FER, *FVSA*, ΦΥΣΑΩ: DITHYRAMBIC AND ACROSTIC STRATEGIES IN OVID, *TRISTIA* 5.3*

ABSTRACT

*In the hymn to Bacchus (*Tristia *5.3), Ovid looks from Tomis back to Rome, where the chorus of poets gathers for the Liberalia. This article argues that Ovid fashions in* Tristia *5.3 a poetic rebirth out of Tomis, deploying in this elegy themes and motifs from the god's mysteries to bolster the pervasive message of persistence in the* Tristia*. This Bacchic mystic tone is accomplished through the hymn's ritual elements and dithyrambic strategies, which reflect on both Ovid's death-like position in exile and his poetic activity there. Furthermore, this article argues that Ovid encodes his mystic dithyrambic strategies in a hitherto unnoticed bilingual acrostic. Through ritual and dithyrambic strategies, Ovid merges three loci of time and space—past Rome, present Rome and present Tomis—and thus reintegrates himself into Rome, rearticulating his Roman citizenship as a literary one.*

Keywords: Ovid; acrostics; ritual; mysteries; dithyramb; Bacchus

In *Tristia* 5.3, Ovid looks from lonely Tomis back to Rome and describes a happy *festum poetarum* for Liber/Bacchus connected to the Liberalia.[1] It has recently been proposed that this yearly event, in which poets sing praises to Liber and constitute the god's chorus, is the festival context for a group of Roman poems with shared Dionysiac features and a high number of cross references.[2] In discussing this festival context, Alex Hardie introduces *Tristia* 5.3 to this intertextually linked group of poems, which have been read as Roman versions of dithyrambs or at least as displaying dithyrambic features.[3] I take my cue from Hardie's concluding thoughts on Ovid's poem: 'The matter calls for a fuller

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[1] G. Luck, *P. Ovidius Naso: Tristia*, 2 vols. (Heidelberg, 1967–77), 2.290; J. Miller, 'Ovid's Liberalia', in G. Herbert-Brown (edd.), *Ovid's* Fasti*: Historical Readings at its Bimillennium* (Oxford, 2002), 199–224, at 201; J. Miller, 'Bacchus and the exiled Ovid (*Tristia* 5.3)', in F. MacGorain (ed.), *Dionysus in Rome* (Berlin and Boston, 2020), 177–92, at 177–8.

[2] A. Hardie, 'A dithyramb for Augustus: Horace, *Odes* 4.2', *CQ* 65 (2015), 253–85, especially 282–5; bolstering F. Cairns, *Generic Composition in Greek and Roman Poetry* (Edinburgh, 1972), 95–7. Luck (n. 1) on *Tr.* 5.3.33 adduces Hor. *Carm.* 4.8 and Prop. 3.17. Hardie (this note) adds Hor. *Carm.* 1.37, 2.19, 3.25, *Epod.* 9 and Tib. 1.7. The approach is not without controversy: see I. Rutherford, '*Dithyrambos*, *thriambos*, *triumphus*: Dionysiac discourse at Rome', in B. Kowalzig and P. Wilson (edd.), *Dithyramb in Context* (Oxford, 2013), 409–23, at 420–3.

[3] See further A. Hardie, 'Horace *Odes* 1.37 and Pindar *Dithyramb* 2', *PLLS* 1 (1977), 113–40; C.W. Macleod, 'Horace and his lyric models: a note on *Epode* 9 and *Odes* 1.37', *Hermes* 110 (1982), 371–5; A. Henrichs, 'Horaz als Aretaloge des Dionysos: *credite posteri*', *HSPh* 82 (1978), 203–11; D. West, *Horace Odes III. Dulce Periculum* (Oxford, 2002), 208; F. Cairns, *Tibullus: A Hellenistic Poet at Rome* (Cambridge, 1979), 171–2; F. Cairns, *Sextus Propertius: The Augustan Elegist* (Cambridge, 2006), 364; Cairns (n. 2), 97; J. Miller, 'Propertius' hymn to Bacchus and contemporary poetry', *AJPh* 112 (1991), 77–86, at 79.

treatment of *Tristia* 5.3, its relationship to the corpus of Augustan poetry for Liber/ Bacchus, and the interconnections within that same body work.'[4] In this article, I will suggest that *Tristia* 5.3 draws on dithyrambic characteristics and strategies in its hymn to Bacchus, but reworks the genre for the poet's exilic context to negotiate a return to Rome and its lively literary community.[5]

Despite the difficulty, even in antiquity, in determining exactly what a dithyramb is or ought to be,[6] the characteristics of the dithyramb—whether performed, imagined or debated—were recognizable enough to be perceived by Roman readers.[7] In the Greek imagination, the Dionysiac chorus, and dithyramb especially, represented liberation, salvation and civic cohesion; in Roman discourse, it has been shown, the same nexus of concepts, grounded in the genre's mythological and social dimension, influenced the *triumphus*.[8] Some of the aforementioned 'Roman dithyrambs' contain Dionysiac material and triumphal celebration.[9] In discussing *Tristia* 5.3, however, I am less concerned with triumph—though the thematic association of arrival and liberation remains relevant[10]—than with the dithyramb's association with ritual, especially with Dionysus' mysteries and their relevance to the soteriological and reintegrative concerns of *Tristia* 5.3. I will, therefore, discuss ritual elements concerning time and space (sections 1 and 2) as well as specifically mystic themes of possession, rebirth and transformation (section 3) and concepts of initiation and exclusivity (sections 4 and 5) in Ovid's renegotiation of Roman belonging for an exile. The Liberalia, to which *Tristia* 5.3 refers, was a distinctly Roman festival and not directly related to the mysteries, but it did involve the musical group worship of a god who as Liber/Bacchus hovered between Greek and Roman cultural modalities. In *Metamorphoses* Book 4, Ovid draws on Greek hymnic elements and several ritual epithets, including those associated with the mysteries, but crowns the hymnic passage with a direct address to the Roman Liber (4.11–17).[11] Similarly, in *Tristia* 5.3 Ovid blends a Roman festival with Greek chorality.[12]

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[4] Hardie (n. 2), 284.

[5] In reading *Tr.* 5.3 as dithyrambic, I join a growing conversation on the relevance of ritual performance and Greek chorality to Augustan poetry. Recently, L. Curtis, *Imagining the Chorus in Augustan Poetry* (Cambridge, 2017), especially 1–31 discusses the influence of Greek *choreia* on Augustan poetry; at 71–107 she treats Propertian elegies, though she leaves room for similar approaches to Ovid's elegies. In general, see T. Habinek, *The World of Roman Song* (Baltimore, 2005), especially 34–57 on community; D. Feeney, *Literature and Religion in Rome* (Cambridge, 1997), 115–36.

[6] G. D'Alessio, '"The name of the dithyramb": diachronic and diatopic variations', in B. Kowalzig and P. Wilson (edd.), *Dithyramb in Context* (Oxford, 2013), 113–32; C. Calame, 'The dithyramb, a dionysiac poetic form: genre rules and cultic contexts', in B. Kowalzig and P. Wilson (edd.), *Dithyramb in Context* (Oxford, 2013), 332–52; on dithyramb's self-reflection on its changeability, see B. Kowalzig and P. Wilson, 'Introduction: the world of dithyramb', in B. Kowalzig and P. Wilson (edd.), *Dithyramb in Context* (Oxford, 2013), 1–28, at 12–13.

[7] Hardie (n. 2), 272 and nn. 41, 88, 94, 95; Rutherford (n. 2), 409–18.

[8] Kowalzig and Wilson (n. 6), 24–5.

[9] On the etymological connection between *triumphus*, *thriambos*, *dithyrambos* and Dionysus, see Varro, *Ling.* 6.68; H. Versnel, *Triumphus* (Leiden, 1970), 11–55, especially 24–5; G. Ieranò, *Il ditirambo di Dioniso* (Pisa and Rome, 1997), 18 (*testimonium* 2); Rutherford (n. 2), 418–23; Hardie (n. 2), 263.

[10] Rutherford (n. 2), 423, on dithyramb in Rome: 'Dionysus and the dithyramb had, in a sense, always been about liberation, transformation, and triumph.'

[11] Miller (n. 1 [2020]), 180–1.

[12] On mixing Greek and Roman cultural elements in Ovid's exilic corpus, see E. Tola, 'Les métamorphoses de l'identité culturelle dans les *Tristes* et les *Pontiques* d'Ovide', *VL* 181 (2009), 2–9,

A reading of *Tristia* 5.3 in conversation with chorality must, however, consider the exilic position of the author. The poem is not simply a 'Roman dithyramb': the poet's isolation is highlighted, and chorality is more theme than immediate reality. Rather, I suggest that Ovid draws on the genre's characteristics and connotations in order to navigate the tension between 'past presence and present absence' and the desire to reintegrate, which thematizes his exilic poetry.[13] The salvific and communal tones of the dithyramb thus become very poignant in *Tristia* 5.3. In imagining, and perhaps effectively translating, Ovid out of solitary exile into a new kind of Roman chorus, *Tristia* 5.3 offers a dithyrambic mystic solution to the final line of the first elegy in Book 5: *uobiscum cupio quolibet esse modo* ('I want to be with you in any way I can', *Tr.* 5.1.80).[14]

1. *ILLA DIES HAEC EST*

Ovid's Bacchic elegy contains strategies of temporal and spatial manipulation that have been connected to choral poetry, particularly to dithyramb.[15] The ability of ritual, specifically of choral performance in ritual, to manipulate space and time has been noted.[16] One aspect of this is the establishing of continuity between present, past and future; what is performed in the ever-present 'now' has been performed since a mythical prototype and will continue to be performed forever. This continuity is also imagined as combining temporally and spatially separated events (mythical past, ritual present and indeterminate future) into event isotopes.[17] Albert Henrichs links moments when dramatic choruses refer explicitly to their own activity ('self-referentiality') to moments when they locate their own dancing outside of their immediate performance context and into imagined past or future performances or when they project their identity onto other choral groups 'in the allusive realm of the dramatic imagination' ('choral projection').[18]

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at 4; L. Curtis, 'Explaining exile: the aetiological poetics of Ovid, *Tristia* 3', *TAPhA* 145 (2015), 411–44.

[13] P. Hardie, *Ovid's Poetics of Illusion* (Cambridge, 2002), 287, 304.

[14] On ruptured communication and strategies of reconnection in the exile poetry, see N. Pandey, *The Poetics of Power in Augustan Rome: Latin Poetic Responses to Early Imperial Iconography* (Cambridge, 2018), 117–33, 215–39; S. Frampton, *Empire of Letters: Writing in Roman Literature and Thought from Lucretius to Ovid* (New York, 2019), 141–62.

[15] On time in the *Tristia,* see S. Hinds, 'After exile: time and teleology from *Metamorphoses* to *Ibis*', in P. Hardie, A. Barchiesi, S. Hinds (edd.), *Ovidian Transformations: Essays on Ovid's* Metamorphoses *and its Reception* (Cambridge, 1991), 48–67, especially 52: '*time* itself is always a loaded term as the *Tristia* get underway'.

[16] O. Taplin, *Greek Tragedy in Action* (London, 1978), 161–2; P. Easterling, 'Tragedy and ritual: "cry 'woe, woe', but may the good prevail!"', *Métis* 3 (1988), 87–109; P. Easterling, 'Now and forever in Greek drama and ritual', in D. Yatromanolakis and P. Roilos (edd.), *Greek Ritual Poetics* (Cambridge, MA and London, 2005), 149–60; B. Kowalzig, *Singing for the Gods: Performances of Myth and Ritual in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Oxford, 2007a), 13–55; B. Kowalzig, '"And now all the world shall dance!" Eur. *Bacch*. 114: Dionysus' *choroi* between drama and ritual', in E. Csapo and M. Miller (edd.), *The Origins of Theater in Ancient Greece and beyond: From Ritual to Drama* (Cambridge, 2007b), 221–51. On present occasion and past event in 'Roman dithyramb', see Hardie (n. 2), 120–2, 132.

[17] Cf. C. Calame, 'Legendary narration and poetic procedure in Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*', in A. Harder, R.F. Regtuit and G.C. Wakker (edd.), *Callimachus* (Groningen, 1993), 37–55. Compare the concept of relativity of simultaneity from physics: the synchronicity of spatially separated events is dependent on the observer's reference frame (velocity).

[18] A. Henrichs, 'Dancing in Athens, dancing on Delos: some patterns of choral projection in Euripides', *Philologus* 140 (1996), 48–62, at 49; A. Henrichs, '"Why should I dance?": choral self-referentiality in Greek tragedy', *Arion* 3 (1994–5), 56–111.

Thus, when choruses sing about their own or other groups' choral activity at another time/place, they create (or enter) a ritual dimension of time that is repetitive and eternally so. Following Henrichs's observations that such self-referentiality and choral projection metatheatrically connect dramatic choruses to the ritual context of their performance,[19] Eric Csapo identifies dithyrambic and mystic qualities in these choral odes: vivid descriptions of Dionysiac chorality, circular dancing and primordial groups such as Bacchants, dolphins and Nereids.[20] Recently, Naomi Weiss has further analysed the ways in which such a 'breach in the action' created by choral projection to a far-away time/ place integrates with tragic *muthos* itself. The associative process or synthesis, which exists between what is performed in the play and what is imagined in the words of the choral ode and which is triggered by this separate choral dimension, she calls 'imaginative suggestion'. Such a framework considers the thematic *and* dramatic narrative function of allusion to a particular genre, such as the dithyramb.[21]

This ritual 'combination of separateness and embeddedness'[22] connects with soteriology in mystic contexts. The chorus is central to Dionysus' mysteries, especially to their transformative force as transition rituals shifting participants from an uninitiated identity to an exclusive initiated identity. Initiands, joining the frenzied music-making of Bacchic ritual, are dislodged from their uninitiated identity and, in a state of religious ecstasy, are connected in sympathetic divine enthusiasm with the rest of the *thiasos*. Bacchic music both represents and effects divine possession, or *enthusiasmos* (literally, 'god within'). In Bacchic mysteries, this close identification with the god carries salvific and even eschatological ramifications. The transitional and transformative force of the mysteries coalesces with the broader time- and space-manipulating aspect of ritual. In ritual what can be claimed for the past can be claimed for the present and vice versa; by the same logic, whatever is claimed to be true in ritual, such as the initiate's status with relation to the god, can be extended to the future. Thus, ritual strategies of spatial and temporal manipulation contribute to mystic transformation of initiates. Furthermore, the mysteries link the ritual present to a specific future—namely, the afterlife. The ritual present, then, can make claims for the fate of the soul after death. These ritual concepts of divine identification/inspiration and movements within space and time will be relevant for the poetic activity and afterlife of a Bacchic adept already in the Underworld.

The opening phrase of *Trista* 5.3 encapsulates the temporal and spatial manipulation, which is characteristic of ritual chorus: this time is that time, this place is that place (5.3.1–4):

> illa dies haec est, qua te celebrare poetae,
> si modo non fallunt tempora, Bacche, solent,
> festaque odoratis innectunt tempora sertis,
> et dicunt laudes ad tua uina tuas.

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[19] See also A. Bierl (transl. A. Hollmann), *Ritual and Performativity: The Chorus in Old Comedy* (Cambridge, MA, 2009), 24–47.

[20] E. Csapo, 'Star choruses: Eleusis, Orphism, and New Musical imagery and dance', in M. Revermann and P. Wilson (edd.), *Performance, Iconography, Reception. Studies in Honour of Oliver Taplin* (Oxford, 2008), 262–90; E. Csapo, 'Imagining the shape of choral dance and inventing the cultic in Euripides' later tragedies', in L. Gianvittorio (ed.), *Choreutika: Performing Dance in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Pisa and Rome, 2017), 119–56.

[21] N. Weiss*, Music of Tragedy: Performance and Imagination in Euripidean Theater* (Oakland, CA, 2017), 11 and 17.

[22] Weiss (n. 21), 11.

This day is that day when poets usually celebrate you, Bacchus—as long as time does not deceive. They bind their merry temples with fragrant garlands and speak your praises to your vine.

As we will see, there are at work three dimensions of temporal and spatial manipulation, each infused with motifs from Dionysus' mysteries. The present and the past of Ovid's worship of Bacchus are combined, the places of Tomis *qua* Underworld and of Rome as locations of Bacchic worship are merged, and ultimately the present and the future of Ovid's reception in Rome are conflated. The second line of the poem begins *si modo non fallunt tempora* ('as long as time does not deceive', 5.3.2), but we will realize by the final line that the poet himself, author of *tempora cum causis* (*Fast.* 1.1), is behind the deceptive movement of time and space in the poem.[23]

2. PAST AND PRESENT

After signalling these strategies, Ovid describes his present distance from Rome and recalls his past participation in poetic symposia at the Liberalia and in the chorus of the Muses. This combines his past experience with the vividness of his present relegation, his memory of Rome with his existence in Tomis (*Tr.* 5.3.5–12):

> inter quos, memini, dum me mea fata sinebant,
>   non inuisa tibi pars ego saepe fui,
> quem nunc suppositum stellis Cynosuridos Vrsae
>   iuncta tenet crudis Sarmatis ora Getis.
> quique prius mollem uacuamque laboribus egi
>   in studiis uitam Pieridumque choro,
> nunc procul a patria Geticis circumsonor armis,
>   multa prius pelago multaque passus humo.

I remember that I was often among them, when my fate allowed me, as a participant not hated by you; now the Sarmatian shore, joined to the savage Getae, holds me placed under the stars of the Little Bear. I, who once led a pleasant life free from labour in my studies in the chorus of the Muses, am now encircled by the sounds of Getic weapons, far from my fatherland and having already suffered much at land and at sea.

In recalling the festival and his former involvement in poetry-making related to the festival, Ovid also remembers his own earlier depiction of the Liberalia in *Fast.* 3.715–24.[24] The verb *memini* (*Tr.* 5.3.5) serves as a kind of trigger or sign for intratextual memory: Ovid recalls on the current occasion of the Liberalia an earlier Liberalia, thus bringing these temporally and spatially separated events together, and not only the religious occasions themselves but also his poetic activities on those occasions. Both *Tristia* 5.3 and *Fasti* Book 3 address Bacchus. Furthermore, in remembering the past chorus of Roman poets together with his earlier poetic activity, Ovid assimilates poetry written for Bacchus to choral worship of the god. It is not insignificant, then, that the

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[23] Cf. Miller (n. 1 [2020]), 182. The pun in line 3 (*tempora*, 'temples') draws further attention to the wordplay (same pun at *Tr.* 1.1.40 and 1.7.4); cf. also *ad mea … tempora carmen* (*Met.* 1.4). On the importance of *tempora* to the *Tristia* under the influence of 'the intense thematization of time' in the *Fasti* and the *Metamorphoses*, see Hinds (n. 15), 52. On time in the *Fasti*, see C. Newlands, *Playing with Time: Ovid and the* Fasti (Ithaca and London, 1995), which does not treat the Dionysiac hymn of *Fasti* Book 3.

[24] Cf. Miller (n. 1 [2020]), 182; J. Miller, 'Ovidian allusion and the vocabulary of memory', in P. Knox (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Ovid* (Oxford, 2006), 86–99; S. Hinds, *Metamorphosis of Persephone* (Cambridge, 1987), 17.

Fasti passage recalled constitutes a pseudo-hymnic aretalogy, or aretalogy/*recusatio*: *nec referam* ('I will not retell', *Fast.* 3.715) and *sed non est carminis huius opus* ('but it is not the purpose of this song', *Fast.* 3.724). The passage fittingly also contains the myth of Bacchus and the pirates (3.723–4), famously told in the *Homeric Hymn to Bacchus* and retold in Ovid's own *Metamorphoses* (3.572–700).[25] The myth of the Tyrrhenian pirates has often been considered an *aition* of the dithyramb. The *Fasti* passage also mentions Semele struck by lightning and Dionysus' double-birth (3.715–18), Pentheus (3.721) and Lycurgus (3.722). I will return to the significance of these myths to *Tristia* 5.3 and dithyrambs.

The recollection in *Tristia* 5.3 of Ovid's earlier choral (and literary) activity alternates with lines describing his current situation, oscillating between past and present. Note the pattern *nunc–prius–nunc–prius* (7, 9, 11, 12). Particularly striking is the juxtaposition of his current position, encircled (11) with sounds of violence and the harshness of the environment in Tomis, with his former place among Bacchic worshippers (*inter quos*, 5) and Muse choruses (10). The juxtaposition makes acute Ovid's present isolation and draws attention to the distance between choral participation and exilic cacophony. On the other hand, strategies of choral projection and imaginative suggestion allow Roman chorality to be read into the poet's present circumstances. Moreover, such choral ritual strategies bring with them allusive memories, implicating past literary activity with present literary efforts. This closely knit oscillation, simultaneously depicting and eliding distance,[26] contributes to the temporal and spatial flux of the poem by employing ritual logic: my current activity is the same as that other activity in another time and place,[27] and so this activity is not bound by the linearity of time or the three dimensions of space. Different times and places merge, allowing the poet to operate on a poetic fourth dimension. Ovid's singular, isolated and lonely voice, through the hymn's choral strategies, can begin to negotiate a place in the Roman festival. By the end of the poem, Ovid addresses the poets in Rome, bringing his past attendance and present absence (or displacement in Tomis) into the present ritual occasion in Rome.

3. TWO DITHYRAMBIC MYSTIC STRATEGIES AND AN ACROSTIC

Having established his past participation in Bacchus' chorus, Ovid invokes him in present Tomis. He compares himself to the god, giving the same number of lines to Bacchus and to himself, marking the lines with *ipse quoque* (19) and *me quoque* (27). These parallel openings invite and secure the comparison (*Tr.* 5.3.19–34):[28]

> ipse quoque aetherias meritis inuectus es arces,
>   quo non exiguo facta labore uia est.
> nec patria est habitata tibi, sed adusque niuosum
>   Strymona uenisti Marticolamque Geten,
> Persidaque et lato spatiantem flumine Gangen,
>   et quascumque bibit decolor Indus aquas.

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[25] Acoetes calling water his *unum paternum* ('one father', *Met.* 3.591) may suggest the ancient identification of Homer with Ocean.

[26] On the effect, see V. Platt, *Facing the Gods: Epiphany and Representation in Graeco-Roman Art, Literature and Religion* (Cambridge, 2011), 193. On Ovid's subversive use of exilic distance, see M. Lowrie, *Performance, Writing, and Authority in Augustan Poetry* (Oxford, 2009), 259–77.

[27] While Ovid highlights the contrast between his past and present states in Rome and Tomis respectively, the present poem is nevertheless another hymn to Bacchus and the allusion also invites comparison of the poems composed on both occasions, as prompted in the first line of *Tristia* 5.3.

[28] Compare *Fast.* 3.721 *tu quoque.*

> scilicet hanc legem nentes fatalia Parcae
>   stamina bis genito bis cecinere tibi.
> me quoque, si fas est exemplis ire deorum,
>   ferrea sors uitae difficilisque premit.
> illo nec leuius cecidi, quem magna locutum
>   reppulit a Thebis Iuppiter igne suo.
> ut tamen audisti percussum fulmine uatem,
>   admonitu matris condoluisse potes,
> et potes aspiciens circum tua sacra poetas
>   'nescioquis nostri' dicere 'cultor abest'.

And as for you, you were yourself deservedly taken to the celestial citadels, whither the path is made with much labour. Nor did you dwell in your fatherland, but you went all the way to snowy Strymon and warlike Getae, and to Persia and the wide-flowing Ganges, and those waters which the dark-skinned Indian drinks. Indeed, the Parcae, spinning the fatal thread, sung this sentence twice for you at your double birth. And as for me, if it is allowed to use the gods as examples, an iron and cruel thread of fate strangles me. I fell no more lightly than he whom Jupiter threw down from Thebes with his lightning for having boasted greatly. Nevertheless, when you heard that a poet had been struck by lightning, you could have had sympathy because of memory of your mother. You could say, examining the poets circling your rites, 'someone of my worshippers is missing'.

Bacchus' eastern wanderings are matched by Ovid's eastern exile: *lex* ('sentence', 25) of wandering, sung by the Parcae, is likened to the *sors* ('fate', 28) of exile oppressing Ovid. The poet deftly swaps *lex* and *sors*—the Parcae usually weave fates and exile is typically a legal sentence—suggesting that Bacchus' travels were a legal matter and prompting further comparison between himself and the god.[29] As discussed earlier, a similar identification with the god is central to Dionysus' mysteries. Such sympathetic participation in Dionysus' vicissitudes shades into Bacchic possession, as we will see in the next several lines. In myth and his broader cult, Dionysus is always arriving and paradoxically always already among his worshippers (though often unseen).[30] Thus, the enthusiastic music of his rituals is both sign and trigger of his presence. The proximity, even to the point of elision, of Bacchus and his worshipper is reflected in the linguistic dimension: both god and initiate are called *Bakchos*. Ovid's assimilation of himself to the god in and through his Bacchic hymn has two implications drawn from the god's mysteries: inspiration/possession and transformation/rebirth.

These two implications are modulated through dithyrambic characteristics. Dithyrambs, known as the 'circular chorus' (*kuklios choros*), were an expression of civic cohesion. Beyond its circular and communal nature, the dithyramb was also, among choral genres, most closely attached to the Bacchic mysteries.[31] The *enthusiasmos* from a

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[29] See Miller (n. 1 [2020]), 187 on Ovid's comparison with Bacchus framing Augustus as Pentheus.

[30] W.F. Otto, *Dionysos. Mythos und Kultus* (Frankfurt, 1933), 74–80; R. Seaford, *Reciprocity and Ritual: Homer and Tragedy in the Developing City-State* (Oxford, 1994), 262–3.

[31] On dithyrambs and Bacchic mysteries, see especially Wilson and Kowalzig (n. 6), 7–11; S. Lavecchia, 'Il "secondo ditirambo" di Pindaro e i culti tebani', *SCO* 44 (1994), 35–93, especially 50–76; S. Lavecchia, *Pindaro: I ditirambi. Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione e commento* (Rome, 2000), 11–13, 109–15; S. Lavecchia, 'Becoming like Dionysus: dithyramb and Dionysian initiation', in B. Kowalzig and P. Wilson (edd.), *Dithyramb in Context* (Oxford, 2013), 59–75; Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007a]), 168–70; Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007b]), 226–32. Cf. also S. Lonsdale, *Dance and Ritual Play in Greek Religion* (Baltimore and London, 1993), 94–7; W. Burkert, *La religione greca di epoca arcaica e classica* (Milan, 2003), 519–28; P. Wilson, 'The politics of dance: dithyrambic contest and social order in ancient Greece', in D. Phillips and D. Pritchard (edd.), *Sport and Festival in the Ancient Greek World* (Swansea, 2003), 163–96; E. Csapo, 'The dolphins of Dionysus', in E. Csapo and M. Miller (edd.), *Poetry, Theory, Praxis* (Oxford, 2003), 69–98; E. Csapo, 'The politics of the New Music', in P. Murray and P. Wilson (edd.), *Music and the Muses: The Culture of Mousike in the Classical Athenian City* (Oxford, 2004), 207–48; Csapo (n. 20 [2008]), 284–6; Csapo (n. 20 [2017]), *passim*.

Dionysiac mystic sphere easily transfers to the poetic concept of divine inspiration, already a mainstay of poetic self-presentation from Hesiod's investiture by the Muses (*Theog.* 31–2). If Dionysus metonymically is wine, then drunkenness, too, is possession, and the god is literally present in 'drunken' poetry. The earliest mention of the dithyramb, a fragment of Archilochus, expresses the poet's wine-inspired state: ὡς Διωνύσοι᾽ ἄνακτος καλὸν ἐξάρξαι μέλος οἶδα διθύραμβον οἴνῳ συγκεραυνωθεὶς φρένας ('I know how to lead the dithyramb, the lovely song of lord Dionysus, when I am struck by lightning in the wits with wine', fr. 120 West).[32] This fragment contains key features of the dithyramb: Dionysus, wine, privileged knowledge, self-referentiality and a lightning link to Semele and the myth/ritual moment of Dionysus' very first epiphany.[33] Dithyrambic knowledge and efficacy are identified here with an experience akin to both drunkenness *qua* possession and Dionysus' lightning-facilitated arrival.[34] This combination reproduces the experience of Bacchic initiation.[35] Thus, the production of dithyramb is assimilated to Bacchic mysteries, both involving experiential identification with Dionysus.[36]

The ritual experience of Dionysus' epiphany replays on one level the god's first appearance at his (second) birth which was facilitated by lightning.[37] Early dithyrambs may have been perceived as performing or inducing Dionysus' epiphanic modality by recollecting through their ecstatic ritualized music the myths of his arrivals, such as his double birth and other miraculous appearances among mortals. One such myth is his appearance among the Tyrrhenian pirates, mentioned in the Liberalia passage of Book 3 of the *Fasti*, a passage that shares many features with the myth of Arion, inventor of the dithyramb.[38] Other prominent myths are those of Pentheus and Lycurgus, which will soon appear in *Tristia* 5.3. The association of the dithyramb's name with Dionysus' thunderous second birth, making the dithyramb a song for Dionysus–Dithyrambus ('Dionysus-through-two-doors'),[39] frames lightning as the facilitator of both the genre and the god's first epiphany. So much is reflected in Archilochus' fragment. Ovid seems to gesture towards this same aspect of the genre's association with Dionysiac ritual and myth in *bis genito bis cecinere tibi* (26).[40] The double *bis* may constitute etymological play on the putative derivation of *dithyrambos* from δίς ('twice'),[41] making the Parcae

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[32] On which, see A. D'Angour, 'Music and movement in the dithyramb', in B. Kowalzig and P. Wilson (edd.), *Dithyramb in Context* (Oxford, 2013), 198–219.

[33] Kowalzig and Wilson (n. 6), 4.

[34] Drunkenness: Epicharm. fr. 132; Lonsdale (n. 31), 89. Dionysus' birth: Plut. *De E apud Delph.* 389A; C. Riedweg, *Mysterienterminologie bei Platon, Philon und Klemens von Alexandrien* (Berlin, 1987), 51, 63; Lonsdale (n. 31), 91.

[35] Lavecchia (n. 31 [2000]), 12–13 and (n. 31 [2013]), 60–3 observes in Pindar's dithyrambs the prominence of Dionysus and Semele, the origin of the dithyramb linked to the birth of Dionysus, and (the archetype of) the festival and its time/place of performance.

[36] Lavecchia (n. 31 [2013]), 61; Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007b]), 230; Seaford (n. 30), 281–93.

[37] Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007b]), 229–32.

[38] Arion: Hdt. 1.23–4. Dionysus: *Hymn. Hom. Bacch.* On the connection of the myths to the dithyramb, cf. W. Burkert, *Homo necans. Interpretationen altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen* (Berlin, 1972), 218–26; B. Zimmerman, *Dithyrambos. Geschichte einer Gattung* (Göttingen, 1992), 24–9; Lonsdale (n. 31), 93–9. See Csapo (n. 20 [2017]), 140–3 and (n. 31 [2003]), 90–4; Lavecchia (n. 31 [2013]), 65 on the 'dithyrambization of the dolphins'.

[39] Pind. fr. 85; Eur. *Bacch.* 519–29; Pl. *Leg.* 700b. Cf. Lavecchia (n. 31 [2000]), 12–13; Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007b]), 229–30.

[40] For the allusion to Tib. 1.7.1, cf. Hardie (n. 2), 284.

[41] Cf. Hor. *Carm.* 4.2.50 (*nec semel dicemus*), with Hardie (n. 2), 263 observing that *nec semel di–* similarly plays on the etymology of dithyramb. Ovid may also allude to Horace's wordplay at *Fast.* 3.714 (**nec referam Semel**em).

singers of dithyramb and giving the genre eschatological significance. The poet, himself *percussum fulmine* (31), is thereafter likened to the twice-born god, an identification strengthened by *admonitu matris* (32) in the next line.

   The ritual experience of Dionysiac epiphany on another level introduces possession and inspiration. The dithyramb's association with Dionysiac epiphany has led even to its identification with the god himself as Dionysus–Dithyrambus: the dithyramb, beyond ordinary hymn, contains the god himself as performer and energizer of the song. In the Archilochus fragment and, as we will see, in the more explicitly hymnic section of *Tristia* 5.3 such inspiration activates poetic ability. As the twice-born god is both transforming and transformative, the possessed/inspired characteristic of the dithyramb also contributes to its changeable nature and its ability to perform change in the singing community and beyond.[42] From Dionysiac transformation and identification with the god who was himself born twice, one arrives at the soteriological aspect of Dionysiac myth and mysteries, which likewise finds expression in the dithyramb.[43] Ovid seems to hint also at the dithyramb's association with the mysteries with *tua sacra* (33), which, especially after mention of Dionysus' rebirth and assimilation of the poet through lightning to the god's experience, likely refers to the Bacchic mysteries.[44]

   Following these gestures towards the dithyramb and the mysteries, Ovid, in a more forceful hymnic section, summons the aid of wine and the sounds of mythic satyrs and Bacchants, onto whose music he projects his poetic activity, encircled as it is by the noisiness of war (11). The sound of these primordial Bacchic choruses is, like the poet, thunderstruck (*attonito*, 38). Thus, their Dionysiac and inspired activity can be conceptually merged with Ovid's hymning. Ovid thus transfers the lightning of Dionysiac dithyrambic epiphany, inspiration and rebirth to his exilic state. In this way, he not only maps his own poetry onto a mythical/ritual choral occasion but also reworks his own lonely circumstances through imaginative suggestion, bringing Bacchic *choreia* into his elegy in Tomis. The nature of lightning morphs from punitive (31), though even there are suggestions of salvific Bacchic mystic lightning, to inspired (38). He changes the very force of the lightning of Tomis and the nature of the sounds around him, making his lonely circumstances, through the medium of the hymn itself, a new kind of Roman Bacchic *choreia*.

   As in the Archilochus fragment, Ovid's dithyrambic hymning involves wine. The sympathetic 'drunkenness' between Ovid and the mythical Bacchic choruses is emphasized with a hitherto unnoticed acrostic, *FVSA*, 'poured out', in lines 35–8 (*Tr.* 5.3.35–46):[45]

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   [42] Kowalzig and Wilson (n. 6), 3, 7.

   [43] On Pindar's dithyrambs especially, see Lavecchia (n. 31 [1994]) and (n. 31 [2000]); Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007a]), 227–8 and (n. 16 [2007b]), 168–70.

   [44] Luck (n. 1) *on Tr.* 5.33; *pace* Miller (n. 1 [2002]), n. 31.

   [45] If we allow telestichs, then the uneven margin of elegiacs does not pose a problem for spotting this acrostic. On telestichs in Ovid, see recently J. Abad del Vecchio, 'Literal bodies (*SOMATA*): a telestich in Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 1.406–11)', *CQ* 71 (2021), 688–92; K. Mitchell, 'Acrostics and telestichs in Augustan poetry: Ovid's edgy and subversive sideswipes', *CCJ* 66 (2020), 165–81. On authorial intention and reading practice concerning acrostics and telestichs, see M. Robinson, 'Looking edgeways. Pursuing acrostics in Ovid and Virgil', *CQ* 69 (2019), 290–308, at 290–1; M. Robinson, 'Arms and a mouse: approaching acrostics in Ovid and Vergil', *MD* 82 (2019), 23–73, at 24–42; J.D. Hejduk, 'Was Vergil reading the Bible? Original sin and an astonishing acrostic in the *Orpheus and Eurydice*', *Vergilius* 64 (2018), 71–102, at 73–4; G. Morgan, '*Nullam, Vare* … chance or choice in *Odes* 1.18?', *Philologus* 137 (1993), 142–5, at 143.

fer, bone Liber, opem: sic altera degrauet ulmum
    uitis et incluso plena sit uua mero,
sic tibi cum Bacchis Satyrorum gnaua iuuentus
    adsit, et attonito non taceare sono,
ossa bipenniferi sic sint male pressa Lycurgi,
    impia nec poena Pentheos umbra uacet,
sic micet aeternum uicinaque sidera uincat
    coniugis in caelo clara corona tuae:
huc ades et casus releues, pulcherrime, nostros,
    unum de numero me memor esse tuo.
sunt dis inter se commercia; flectere tempta
    Caesareum numen numine, Bacche, tuo.

Help me, good Liber: may another vine weigh down the branch, and may the grapes be filled with wine within. Thus may the energetic youthfulness of the Satyrs together with the Bacchae be present; may you not be kept hidden in their thunderstruck cry; may the bones of Lycurgus the axe-bearer be crushed; may Pentheus' impious shade never lack punishment; and may the crown of your wife, bright in the heavens, glitter forever and surpass the neighbouring stars. Be here and soften my downfall, most fair one, remembering that I am one of yours. There is negotiation between the gods. Bacchus, try to bend Caesar's might with your own.

While the poet calls for the aid of wine—both Liber himself, metonymically, and the grapes which will be full of his vintage—and Bacchic choral community,[46] the perfect participle *fusa* in the acrostic indicates that already the wine is poured out and, as a result of Bacchic drunkenness, the composition of this dithyrambic hymn is possible in the first place.

The acrostic might be further expanded in light of the broader content. Lines 39–40 recall Dionysus' victory over his mythical enemies, Pentheus and Lycurgus, who, as we saw earlier, are recalled along with the Tyrrhenian pirates from the Liberalia passage of *Fasti* Book 3.[47] As myths of Dionysiac epiphany and resistance that was turned into compliance, Pentheus and Lycurgus are, like the pirates who were turned into dolphins, similarly attached to the dithyramb's origins.[48] The epiphany of Dionysus in these myths marks the point when those who initially resist him are forced to accept his rites. Similarly, in Bacchic initiation, the choral presence of Dionysus marks the initiate's change of status. It has been argued that the same shift is expressed in archaic dithyrambs—for example Pindar's *Dithyramb* 2,[49] in which the moment of the god's appearance marks the transition between the mythical narrative section of the dithyramb and the self-referential expressions of the ritual setting of the performance.[50] Conversely, the moment of Dionysus' reappearance, that is, his epiphany, in his myths, often in a choral setting, marks the point when myth elides into ritual immediacy, where Dionysus is also understood to appear among his worshippers. The choral form of Dionysiac ritual re-enacts his mythic *thiasoi*, including those who once resisted him. Choral performance,

[46] *Tr.* 5.3.4 (*laudes ad tua uina tuas*) already signals Bacchus' presence in both chorus and wine with a double *tuus.*

[47] Miller (n. 1 [2020]), 188 notes that the *aretai* of *Tristia* 5.3 are typical of Bacchic prayer.

[48] Both myths are subjects of tragedies; on the relationship between dithyramb and drama, see Hardie (n. 2), 276. That dithyrambic aetiologies share many characteristics with Dionysiac resistance myths suggests the identification of the god with the genre: Kowalzig and Wilson (n. 6), 9.

[49] On which, see A. D'Angour, 'How the dithyramb got its shape', *CQ* 47 (1997), 331–51.

[50] Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007b]), 229–30. On narrative as a defining characteristic of dithyramb, see D. Fearn, *Bacchylides: Politics, Performance, Poetic Tradition* (Oxford, 2007), 163–225; E. Csapo, 'New Music's gallery of images: the "dithyrambic" first stasimon of Euripides' *Electra*', in J. Cousland and J. Hume (edd.), *The Play of Texts and Fragments: Essays in Honour of Martin Cropp* (Leiden, 2009), 95–109.

then, links myth and ritual through the shared presence of Dionysus, creating the link across time and space through self-reference, choral projection and imaginative suggestion.

With such myths in the broader text it is possible to continue reading down the margins of lines 39–45 to give *OISCHVS*. The whole acrostic for lines 35–45 would then read: φυσάω ἰσχύς ('I, divine might, blow').[51] *fer* invokes, *fusa* expresses inebriation, and φυσάω suggests inspiration. If we can discern the first-person voice of the god in the margin,[52] then the efficacy of Ovid's hymnic summoning of Bacchus' epiphany is secured. Conversely, the god's very (active) presence is the origin of the poet's (passive) inspiration. In-text acrostic signposts are also discernible, which point the reader to the margin. Two lines before the beginning of the acrostic the reader will have read *aspiciens* ('examining', 32), encouraging them to look more closely. Relevant to myths in which initial resistance is met with divine epiphany, *taceare* (38) indicates a hidden nature, or rather, with *non,* the revelation of something hidden.[53] The non-concealment of the god within the thunderstruck cry of the Bacchants links the acrostic to the force of ritual cry and cult hymn that effects epiphany. Immediately thereafter come the myths of the defeat of Bacchus' enemies, that is, the moments of his epiphany. It is also the line where the passive Latin acrostic *FVSA* switches to the active Greek first-person φυσάω.[54] *incluso* (36) likewise hints at enclosed or encoded meanings and, describing the requested wine contained in grapes, links the acrostic to Liber *qua* wine.[55] The hidden presence of the acrostic parallels the about-to-arrive and paradoxically already-arrived characteristic of Dionysus discussed earlier. The secretive and exclusive nature of the mysteries, too, offers a fitting context for Bacchus' acrostic presence. *degrauet ulmum* (35) suggests the downward direction of the letters, hanging like a bunch of grapes from the in-line *fer*. *casus* (43) again suggests a downward reading, perhaps recalling also the poet's earlier *cecidi* (29) when struck by Jove's lightning.

The ending of the final line of the acrostic, if suspended before the next line contextualizes the command, may prompt the reader to 'try to translate' (*flectere tempta*, 45) the Greek.[56] Moreover, the line following the end of the proposed acrostic contains twice a possible Latin rendering of divine ἰσχύς: *numen numine* (46). *numine adflatus/ adflor* translates ἐνθουσιαστικός, which, I have argued, underlies this passage that asks for Liber's aid. Thus, the words of the context thematically secure the acrostic's message of divine inspiration. The merging of Greek dithyramb with Roman festival in *Tristia* 5.3, too, provides an apt atmosphere for a transliterated Greek acrostic. When read with the

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[51] φῦσα ὦ ἰσχύ 'oh grown might' and φύσα ὦ ἰσχύ 'blow, oh might' are also possible. For Greek acrostics and telestichs in Ovid, see Mitchell (n. 45); Abad del Vecchio (n. 45). On transliterated Greek wordplay and acrostics, rare but not unrecognized, see E. Rick, 'Cicero belts Aratus: the bilingual acrostic at *Aratea* 317–20', *CQ* 69 (2019), 222–8; J. Danielewicz, 'Vergil's *certissima signa* reinterpreted: the Aratean *LEPTE* acrostic in *Georgics* 1', *Eos* 100 (2013), 287–95; J. Danielewicz, '*ASTER, ASTER, ASTER*: a triple transliterated Greek acrostic in Vergil's *Eclogue* 4.361–6', *Philologus* 163 (2019), 361–6; L. Kronenberg, 'The tenth of age of Apollo and a new acrostic in *Eclogue* 4', *Philologus* 161 (2017), 337–9.

[52] For ἰσχύς as 'divine might', see LSJ s.v. 2.

[53] Of note is the passive sense of the word, meaning not simply 'to be silent' but rather 'to be secret/concealed'. See Lewis and Short s.v. *taceo* 2.A.II.b.

[54] For bilingual wordplay elsewhere in the *Tristia*, see Curtis (n. 12), 424–35.

[55] Compare *Pont.* 3.3.104, on which see R.A. Smith, '*Nomen inest:* a declining domicile and caustic acrostics in *Ex Ponto* III.3', *A&R* 7/8 (2014), 45–64 and Mitchell (n. 45), 175 n. 29.

[56] *TLL* 6.1.897.11 (s.v. *flecto* 4.A.2): '*vertere in aliam linguam*: Manil. 3.41 *non omnia nomina Graeca flecti possunt*'.

horizontal text, the acrostic mutually confirms and is confirmed by a bilingual and biliteral/multiliteral atmosphere haunted by a biform and bicultural god.[57]

The simultaneity of the acrostic and the horizontal text furthermore enacts on the level of reading the same spatial and temporal manipulation at play on the level of the poem's ritual logic. Ovid projects his current hymnic activity onto the mythical choruses of Dionysus and the past and present chorus of poets in Rome, calling on the divine presence that defines all of their chorality. At the same time, in his own margin he suggests that that same inspiring/inebriating presence has already invigorated and validated his own ritualized poetry, allowing such projection to be effective. The text is able to call on the god at the same time as it hints at the presence of the divinity that has already arrived. Various instances and modes of meaning occur simultaneously in the text in the same way that multiple events of myth, ritual and performance merge with Dionysus' enthusing epiphany as the lynchpin.

Returning to the question of soteriology: Ovid's transferral of initiatory lightning into *Tristia* 5.3 also suggests Dionysiac rebirth and reintegration. As noted earlier, the dithyrambic poet, like the Bacchic initiate, is assimilated to Bacchus in being thunderstruck. Though the immediate point of comparison for the thunderstruck Ovid (31) is the unfortunate Semele (32)—or the boastful Capaneus (29–30)—in a dithyrambic context, the exilic image of lightning is overlaid with more positive connotations of Dionysus' rebirth. Capaneus was struck by lightning for claiming invincibility on par with the gods. Ovid claims, though less explicitly, a similar likeness to Semele and Dionysus, both of whom were midwifed by lightning. The comparisons evoke, not without irony, two kinds of Jovian lightning: punitive and divinizing. The former flashes throughout the *Tristia*; in *Tristia* 5.3, the two strike in close succession. The bolt that doomed both Semele and Ovid also delivered Dionysus. *percussum fulmine* (31) thus connects death, and even penalty, with Bacchic epiphany, dithyrambic inspiration and mystic rebirth. Such connections suggest a return from death to life, and analogously from Tomis *qua* Underworld to Rome, for the poet through his inspired, even lightning-struck, hymn. But it is not only Bacchus and the Bacchic initiate to whom the poet assimilates himself. Dionysus once performed a *katabasis* to rescue his lightning-struck mother from Hades.[58] The imperatives *fer opem* (35) and *huc ades* (43) summon or effect the presence of Dionysus into the very Underworld of Tomis. Epiphany is common in hymns and particularly striking and salvific in a Dionysiac context; the god's presence is necessary for the mysteries' eschatological goal. If Ovid is successful in effecting the epiphany of Bacchus in the Underworld of Tomis, his hymn will project him from deathly Tomis into the lively Roman chorus of poets, where the god is also present.

Ovid's request for Bacchus' epiphany in Tomis extends to Bacchus' intercession with the emperor (*flectere tempta* | *Caesareum numen numine, Bacche, tuo* 'Bacchus, try to bend Caesar's might with your own', 45–6).[59] In the context of transformation and community, the request to 'bend Caesar's might' suggests that the eschatologically concerned ritual strategies of the mysteries are deployed for a civic kind of salvation in Ovid's 'dithyramb'. Rescue from the Underworld of Tomis translates directly into social reintegration in Rome. Such soteriological civic concerns accord with dithyrambic narratives of resistance myths. As noted above, performance of rejection of the god also enacts the city's eventual acceptance of

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[57] Abad del Vecchio (n. 45), 692: 'bilingual/bi-literal atmosphere'.

[58] Diod. Sic. 4.25.4; Paus. 2.31.2, 2.37.6; Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.38; Hyg. *Fab.* 251 and *Poet. astr.* 2.5. On *katabasis* as part of the Dionysiac experience, see M. Nilsson, *The Dionysiac Mysteries of the Hellenistic and Roman Age* (Lund, 1957), 116–32; R. Seaford, 'Dionysiac drama and the Dionysian mysteries', *CQ* 31 (1981), 252–75.

[59] These lines may confirm the acrostic: Caesar will know what he means.

his rites.[60] Such change is played out in Pindar's 'Argive' dithyrambs, which narrate Perseus' conflict with Dionysus, itself the aetiology for the god's local mysteries at Lake Alcyonis in Lerna.[61] Barbara Kowalzig places the dithyrambs in this cult context, arguing that Perseus' resistance to Dionysus' rites in the myth section of the dithyramb leads to the establishing of Dionysus' mystery cult in Argos and the re-emergence of his rites in their choral form in the dithyramb itself.[62] The dithyrambs then perform the simultaneous rejection and acceptance of the rites, re-enacting the aetiological resistance myth and affirming through ritual performance the city's acceptance of the god's cult.[63] Since the actors in Dionysiac resistance myth are usually members of the civic body (for example the Theban women in Euripides' *Bacchae*), the dithyramb's implication is a social reconfiguration of Dionysus' worshippers *qua* members of society.[64] In dithyramb, the re-enactment of Dionysiac myths, both those of his arrival and those of his resistance which was turned into acceptance, also performs his transformative and community-creating choral rites. Not all of Dionysus' rituals are mystic—the eschatological concerns of the mysteries would be adjusted for civic concerns—but mystic strategies of involvement are suitable for addressing a wider audience.[65] The dithyramb thus performs publicly (in the social or civic sphere) the kind of transformation normally exclusive to the mystic community.[66]

4. PRESENT AND FUTURE

The final dimension involved in this dithyrambic elegy's temporal and spatial manipulation appears in the final twelve lines of the poem. Ovid turns from mythical choruses and projects his poetic activity in Tomis onto the current Bacchic celebrations in Rome, inaugurating his poetic reception (*Tr.* 5.3.47–58):

> uos quoque, consortes studii, pia turba, poetae,
> > haec eadem sumpto quisque rogate mero.
> atque aliquis uestrum, Nasonis nomine dicto,
> > opponat lacrimis pocula mixta suis,
> admonitusque mei, cum circumspexerit omnes,
> > dicat 'ubi est nostri pars modo Naso chori?'
> idque ita, si uestrum merui candore fauorem,
> > nullaque iudicio littera laesa meo est,
> si, ueterum digne ueneror cum scripta uirorum,
> > proxima non illis esse minora reor.
> sic igitur dextro faciatis Apolline carmen:
> > quod licet, inter uos nomen habete meum.

[60] Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007a]), 168–70 and (n. 16 [2007b]), 230.
[61] Paus. 2.20.4, 22.1, 23.7–8; Nonnus, *Dion.* 47.
[62] Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007b]), 226–32. Lavecchia (n. 31 [2000]), 115 n. 36 and (n. 31 [2013]), 66–8 argues that *Dithyramb* 1 referred to this myth. On resistance myths, see C. Sourvinou-Inwood, 'Something to do with Athens: tragedy and ritual', in S. Hornblower and R. Osborne (edd.), *Ritual, Finance, Politics*: *Athenian Democratic Accounts Presented to David Lewis* (Oxford, 1994), 147–88; R. Seaford, *Euripides Bacchae* (Warminster, 1996), 45.
[63] Kowalzig and Wilson (n. 6), 9.
[64] Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007a]), 169.
[65] Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007b]), 231–2.
[66] Cf. Lavecchia (n. 31 [2013]), 62–3, (n. 31 [2000]), 11–12, 109–15, and (n. 31 [1994]), 50–76; Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007a]), 168–70 and (n. 16 [2007b]), 226–32; Burkert (n. 31), 519–28, 530–3; Lonsdale (n. 31), 96–7. Wilson (n. 31), 163–96 discusses the mystic aspects of Dionysus summoned to resolve political *stasis* in Pind. *Dithyramb* 3.

As for you, poets, fellow scholars, observant crowd, each of you, when the wine is drunk, ask these same things. And some one of you, when Ovid's name is mentioned, let him offer a cup mixed with his tears, and, reminded of me when he has looked around at everyone, let him say, 'where is Naso who was just part of our chorus?' And [do] this thus, if I have earned your favour by my honesty, if no writing has been harmed by my judgement and if, when I revere the worthy writings of ancient men, I nevertheless do not think recent ones are less than them. Thus, therefore, may you make a song with Apollo at your right hand: as is allowed, keep my name amongst you.

The words *uos quoque* (47) respond to *ipse quoque* (19) and *me quoque* (27), discussed earlier. These three points triangulate those involved in a ritual chorus: the choral community, the god and the individual. The chorus of poets share Ovid's enthusiasm: they too drink wine (48) and perform for Bacchus. Ovid even asks them to make the same request he makes (48). Thus, Bacchus is among them in Rome and with Ovid in Tomis at the same time, merging the two disparate locations through the shared presence of the god.

Dithyrambic and mystic strategies of community creation continue as Ovid asks the poets to name him: *Nasonis nomine dicto* ('when Naso's name is mentioned', 49), *ubi est ... Naso?* ('where is Naso?', 52), *inter uos nomen habete meum* ('keep my name amongst you', 58). Repetitive naming is a strategy of cult music that is understood to effect epiphany. Bacchic music's ability to effect the god's presence and its simultaneous state of divine possession is reflected in the use of repetitive and accumulated *epiklēsis,* calling on the god's various epithets. The force of such *epiklēsis* is imagined as effecting the god's appearance in the midst of the chorus.[67] Since several of Bacchus' epithets derive from cult cries, the sound of the shouted/sung epithet becomes the sonic presence of the god.[68] It is usually Augustus who is assimilated to a god (Jupiter with his punishing lightning), and so Ovid's self-assimilation to Bacchus, particularly in such ritualized modes, strikes a defiant note. The repeated naming of Ovid extends his identification with Bacchus: as a chorus would name the god into appearing *inter uos*, so the Roman poets (Ovid claims) will name him and bring him into their midst in Rome.

5. CLOSING THE BOOKS

I will conclude with the metaliterary elements of these final lines, which allow Ovid to reflect back the dithyrambic strategies of transformation and rebirth on his literary corpus and upon Roman literature as well. Alex Hardie points out that *dextro Apolline* (57) responds to the setting of Propertius 3.17, the Palatine temple of Liber which is next to the Palatine Magna Mater (*iuxta dea*, Prop. 3.17.35). Nearby is the temple of Palatine Apollo and its library. The words *dextro Apolline*, literally 'with Apollo on the right', also

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[67] E. Csapo, 'Later Euripidean music', *ICS* 24–5 (1999–2000), 399–426 and (n. 31 [2004]) connects dithyrambic virtuosity to cultic roots; A. Ford, 'The poetics of dithyramb', in B. Kowalzig and P. Wilson (edd.), *Dithyramb in Context* (Oxford, 2013), 313–31 connects New Dithyramb's linguistic extravagance to cultic strategies, suggesting that New Dithyramb borrowed from incantatory *epiklēsis* for the prioritization of sound over meaning in epithet innovation. Similar Bacchic *epiklēsis* is found at Hor. *Carm.* 4.2.49–50 (*teque, dum procedis, 'io Triumphe' | non semel dicemus, 'io Triumphe'*), elucidated by Hardie (n. 2), 256–7, 263.
[68] One might compare the emotional and spiritual effect of Handel's Hallelujah chorus.

encode the meaning 'with Apollo's library next door'.[69] Reference to a library and the *iudicium* (54) of fellow poets is paired with the theme of (poetic) memory. Ovid refers to his own poetic memory, including himself in past and, importantly, contemporary Roman literature (55–6). At the same time, crucially, one of the present Roman poets will remember Ovid (51). The words *admonitus mei* (51) echo *admonitu matris* (32) in the same metrical position at the beginning of the line. Ovid's dithyrambic recollection of Semele elides into the recollection of Ovid by Roman poets. On the one hand, assimilation to Semele suggests, as discussed above, anticipation of rebirth/rescue. On the other hand, the assimilation of story to story and of myth to myth anticipates Ovid's reception in Rome through literary memory and suggests another kind of Bacchic transformation and rebirth: a place in the chorus merges into a place in the canon.[70]

However, it is not just Ovid's own social-literary status that is transformed. As discussed earlier, identification between Dionysus and worshipper is central to his mysteries. Another facet of the identifying function of the mysteries is the creation of new exclusivity. The mysteries were famously exclusive and secretive, but by being open to practically anyone they differed from other religious avenues which limited participation to particular groups of people.[71] The enthusiastic presence of the god transforms the participants in the chorus and, by assimilating them to himself, eliminates social distinctions. Thus, the mysteries formed a paradoxically democratic exclusivity based on shared experience rather than pre-existing criteria.[72] It may be productive, then, to consider in this light Ovid's claim throughout the *Tristia* to speak to his audience directly rather than through official channels;[73] the excluded poet fashions his own new exclusivity.[74] Furthermore, in addition to transforming the social status of his worshippers, as discussed above, Bacchus reconstitutes the entire civic body into his *thiasos*.[75] The dithyramb performs publicly and communally the transformational force of the exclusive mystic choral group. In light of the potential for the dithyramb to be used in civic spheres to create and affirm communal identities, a further poetic—specifically relating to Ovid and Tomis—usage seems at the very least reasonable. Through the dithyrambic hymn in *Tristia* 5.3 Ovid redefines and refashions the Roman community into a literary *thiasos* to which he, even in exile, can claim he belongs.

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[69] Hardie (n. 2), 282–4; cf. his discussion of *laurea . . . Apollinari* (4.2.9) and literary competition at (n. 2), 273–5. On Apollo Palatinus, see J. Miller, *Apollo, Augustus, and the Poets* (Cambridge, 2009), 185–252.

[70] On the *iudicium*, cf. Hardie (n. 2), 282–5; on canon as chorality, see Curtis (n. 5), 130–72.

[71] Bar murderers and non-Greek speakers; see e.g. Schol. Ar. *Ran.* 369; Suet. *Ner.* 34. Cf. W. Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Oxford, 1985), 286–7; M.B. Cosmopoulos, *Bronze Age Eleusis and the Origins of the Eleusinian Mysteries* (Cambridge, 2015), 18 with n. 58.

[72] Kowalzig (n. 16 [2007a]), 168–70 and (n. 16 [2007b]), 231–2 on the 'new exclusivity' of mystery cults.

[73] For example *Tr.* 3.1.79–80.

[74] It may also be productive to consider Ovid's thematization of illicit sight, secrecy and special knowledge (e.g. *Tr.* 2.146) within dynamics borrowed from the mysteries.

[75] On the involvement of *omnis ciuitas* as one of the 'dithyrambic' features of Hor. *Carm.* 4.2, see Hardie (n. 2), 270–1.