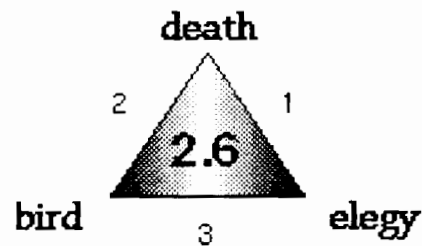
of a life.⁵³ This is one of two times the name "Tibullus" is used in these poems and perhaps it offers a sphragis of sorts, an item suitable to the subjects of both death and poetry. It may be beneficial to explicitly restate the fact that this type of funeral describes the *death* as one of the *poetic persona*, "Tibullus"--just as the events of *life* correspond to this fictional character--when considering whether or not Psittacus represents a poet.

In the poems of both Propertius and Tibullus, the funeral, the resting place, and the tomb are easily identified with that of a poet, and even the type of poet is readily distinguished through the use of programmatic language and images. Rather than utilizing traditional descriptions for a lament, both Propertius and Tibullus seem to offer an "*unreal*" literary description of the event. These two poems provide the most immediate context for Ovid's poem and will be reconsidered in section III.

⁵³As mentioned above, the use of epigram for dedication (especially on temple offerings) is ancient. If Tibullus' inscription is to read like a literary dedication, it highlights both the concrete and abstract uses of epigram; the former in its physical origins and the latter in its present literary use. If the poet's work as an elegist gets translated into a concrete "world" of the afterlife, wherein *topoi* are realized as the "afterlife", it is equally fitting that what would be a *literary* dedication, that is a dedication of 'ideas', becomes also translated into a physical inscription on the tombstone of this (fake) concrete world.

II. THE *TOPOI*

Having examined the broad literary context, it is now possible to treat three of the specific *topoi* inextricably linked within Ovid's poem: death/immortality, elegiac love, and birds *qua* poets. As mentioned in the opening of this paper, the reception of a piece of literature is conditioned by the competence of its reader. *Amores* 2.6 was originally read by a circumscribed, educated group of readers, and therefore it becomes necessary to explore how these three *topoi* might have affected the reception given to this poem.



The conceits of 2.6 can be better understood by examining the relationships between the three *topoi* mentioned above. The graphic image of a triangle is useful in illustrating the topical relationships found in 2.6. The three items, Death, Elegy, and Birds form the three points of the triangle, and each has a one-on-one relationship to the point that forms the other end of a given side (sides 1, 2, 3). In other words, there is a well-defined relationship between the *topoi* of death and elegy (side 1), birds and death (side 2), and elegy and birds (side 3). Although it is possible--and unfortunately necessary--to discuss the individual connections in a linear fashion between just two points (i.e., *topoi*) at a time, it must be stressed that 2.6 is merely demarcated by these points and segments, and that the true essence of this work lies in the *area* of the triangle--in the non-linear association of these ideas. Each of the relationships defined by the sides of the triangle above can now be discussed: Elegy/Death; Death/Birds, Birds/Elegy.

Elegy is intricately connected to the idea of death; there are two distinct connections: 1) the commonly accepted funerary origins of the genre; and 2) the mix of eroticism and morbidity.

Ancient sources trace elegy to roots in Greek funerary poetry, a notion derived both from the name, *elegia* (*legein*, to say “*e-e*”), and from its metrical affiliations with traditional laments.⁵⁴ Whether this is a specious origin or not, the derivation held sway in the themes and language of elegiac collections. Ovid is aware of these associations, and gestures to the putative origins of his genre in a poem on a dead pet. The lamentable subject matter⁵⁵ lends itself nicely to a particularly elegiac, programmatic statement, as one finds in 2.6.⁵⁶ If the traditional rules for composing epitaph served as a regulating force in the development of the literary epigram and, in general, helped shape the poetic ideals of the Hellenistic/Callimachean movement, there then exists a connection between funerary epitaphs and elegy--not only in subject matter, but also in style.

Stepping away from the concept of the elegiac genre into even broader terms, there has always been a literary connection between the erotic and the morbid⁵⁷ and, in fact, love and death coexist symbiotically in Roman elegy. Indeed a mingling of love and death (eroticism and morbidity) is not an unlikely combination since love is the emotion that gives death its power; death's impact is measured by those who loved the deceased.⁵⁸ It could

⁵⁴Although the earliest poems and dedications for the deceased were in epic hexameter, as early as the eighth century B.C.E. the epic hexameters were replaced by the elegiac couplet which then became the norm. For early stages of the epigram, see L.Taràn (1979) 1.

⁵⁵See, T.D. Papanghelis (1987).

⁵⁶The explicit programmatic language in Ovid's poem is hard to deny. In his discussion of the literary treatment of elegiac origins, S. Hinds (1987) 103n. 14, points out that "Lament for the dead featured at what is for us, and may well have been designed by the author as, the beginning of Catullus' sequence of elegiac poems (Cat. 65), and at the very end of the first book of Propertius." He cites T.P. Wiseman (1969) 17-18. "The twelfth line of this poem is the only passage in our collection of Catullus' poems with an apparently explicit programmatic content: addressing his dead brother, the poet promises *semper maesta tua carmina morte canam*...The promise is not to keep writing about the brother's death, but to keep writing *carmina maesta*--which means...to keep writing elegiacs. And, of course, the rest of our collection is in elegiacs."

⁵⁷Compare popular modern icons such as Dracula, Morticia/Vampira, and countless deadly seducers found in cult films, murder mysteries and Hollywood action films.

⁵⁸This is witnessed in many epitaphs where grief is expressed by a spouse, lover, sibling, or parent. The goal of the epitaph, however, is to entice, through its rhetoric, the indifferent stranger. Love and death are treated explicitly in a number of Latin elegies. Prop. 1.17, Tib. 1.3, Ovid 3.9. Cat. 96 to Licinius Calvus

even be said that love and death are the basic two forces at work in the elegiac genre. Since the erotic context of elegy is based in a world of hyperbole where opposites and extremes are continually played off each other, the complete and unconditional surrender to love, the so called *militia amoris*, can only be played against the ultimate cessation of that extreme love: death.

In the passage of Propertius discussed above, the reader finds a strong juxtaposition of love and cessation of love, heightened through the Ego's obsessive descriptions of the love of the living and death of the loved. Papenghelis, in his book on love and death in Propertius, says, "...the potential of the Propertian *amor* is fully realized and its quality best revealed within the frame of various death fantasies; and that the association of love and death in his work grows so radical as to shade off into various forms of identification, where the one comes to be envisaged in the pictorial and conceptual terms pertaining to the other." It is not only in Propertius that a strong connection between love and death is found, in fact, it seems to be requisite of the whole of this genre.

Given the commonplace juxtaposition of love and death in elegy, the inclusion of 2.6, an almost exclusively funerary poem, does not seem completely out of place in a book of love poems. The oddity of this particular funerary poem lies in the absence of the overt erotic themes found in the funerary poems of Propertius, Tibullus, and as mentioned previously, Catullus. Its placement, however, within a book of erotic elegy and thereby its position within the erotic context of the collection, require the reader to assess this poem as it relates to the themes of elegy. As mentioned above, 2.6 heralds the origins of love poetry through allusion to its ancestry in Greek epitaph and funerary poetry, but the use of a bird who mimics, and the identification of that bird with a poet, add a greater depth to the poem, as will be illustrated below.

on the death of his young wife. Calvus himself wrote a poem on the death of Quintilia (cf. Prop. 2.34. 9-90 *haec etiam docti confessa est pagina Calvi, cum caneret miserae funera Quintiliae*). Cf. epigrams with odd mingling of sex, love and death (AP 7. 217, 218).

Aside from the specific connections between morbidity and eroticism just discussed, there are broader connections between death and poetry in general. We can now return to lines 35-36 of Callimachus' prologue to the *Aetia*. As mentioned briefly above, these lines introduce a theme central to our reading of 2.6: a 'key to immortality' through song. The ability of poetry to effect immortality is a prominent theme in Roman elegy, and must bear special reference to the funerary setting of 2.6. Although the connection between poetry and effecting a lasting memory (i.e. poetic immortality) stretches as far back as Homer, the Roman elegists draw close connections between writing the proper, refined kind of poetry and achieving immortality. Ovid says, in his poem on the death of Tibullus, *defugiunt avidos carmina sola rogos* (3.9.28). It will be argued that the epigram at the end of 2.6 (60-62) can be read in such a way as to stress the idea that the parrot/poet is able to please the mistress even from the tomb itself. *Carmina* (poetic compositions) seem to provide a path to immortality and the songs (*carmina*) of the cicada, locust, or bird play appropriately into this theme.

Elegy then incorporates two elements as the basis of its particular genre: love and death. Death is inextricably linked to elegy--in the minds of the poets--through its purported origins in Greek funerary poetry. The theme of death, in this way, emerges as a learned glance back to the ancestry of the genre. Death has one strong connection universal to poetry: the ability of poetry to overcome death through the lasting monument of composition. 2.6 makes explicit both these connections between poetry and death/immortality which will be treated later.

Not only is Ovid writing in a poetic tradition which finds funerary poetry as its generic progenitor, but he *is actually* writing funerary poetry in 2.6. The protagonist in this poem, the parrot *qua* poet, has a blatant connection with death since it *is* dead, but there are further reaching ancient associations between birds and mortality itself, especially the mortality of humans. If the parrot in 2.6 is a metaphoric guise for the poet, the symbolism

embodied in the bird is particularly apt and imports many meaningful iconographic associations with death.

It was believed that the soul, as a winged creature, assumes the form of a bird when it is breathed out of a dying body.⁵⁹ Plato, in *Phaedrus* 246c, describes the soul as an entity that grows wings and feathers and, fully-winged, it soars aloft. In this freed state it regulates the machinations of the world. When Memnon (king of the Ethiopians) was slain by Achilles, his mother (the goddess Eos) prayed to Zeus to make her son immortal and, upon this request, a flock of birds flew out of his ashes.⁶⁰ When the sons of Daunius were overcome by the treachery of their envious neighbors, Zeus ordered that their bodies vanish and that their souls be changed into birds.⁶¹ These examples provide only a few of the many illustrations of this type of symbolism between birds and the soul.⁶²

The gods, in their earliest theriomorphic state, were often birds and, in their later anthropomorphic representations, remained associated with these same bird-figures (Zeus, the Eagle; Athena, the owl; Juno, the peacock; Venus, the dove; Apollo, the swan & falcon).⁶³ After birds were no longer thought to embody the divine natures of the gods, they were believed to manifest divine will in their flight patterns, hence the popularity of augury. In ancient Egyptian religious iconography, the symbol of the soul is an androcephalic bird. The Sirens, an ancient tri-form goddess,⁶⁴ are winged, singing creatures with human heads. Pollard cites several examples where Sirens, or women-

⁵⁹Compare this to depictions of the Christian Holy Spirit as a dove and angels as winged, singing creatures. There is a famous depiction of the martyrdom of St. Quintinus where a bird escapes from his mouth as his head is cut off. B. Rowland (1978) intro.

⁶⁰Apollodorus 3.12.4; Servius on *Aen.* 6.57.

⁶¹Antoninus Lib. 37.

⁶²See the general discussion in the introduction to B. Rowland (1978) and individual birds indexed in the body of the text.

⁶³Instead of listing all the many sources, I refer the reader to Pollard (1977) the sections beginning at 17 and 188. On the debate over the theriomorphic forms of the early gods, and perhaps the Siren as representing a half-way stage in her development between owl and fully humanized deity Pollard cites the relevant bibliography on 799 n. 1.

⁶⁴Divine power, represented by three female divinities symbolizing three balancing forces, appears in early mythology from many different cultures. The Sirens, Muses, Graces, and Fates are all examples of early Greek tri-form goddesses. For the original triad of Graces, see Paus. 9.35.1-7; for the Thriae, or original three Muses, see Paus. 9.29.2 and *Harper's Classical Literature and Antiquities*, 1061.

headed-birds, are pictured on tombs and in funerary contexts on pottery.⁶⁵ In a literary epitaph for Plato (*AP* 7.62) an Eagle on the grave asserts that Plato's soul has taken on the form of a bird although his physical body remains in the earth.

- α. Αἰετέ, τίπτε βέβηκας ὑπὲρ τάφον; ἢ τίνος εἶπέ,
ἀστερόεντα θεῶν οἶκον ἀποσκοπέεις;
β. ψυχῆς εἰμὶ Πλάτωνος ἀποπταμένης ἐς Ὀλυμπον
εἰκων· σῶμα δὲ γῇ γηγενὲς Ἀτθίς ἔχει.

A common and easy metamorphosis seems to be from human-form to bird-form:⁶⁶ Ciris into a tern, Nisus into a sea-eagle, Philomela & Procne into the nightingale & swallow, Tereus into a hoopoe, and the sisters of Meleager into guinea fowl are only a few of the examples.⁶⁷ A majority of these human/bird transformations center around death. They occur either to escape death,⁶⁸ to escape excessive mourning for an already dead person,⁶⁹ or to pay the penalty for killing or trying to kill someone else.⁷⁰ The gods too assume bird form as the famous examples of Zeus turning into a swan to woo Leda and Hera turning into a cuckoo illustrate.

For Daedalus, it is not through metaphysical means, but rather, through his masterful art that he metamorphosizes both himself and his son into temporary birds. He has contrived a way to attain freedom--by assuming the form of a bird--and thereby escape impending death, or so the plan was. The example of Daedalus not only shows how the physical form of the bird can help escape death but also how an artist is able to craft the metaphor for the soul into a physical manifestation. Both Ovid and Horace will present their birds as actual physical manifestations and not as mere metaphors.

⁶⁵J. Pollard (1977) 188-190. He also mentions the close connections of Harpies--other women-headed bird figures--with death.

⁶⁶The *Physiognomus* draws parallels between the characters of birds and men (812 B 13, 813 A 20).

⁶⁷For an excellent and well-referenced collection of such metamorphoses see J. Pollard (1977) Chapter 19, "Men in Bird Form".

⁶⁸Ciris, Philomela, Procne; there are also many other less famous transformations of these sorts. Perdix, the son of Daedalus, was pushed off a roof by his father in a jealous fit after he invented the saw and was turned into a partridge

⁶⁹The sisters of Meleager, the mother of Cyncus, Alcyone grieving for her drowned husband Ceyx.

⁷⁰Tereus, Ciris

for such reasons were considered highly knowledgeable.⁷² Horace's poem provides a nice key to unlocking some barriers posed by the metaphoric nature of 2.6. Two important facts are made explicit; the bird in this poem *is* confessed to be the poet himself, or was in one incarnation and, the bird *is* the especial key to this poet's immortality.

Not only are the poems topically connected, but much of the language in Horace's poem finds close parallels in the poems of Ovid, Catullus, Propertius and Tibullus discussed above. Compare the following: *per liquidum aethera* (Hor. 1.2) and *liquido in aere* (Ov. 1.11). Horace will soar *per liquidum aethera*, the same space delegated for the *Piae volucres* in Ovid's poem. Horace's afterlife will not be lived among the Stygian shades either, but will be lived immersed in the stuff of literature, like Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid. Substitutions for the normal funeral are here, too, implemented as a conceit.

*absint inani funere neniae
luctusque turpes et querimoniae;
compesce clamorem ac sepulcri
mitte supervacuos honores*

From the brief examples above, it is clear that birds are connected to death through their associations with immortality, and that they often symbolize the soul or undying part of the body. There are examples of humans turning into birds--through a physical metamorphosis--at the verge of death and, also, humans turning into birds--through artistic construction--to escape death. The long history of metamorphosis from human-form to bird-form and the further association between the immortal gods and birds adds force to the avian symbol for immortality, especially in the funerary setting of 2.6. Oddly enough, the identification of the parrot with the poet becomes more natural when death is incorporated into the formula. In this section, it has been illustrated that not only are death and [im]mortality historically connected to poetry but are equally linked to the image of the bird.

⁷²Birds were used as weather prophets, divine omens, betrayers of infidelity, etc. See J. Pollard (1977) 17, and chapter 12, "Birds and Natural Phenomena".

The relationship between the literary image of the bird and the poet is usually illustrated by the swan. In fact birds of all kinds, especially ones that sing beautifully, have a long and well-documented association with poets. Ovid's parrot must have seemed like a silly illustration of this traditional association between the beautiful, lyric quality of the swan and the poet. The parrot does not even have a song, so to speak, and aside from some whistles and croaks, can only repeat human speech in an imperfect way. But nonetheless he is a bird, and hints at all of the traditional bird/poet associations in a new and humorous light.

For the reasons outlined above, there are far more literary references to swans than parrots, but it is now widely accepted that poetic references to swans can often be interpreted as references to poets and poetic compositions and it does not seem unreasonable that other birds can be included in this type of metaphor, especially ones noted for verbal dexterity.⁷³ Keith says, "Ovid's immediate predecessors had gone still further (than remarking merely on the beauty of dying swan's song) in self-consciously identifying the songs of the swan with the compositions of the poet."⁷⁴ Keith also cites Nisbet and Hubbard (Horace 2.20) on the remarkable "literalization" of the metaphor of the poet as swan. They say, "poets and other literary men are often compared or identified with swans."⁷⁵

In a large part, this literary identification of the swan with poetry is aided by the bird's close association with Apollo and the Muses. The swan was believed to sing most beautifully upon its death,⁷⁶ whereas it was also song, or poetry, that would make the poet famous and perhaps immortal in spite of death. If the swan was especially famed for its vocal ability, no less was the parrot known for its unique vocal features.

⁷³I Excerpt much of this argument from A.M. Keith (1992) appendix 1 "Swans in *Metamorphoses* 2" 137-146. Keith cites as support R.G.M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard (1970) *ad* Hor. C. 2.20.10.

⁷⁴Keith derives this view from arguments in S. Hinds (1987) esp. 47 and 149 n. 65. S. Hinds discusses the often implied connection between the *carmina* of the swan and the literary *carmina* of the poet.

⁷⁵R.G.M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard (1970) 342.

⁷⁶see D.A. Thompson (1936) 181 c.v. KYKNOΣ under the section entitled "The Swan's song: especially of the dying swan."

Compare the way Cicero (Cic. *Tusc.* 1.30) describes the swan:

illa cygnea fuit divini hominis vox et oratio

and the way Ovid describes the parrot (37-8):

ille loquax humanae vocis imago

psittacus.

The image of the bird becomes associated with the poet for the same reasons the cicada and locust are associated with the poet in Hellenistic times, namely that singing animals provide a good metaphor for the poet and his craft. The most common association is between the poet and the swan and it may not be inconsequential that the swan is believed to sing most sweetly upon its death. The "swan-song" or death-song binds tightly together the ideas of poetry, death, and birds, ideas that have shared long and poetically productive associations with each other.

Now the final side of the triangle can be discussed; how do birds function in elegy and in particular, why has Ovid chosen the parrot as a symbol for his poetry are important questions to better understand 2.6. Boyd believes that Ovid has successfully symbolized his own poetry in the guise of the parrot, and she says, "Ovid achieves this identification of bird and elegy by describing the parrot through the poem with the sort of conventional programmatic language he frequently uses in the *Amores* to characterize his own elegiac poetry."⁷⁷

Symbolizing the poet and his art with a bird is not unusual, but the choice of a parrot as that bird is unusual.⁷⁸ The particular attributes of the parrot, therefore, must be explored to fully understand the humorous innovation Ovid has made upon a traditional *topos*. As mentioned above, the parrot, as a mimic, calls attention to the fact that Ovid is poetically mimicking the famous bird in Catullus. Perhaps this humorous allusion itself would be enough to justify Ovid's use of a parrot to symbolize his brand of poetry, but

⁷⁷B.W. Boyd (1987) 367-8.

⁷⁸The parrot is only mentioned in eleven Latin sources, all of them after Ovid, except Varro.

there are even more reasons why this particular bird is an especially apt image for Ovid's use.

Another programmatically tantalizing feature of ancient parrots--aside from their verbal ability to mimic--is that, almost exclusively of the animals, they were believed to possess, "*mneme*" or memory.⁷⁹ Indeed memory is an essential resource to mimicking: the better the memory, the better the mimic. The parrot is one of the best mimics, therefore it must have the best memory.⁸⁰

A "poetic memory" is also invaluable to an Alexandrian-styled author, especially in producing the popular collocation of variants and the more complex kinds of intertextual/situational allusion popular at Ovid's time. Although the parrot is not the *smallest* mimic around (like the cicada or locust), with its faculty for memory and vocal flexibility, it might be the best suited to write Alexandrian/Callimachean poetry--especially through the chronological and linguistic distance of Ovid's Roman viewpoint.⁸¹ In the end, poetic (or verbal) memory is just as important to a poet's compositions as it is to a parrot's loquutions, thereby making the parrot an attractive metaphor for Ovid's specific kind of composition and his particular placement within the established tradition.

It is not within the scope of this paper to investigate in further detail the *topoi* discussed above, but, hopefully, through this brief treatment, a better understanding of how elements that do not belong to a given literary model are at work in the poetics of 2.6. Free associations, which would naturally be drawn by Ovid's readers, must be pointed out in an unnatural and linear form of argumentation in order for modern readers to attempt a holistic reading. The relationships between elegy and death, death and birds, and birds and

⁷⁹According to Aristotle *HA* 8.12, 597b 25ff.

⁸⁰Parrots were thought to possess a memory so keen that they often would recall details from drunken parties (the parrot itself was a notorious drunk and had a weakness for women. Cf. the cicada *AP* 7.196 who is drunk on dew drops Ἀχλὺς τέττιξ, δροσεραῖς σταγόνεσσιν μεθύσθεις) that would later serve to incriminate the revelers. In this same way they were deemed capable of betraying the sexual indiscretions of the master's wife. Arist. *H.A.* 7.597 B, 25

⁸¹Parrots were often credited with knowing both Latin and Greek (Plin. 10, 59, on the Caesars' birds), making the choice of this bird even more appealing to a Latin author alluding to his Greek forebears.

poetry are complex and inevitably tightly woven into the literary fabric. It is not in any given relationship between two of these *topoi*, but rather the tangled nature of all three that allows for the humorous, sympathetic, and artistic sentiment of 2.6.

III. THE PARROT AS POET IMPOSTOR

Let us return now to the groundwork laid in section I, and incorporate the ideas discussed in section II, to inform a closer reading of *Amores* 2.6. Psittacus is described in terms that are as literary and programmatic as the descriptions of dead poets in the poems of Tibullus and Propertius. Through his use of language, I believe that Ovid has styled the parrot of 2.6, to a large extent, as a “dead poet” of this sort. The problem scholars have with reading *Am.* 2.6 in this way is that Ovid describes a bird, and bird-like attributes, and a bird-underworld. Would this problem cause such consternation if Ovid had inserted a couplet which said, “this is a metaphor, entirely a construct, and the bird is a Latin elegiac poet like the persona of my elegies”? Perhaps the difficulty in interpretation would be gone but so would all the artful satire and humor and sympathy.

There are several passages in this poem which self-consciously point out the metaphoric nature of 2.6, strengthening the association of Psittacus with the poet, and in particular, with the poet Ovid. These passages will be discussed in detail below, but first I will briefly outline some of the important physical descriptions of Psittacus.

Eois ales ab Indis is the first description and a “first impression” of sorts. The phrase indulges in a grandeur that is quite a step away from lower-register words in which Ovid often indulges for humorous effect. Psittacus is not a little bird, nor a dear prattling pet, but he is a ‘winged creature from the Indic land of rising sun’. In traditional epitaphs the most essential information to convey was the person's name and his/her homeland. This first line tells us both of these things. Psittacus is both important and inspired. He seems even more remarkable when contrasted with the *frequenter aves* in the following line. The enjambment of *occidit* allows the reader savor the beautiful image of the first line

before learning that this beautiful creature is dead. The realization of line 2 offers a nice segue into the full-blown lament that is to follow.

The description of the death and afterlife of this bird is befitting a poet, in the same way the death and afterlife of Propertius and Tibullus were suitable to the type of poetry and literary programs each had participated in throughout their careers. The parrot's funeral is to include *carmina* rather than traditional elements (*longa tuba*).⁸² Compare this substitution of a literary element for an actual funerary object to Propertius 2.13b, where he specifies many substitutions to a traditional funeral. In the end, Propertius goes as far as to say that his three little books should *be* his *pompa* (25). So, in the case of both Psittacus and Propertius, literary substitutions serve for actual items; *carmina* and *libelli* will take the place of *the longa tuba* and the *pompa*.

*nec mea tunc longa spatietur imagine pompa,
nec tuba sit fati vana querela mei;
nec mihi tunc fulcro sternatur lectus eburno,
nec sit in Attalico mors mea nixa toro.
desit odoriferis ordo mihi lancibus, adsint
plebi parvae funeris exsequiae.
sat mea sat magna est, si tres sint pompa libelli*

In Ovid's poem, the substitution appears to be simply bird-anatomy for human-anatomy. The funeral will contain the traditional elements, including the pounding of the chest and tearing of the cheeks. The substitution in 2.6 does not contain a swapping of individual poetic items for traditional elements of mourning, but merely a physical substitution of birds for humans. In this way, birds with various attributes take the place of humans that could be described by these same attributes. The parrot is, similarly, a 'substitution' for

⁸²S. Hinds has pointed out to me that it is possible that Ovid takes the *longa* from line 19 and the *tuba* from line 20 of Propertius 2.13b.

the poet. Even Philomela (an attested example of a human-body swapped for a bird-body) is called, presumably in her bird-form.

The vocal abilities of Psittacus are by far his most frequently described feature, and the most valuable feature for a poet, too. The parrot's vocal ability is mentioned 10 times (*vox* 18, *vocum* 23, *sono* 24, *garrulus* 26, *sermonis* 29, *loquax*, *vocis* 37, *palato* 47, *clamavit* 48, *sua verba* 58, *loqui* 62). Psittacus' facility with speech is not average but far superior to the throng of birds. In the underworld (58f, 62), he will impress the other birds with his *verba* in much the same way an elegiac poet hopes to impress his mistress with *verba*. If Psittacus is to serve as a model of the good poet, the *obscenae aves* seem to represent the bad poets. In fact, the use of *obscenae* is a clever way to incorporate both the notion of 'unpropitious' birds, but also of 'badly spoken' poets. The ancient etymology of this word has the idea of public performance, as a poet would do, built into it as well as ill-omened events, such as augury reveals. Varro (*Ling.* 7.96) defines the etymology thus: "*Obscenum dictum ab scena... quod nisi in scaena palam dici non debet.*" Servius on a particular *obscena avis* in Vergil (the harpy, Celaeno), who is significantly termed an *infelix vates*, says, "*Obscenae sunt aves, quae canendo adversa significant, ut paulo post 'infelix vates'.*"

The parrot is *ingeniosa* in *vox*, an adjective Ovid uses to describe his own poetic abilities in *Am.* 3.8.8.⁸³ He is not even able to eat very much because of his *amor sermonis*. In poetic terms, Psittacus is talented (*ingeniosa*), passionate (*sermonis amore*), and prolific (*garrulus*).⁸⁴ By analogy with Propertius and Tibullus, Psittacus looks a lot like a love elegist with Callimachean esthetics, and much like Ovid himself. The bird has an *amica*, he did not engage in *fera bella* but was an *amator pacis*. In *Am.* 1.1, the programmatic introduction to the collection, Ovid says: *ferrea cum vestris bella valete*

⁸³There are nine instances in the *Amores* alone where Ovid uses *ingenium* to refer to his own poetic ability (1.15.2, 2.1.18, 2.17.34, 2.18.11, 3.1.25, 3.8.3, 3.11.10, 3.12.8, 3.12.16).

⁸⁴I agree with K. S. Myers (1990) n.8 that by using *garrulus*, "Ovid may be poking fun at his own pretensions and poetic productivity."

modis.⁸⁵ Ovid is using *ferrea bella* to refer to the writing of epic, and, since both of these poems are contained within the same work, it can be argued that the lexically similar *fera bella* in 2.6 may also refer to the writing of epic, perhaps humorously alluding to the feral nature of 2.6.⁸⁶

In the bird-Elysium there will be *oscula* (56). There are numerous references to things which are small or thin, including the bird himself and his diet and, as shown earlier, language of this sort reflects the Callimachean ideal of *leptos*. Psittacus has *rari forma coloris*. As Myers points out, color is often used to describe the style appropriate for various genres.⁸⁷ *Rarus* (meaning both sparse and of uncommon quality) is an adjective that describes a style appropriate for Callimachean poetry. Propertius announces that *Cynthia rara mea est!* (1.8.42). Since Cynthia was not only the name of Propertius' mistress, but the name of the poetic collection, *Cynthia rara* can function in a "double frame of reference" as both an exquisite mistress and a collection of rarefied poetry. *Simplicis aquae* (32) suggests the pure water that should be sought for inspiration.⁸⁸ Even the poetic element of meter is suggested by *implentur numeris deteriora suis* (40), where the difference between elegiac meter and epic meter is determined by the lower verse. The couplet (39-40) taken as a whole may provide a further humorous effect when applied to Ovid's programmatic introduction to the work. He says in 2.6 that nearly all the best things are snatched away by greedy hands and the worse things fill out with their own number:

*optima prima fere manibus rapiuntur avaris:
implentur numeris deteriora suis*

⁸⁵In light of the fact that *psittacus* rejects *fera bella*, a similar programmatic rejection (of *ferrea bella*) is made by Ovid himself, and the resemblance between the two may be humorously highlighted in that Ovid bids farewell to epic, "*valet*", and this is precisely the one phrase we actually know *Psittacus* can say. At any rate, Ovid and *Psittacus* are programmatically similar in that they both reject *bella*.

⁸⁶Cf. also Prop. 3.5.1: *Pacis Amor deus est, pacem veneramur amantes*.

⁸⁷Also Horace, *Ars Poet.* 2.

⁸⁸Cf. Prop. 2.10.25-26, Verg. *Ecl.* 6.64, and Poseidippus AP 12.168.

In 1.1, speaking about his choice of genre, Ovid says that he was preparing to write epic poetry where the lower verse matched the first (*cf. implentur numeris deteriora suis*), but Cupid snatched away (*sub -rapio*) a foot thereby changing the genre.

*Arma gravi numero violentaque bella parabam
edere, materia conveniente modis
par erat inferior versus--rissime Cupido
dicitur atque unum surripuisse pedem*

If the lower (verse) is filled with its own number, this could be further reference to epic meter.

The tomb itself is a little tomb *tumulus*, and it has a small tombstone, *exiguus lapis*, similar to the *exiguo busto* in which Propertius asks to be buried. There may be a more direct allusion to Callimachus in the description of Psittacus' tomb. Ovid describes that the little tomb had a little marker which also had an inscription suitable to the small size of the stone. The grave itself was suited to the small size of the corpse.

*ossa tegit tumulus, tumulus pro corpore magnus
quo lapis exiguus par sibi carmen habet*

There is an epigram of Callimachus (AP 7.447) that describes a verse that must also fit the "shortness" of the deceased.

Σύντομος ἦν ὁ ξείνος· ὃ καὶ στίχος· οὐ μακρὰ λέξω·
"Θῆρις Ἀρισταίου, Κρής" ἐπ' ἐμοὶ δόλιχος.

The imagery of 2.6 does not lack poetic language. The funeral, the after-life and the tomb, like those described in Prop. 2.13 and Tib. 1.3 all befit a poetic persona, certainly not merely an ordinary parrot. It is possible that with the bird/poet metaphor, Ovid and his precursors may be playing with the much older traditions of birds and their associations with immortality mentioned above.

I return to the point raised earlier in this section, that Ovid actually makes references to the fact that there is a metaphor (parrot=poet) explicit in the poem. The introduction of Psittacus not only presents a grand and exotic creature, but an *imitatrix*, an imitator, as also discussed above. That a parrot imitates with its voice is known to the reader immediately,

but since Ovid does not choose to highlight Psittacus' voice in his opening description, the reader may be encouraged to notice other possible readings of the word *imitatrix*. Hinds' argument that Ovid has constructed this line to "draw attention to its status as allusion."⁸⁹ applies in particular to this first line, but can apply to other self-conscious allusions throughout the poem. Perhaps not only is Psittacus an *imitatrix avis Catulli* but further, *Psittacus* (if he is to serve as a metaphor for Ovid himself) is a "false bird" or "imitating a bird" and Ovid is humorously saying as much. Given the fact that a bird's repertoire is entirely composed of its master's own words, in essence what one hears from the bird are the *words* of the trainer in a different *voice*. So, when Psittacus speaks what one hears is an echo (*imago*) of the poet speaking. Furthermore, Psittacus has a *vox ingeniosa mutandis sonis* (l. 18) a "voice gifted at translating speech." *muto* can be used of translating languages, such as Latin to Greek⁹⁰ or is often used of "translation" in metamorphoses from one form to another.⁹¹ It may not be insignificant that this is the word that Horace uses when describing his transformation into a bird (*album mutor in alitem* 2.20.10). *Sonus* is used of both articulated human speech and often the utterance of an animal, especially a bird.⁹² As mentioned earlier, the adjective *ingeniosus* has been used by Ovid to describe himself; perhaps it is Ovid here who is equally gifted at translating speech into avian terms as the bird is at translating bird sounds into human speech.

As mentioned above, in lines 5-6, the poet overtly informs the reader that there is substitution underway, *pro maestis capillis, pro longa tuba*. It is unnecessary, if not unpoetic, to tell the Roman reader that in mourning the tearing of plumage is *in place of hair*, especially following the formulaic *et rigido teneras ungue notate genas*.⁹³ Given the "avian frame of reference" of the entire poem, the inclusion of *pro maestis capillis*, and *pro*

⁸⁹(an allusion to Cat. 3, that is) S. Hinds (1988).

⁹⁰Quint. *Inst.* 3.4.14

⁹¹Hor. 2.20.10 *album mutor in alitem; in nova ..mutatas...formas corpora* Ov. *met.* 1.1; *sed frustra mutos revocabis, Cynthia*, Manis Prop. 2.13b

⁹²OLD *ad loc.*

⁹³B.W. Boyd (1987) points out that the exact formulaic wording can be maintained because *unguis* is used both of the human fingernail and of the claws of birds.

longa tuba can only highlight the fact that there is a substitution of a more traditional element.

Another reference to the fact that things are not always as they seem can be found in line 23, where Ovid says *non fuit in terris vocum simulantior ales*, not in the whole world was there a bird more imitative in voice (i.e., it is not *his* voice, but an imitation of another's). The comparative form of the present participle of *simulare* is unique to Ovid and cannot be compared with other usages. In this lexically unique description of Psittacus, it may also be helpful to note the use of *ales* (the individualistic, marked form) again to describe this bird, in contrast to the other *aves* (the unmarked, common form) to point up the singular talents of the parrot. The verb *simulare* can often mean to pretend, or even to counterfeit,⁹⁴ Perhaps this line should more rightly be read "not in the whole world was there a bird more counterfeit in voice." *Reddebas blaeso tam bene verba sono*, is usually rendered to the effect of, "you return words so well in your lispy tone." It could also be rendered humorously keeping in mind that the parrot is actually returning the words of a poet, "you return words so well with this speech impediment." Ovid used the unusual adjective, *blaeso*, in one other instance (AA 3.293f) when he describes the learned artifice of human speech. In this passage, too, there is a dissimulation of sorts going on and the question about what is written and what is spoken and which of them is legitimate.

*quid, cum legitima fraudatur littera voce,
blaesaque fit iusso lingua coacta sono?*

To further build on the ambiguity arising regarding Psittacus' identity, as mentioned in lines 37-38 the reader learns that he is merely an *imago*, an echo, a physical or mental image. Implicit in this word, however, is the notion that the subject is something other than the "real" thing, it is a substitution or reproduction of sorts. Ovid hints more and more

⁹⁴OLD *ad. loc.*

explicitly that Psittacus is not, indeed real. Lines 37-38 in fact "echo" lines 1-2 but the first words of the lines are inverted.

Psittacus, Eois imitatrix ales ab Indis 1

occidit: exsequias ite frequenter aves

occidit ille loquax humanae vocis imago

Psittacus, extremo munus ab orbe datum. 37

Psittacus' form has faded from an *imitatrix* to an *imago*.

In his description of the afterlife, Psittacus is portrayed as a poet figure. Line 58 reads, *convertit volucres in sua verba pias*. *Psittacus* is able to "turn pious birds to his words", but is Ovid playing with the reading that he has "turned his own words into dutiful birds"?

The final couplet of this poem reveals the epitaph on Psittacus' gravestone. The words jump forth in the first person as if the dead bird can actually speak.⁹⁵

COLLIGOR EX IPSO DOMINAE PLACUISSE SEPULCHRO 61

ORA FUERE MIHI PLUS AVE DOCTA LOQUI

The most straightforward reading of line 61 would be, "I am esteemed by the evidence of this grave itself to have pleased my mistress". This reading would be supported by many Greek epitaphs that convey similar ideas. This epitaph however does not satisfy any of the requirements of a traditional epitaph, it does not tell the name of the creature, it does not tell where he was from, whom he belonged to, or how he died. Like the imagery and descriptions up to this point, the epitaph itself seems to make sense as a literary dedication, rather than a grave marker for an actual bird. As seen in Tibullus and Propertius, both of the epitaphs also seemed more like a dedication of a literary work, and Horace's poem as a whole functions in this capacity, too. I believe an ambiguity in the

⁹⁵Although the first person is typically used throughout literature as coming from the mouth of a human or divine character, in the pet epigrams of the *Greek Anthology* more than half of the animals speak in the first person through their epitaphs. (AP. 7.191, 7.197, 7.198, 7.200, 7.207, 7.215, 7.216). This unexpected predominance of the first person in pet epitaph might again reinforce the literary anthropomorphism of these animals.

epitaph merits a literary interpretation. *Colligo* can be used of works, to collect (in a book, etc.), or to bring (literary works, etc.) together.⁹⁶ Therefore, the sense inferred by this line could be, "I am published to please my mistress from the grave itself." By these means, Ovid/Psittacus could live beyond the grave through his literary talents, a theme that itself echoes throughout the *Amores*.⁹⁷ Maybe poetry *can* grant immortality.

⁹⁶Cf. Cic. *Att.* 12.40.1, 14.14.5, *Off.* 1.159, Ov. *Pont.* 3.953, Plin. *Nat.* 19.94, Cic. *Att.* 9.13.3.

⁹⁷1.3, 1.10, 1.15, etc.

- Adams, J. N., *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary*. (London) 1982.
- Barchiesi, Alessandro, "Problemi d'interpretazione in Ovidio: continuità delle storie, continuazione dei testi," *MD* 1986 (16) 77-108.
- Bing, Peter and Cohen, Rip, *Games of Venus* (Routledge, 1991).
- Booth, Joan, *Ovid: The Second Book of Amores* translation and commentary (Warminster, 1991).
- Bing, Peter *The Well-Read Muse: Present and Past in Callimachus and the Hellenistic poets* (Göttingen, 1988).
- Boyd, Barbara Weiden, "The Death of Corinna's Parrot Reconsidered: Poetry and Ovid's *Amores*," *CJ* 82 (1987) 199-207.
- Brandt, Paul, *P. Ovidi Nasonis Amorum Libri Tres, Text und Kommentar* (Hildesheim, 1977).
- Cahoon, Leslie, "The Parrot and the Poet: the Function of Ovid's Funeral Elegies," *CJ* 80 (1984) 227-35.
- Cairns, Francis, *Generic Composition in Greek and Roman Poetry*. (Edinburgh, 1972).
- Capponi, Filippo, *Ovidius Cynegeticus* (Genova, 1988).
- Carson, A., *Eros the Bittersweet: An Essay*. (Princeton, 1986).
- Catullus: The Poems*, ed. Kenneth Quinn (Glasgow, 1973).
- Conte, Gian Biagio, *The Rhetoric of Imitation: Genre and Poetic Memory in Virgil and Other Latin Poets*, transl. Charles Segal (Ithaca and London, 1986).
- Cook, A.B., *Zeus*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1914-40).
- Day, A., *The Origins of Latin Love-Elegy* (Oxford, 1938).
- Fried, Michael, "Painting Memories: On the Containment of the Past in Baudelaire and Manet," *Critical Inquiry* 10 (1984) 510-42.
- Hinds, Stephen, "Generalising About Ovid," in *The Imperial Muse: To Juvenal Through Ovid*, ed. A. J. Boyle (Victoria, 1988) pp.4-31.
- _____, *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the self-conscious Muse* (Cambridge, 1987).
- Keith, A. M., *The Play of Fictions: Studies in Ovid's Metamorphoses Book 2* (Ann Arbor, 1992).
- Kennedy, Duncan F., *The Arts of Love: Five studies in the discourse of Roman Love Elegy* (Cambridge, 1993).
- Labate, Mario, *L'arte di farsi amare; Modelli culturali e progetto didascalico nell'elegia ovidiana* (Pisa, 1984).

- Lateiner, Donald, "Ovid's Homage to Callimachus and Alexandrian Poetic Theory (*Amores* 2.19)," *Hermes* 106 (1978) p. 188f.
- Luck, Georg, *The Latin Love Elegy* (London, 1959).
- Maltby, Robert, *A Lexicon of Ancient Latin Etymologies* (Leeds, 1991).
- Martindale, Colin, *The Clockwork Muse* (New York, 1990).
- Morgan, Kathleen, *Ovid's Art of Imitation: Propertius in the Amores*, Mnemosyne supplement 47 (Leiden, 1977).
- Myers, K. Sara, "Ovid's *Tecta Ars*: *Amores* 2.6, 'Programmatic and the Parrot'," *Echos du Monde Classique* 34 n.s. 9 (1990) 367-74.
- Nisbet, R.G.M. and M. Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace, Odes Book I* (Oxford, 1970).
- Ochs, Donovan J., *Consolatory Rhetoric: Grief, Symbol, and Ritual in the Greco-Roman Era* (South Carolina, 1993).
- Papanghelis, Theodore D., *Propertius: A Hellenistic poet on Love and Death* (Cambridge, 1987).
- Pollard, J., *Birds in Greek Life and Myth* (London, 1977).
- Putnam, Michael C.J., *Tibullus, A Commentary* (Norman, 1973).
- Quinn, Kenneth, *Catullus: The Poems* (London and New York, 1973).
- Rowland, Beryl, *Birds with Human Souls: A Guide to Bird Symbolism* (Knoxville, 1978).
- Smith, R. Alden, "Fantasy, Myth, and Love Letters: Text and Tale in Ovid's *Heroides* ," *Arethusa* 27 (1994) 247-73.
- Taràn, Lida , *The Art of Variation in The Hellenistic Epigram* (Leiden, 1979).
- Thomas, Elizabeth, "A Comparative Analysis of Ovid *Amores* II, 6 and III, 9," *Latomus* 24 (1965) 599-609.
- Thompson, D'Arcy Wentworth, *A Glossary of Greek Birds* (London, 1936).
- Veyne, Paul, *Roman Erotic Elegy: Love Poetry and the West* (Chicago, 1988).
- Walsh, George, "Callimachean Passages: The Rhetoric of Epitaph in epigram, *Arethusa* (24) 1991, 77-105.
- Wiseman, T.P. *Catullan Questions* (Leicester, 1969).