

The correspondence is more broadly significant as a particularly clear piece of evidence for Sappho's presence in the *Aeneid*, which scholarship has only recently begun to detect.<sup>3</sup> Book 4 opens with metaphorical descriptions of female passion ultimately traceable to Sappho ('love as a wounding battle', 'love as fire': *Aen.* 4.1–2, cf. Sappho, fr. 1.27–8, 31.9–10), and so at this early stage of Dido's romance with Aeneas the Sapphic reference is very suitable. Yet the news of the wedding will spread, not to the Trojan φίλοι but to the hostile local suitors, recalling Nausicaa's fear of a φῆμιν ὀδευκέα on the part of the Phaeacians if she were seen to marry a foreigner (Hom. *Od.* 6.273).<sup>4</sup> The poet's comment on Dido's *culpa*, in her belief that she is now married to Aeneas (*Aen.* 4.172), leads the reader to expect a reversal in the manner of a tragic (rather than lyric) victim of love, and eventually the Sapphic love-metaphors become real, in Dido's suicide by a fatal stab on an actual pyre (4.630–66). At that point Rumour again spreads the news (*concussam bacchatur Fama per urbem*, 4.666) and thus makes explicit the foreboding undertone that was contained in the memory of Hector and Andromache's ill-fated wedding at her earlier appearance (*magnas it Fama per urbes*, 4.173).

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## NAPE *VERTIT*: A NOTE ON OVID, *AMORES* 1.12\*

### ABSTRACT

*The hairdresser who carries Ovid's invitation to his puella in Amores 1.11 is almost immediately blamed for his rejection in 1.12, before that blame is transferred to the tablets carrying that invitation. Nape (the enslaved hairdresser of the puella) has been linked to the character Dipsas, appearing in 1.7, specifically through the descriptor sobria. By focussing on the use of the verb uerto, the reference to the mythical strix, and curses related to the old age of both Dipsas and the tablets in 1.7 and 1.12, this note demonstrates that the supernatural word choice further connects Nape with Dipsas.*

**Keywords:** Ovid; *Amores*; Latin elegy; *lena*; intratextuality; supernatural; witches

In Ovid's *Amores* 1.12, the second poem of the diptych that recounts a rejected invitation, we find the first-person narrator (ostensibly Ovid himself) transfer his hostility at this rejection from the *puella* to her enslaved hairdresser (who carried the message

<sup>3</sup> E.E. Prodi, 'Sappho', in R.F. Thomas and J.M. Ziolkowski (edd.), *The Virgil Encyclopedia* (Malden, Mass., 2014), 1118–19; S. Harrison, 'Shades of Sappho in Vergil', in T.S. Thorsen and S. Harrison (edd.), *Roman Receptions of Sappho* (Oxford, 2019), 137–50; and, for general context, L. Morgan, 'Sappho at Rome', in P.J. Finglass and A. Kelly (edd.), *The Cambridge Companion to Sappho* (Cambridge, 2021), 290–302.

<sup>4</sup> See Hardie (n. 2), 86–7 n. 31 on this and further epic models.

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from 'Ovid' to the *puella*) and finally to the tablets themselves. Indeed, Nape (the enslaved hairdresser of the *puella*) is read by some as being connected, primarily through the descriptor *sobria* 'sober', with the *lena* of the *puella*, Dipsas, who appears in *Amores* 1.8.<sup>1</sup> If we reconsider the text of 1.12, however, I propose that we can further see Nape and Dipsas, two characters who possess an undue and baleful influence over the *puella*, as being even more closely aligned through the mystical language employed in the description of the tablets and the duplicity associated with those tablets in 1.12.

As 'Ovid' transfers the blame from one intermediary of his message (Nape) to another (the tablets), he does not blame the words themselves (his own message) for failing to persuade his *puella*, but sees the medium as at fault. Indeed, this transference of blame dominates the majority of the poem (*Am.* 1.12.15–20):

illum etiam, qui uos ex arbore uertit in usum,  
 conuincam puras non habuisse manus.  
 praebuit illa arbor misero suspendia collo,  
 carnifici diras praebuit illa cruces;  
 illa dedit turpes raucis bubonibus umbras,  
 uulturis in ramis et strigis oua tulit.

Even him who transformed you from the tree for use,  
 I will convict of having had impure hands.  
 That tree offered for hanging some wretch by the neck,  
 offered to the executioner as dreadful crosses;  
 it gave foul shade to the raucous owls,  
 carried the eggs of a vulture and an 'owl' in its branches.<sup>2</sup>

Everything about the tablets is considered to be against the lover, from the character of the man who cut down the tree, to the nature of the tree itself, and even the animals who once made their home there.

Moreover, the connection between the tablets and Nape is one that has been well documented by other scholars. The adjective *duplices* at *Am.* 1.12.27 is well understood to be an example of Ovid's clever rhetoric, referring both to the tablets' folding construction and to their 'duplicity' against 'Ovid' who wrote on them. Although McKeown commented that this 'seems to offer a somewhat unnecessary explanation of the joke', Pasco-Pranger has demonstrated the connection and complexity of this adjective's appearance, particularly as it connects to the *simplex* of *Am.* 1.10.13.<sup>3</sup> Pasco-Pranger explains that implicit in Nape's role as a go-between is her lack of *simplicitas* and that the pre-existing understanding of the moral sense behind *simplicitas* reinforces the moral meaning behind *duplices* when it is thus applied to the tablets. Essentially, if the tablets are *duplices*, then so too is Nape. Henderson, meanwhile, who considers Nape as a forerunner of Cypassis (and subject of the narrator's affection in *Amores* 2.7 and 2.8), notes that Nape gets her name from the '«grove» or «Coppices» which bespeak(s) «raw material for poetry»', thus making her both the material of

<sup>1</sup> J.C. McKeown, *Ovid: Amores. Text, Prolegomena and Commentary in Four Volumes. Volume II. A Commentary on Book One* (Liverpool, 1989), 326; N.B. Pandey, 'Caput mundi: female hair as symbolic vehicle of domination in Ovidian love elegy', *CJ* 113 (2018), 454–88; M. Pasco-Pranger, 'Duplicitous simplicity in Ovid, *Amores* 1', *CQ* 62 (2012), 721–30, at 728.

<sup>2</sup> All translations are mine. Here I translate *strigis* as 'owl', but according to *Ov. Fast.* 6.141–2 a *strix* was believed to be the owl-like form of a transformed witch.

<sup>3</sup> McKeown (n. 1), 335; Pasco-Pranger (n. 1).

Ovid's poetry and the physical material (wood) of his writing tablets.<sup>4</sup> Fitzgerald, building on the work of Henderson, has further found a connection between Nape and the tablets through the descriptors of the writing tablets as *fidās ... ministras* 'faithful servants' (*Am.* 1.11.27), arguing that the 'constant slippage in this poem between tablets and maid' suggests to the reader that they are substitutes for or extensions of one another.<sup>5</sup>

With this connection between tablets and enslaved hairdresser in mind, the verb applied to those tablets at *Am.* 1.12.15 can thus subtextually be linked with Nape as well, while also subtly tying the construction of the tablets to the theoretically supernatural skills of the stereotypical elegiac *lena*.<sup>6</sup> Here I have translated *uertit* as 'transformed', yet one of the possible definitions of *uertere* is 'to change' in terms of magical or supernatural transformations.<sup>7</sup> In *Amores* 1.8, in fact, Dipsas is described as mystically changing form (1.8.13) using *uersam* as well. Additionally, in referring to the owls and the *striges* to whom the wood of the original tree once offered sanctuary, Ovid is calling upon birds specifically associated with ill-omen and witchcraft.<sup>8</sup> For all that this is the case, there is additionally a close association between the *strix* and witches themselves, specifically in *Ov. Fast.* 6.141–2:

siue igitur nascuntur aues, seu carmine fiunt  
neniaque in uolucres Marsa figurat anus,

whether, then, they were born birds or are made into them with a spell,  
a Marsian song shaping old women into birds.

Yet we do not need to look intertextually for this reference. During Dipsas' description in *Amores* 1.8, Ovid writes that (1.8.14) *pluma corpus anile tegi* 'her old woman's body clothed with feathers'. Although Ovid never overtly claims that Dipsas' avian form is that of a *strix*, her magical (witchy) powers described at *Am.* 1.8.5–12 in the lead up to her feathered form at 1.8.14 subtly imply that this avian transformation is into that animal most associated with the Roman witch: a *strix*.<sup>9</sup> Thus the ominous transformation of the trees into tablets is linked semantically to the magical transformations of Dipsas,

<sup>4</sup> J. Henderson, 'Wrapping up the case: reading Ovid, *Amores*, 2, 7 (+ 8) I', *MD* 27 (1991), 37–88, especially 74–81 (quotation from 75). Alternatively, S. Papaioannou, 'Poetology of hairstyling and the excitement of hair loss in Ovid, "Amores" 1, 14', *QUCC* 83 (2006), 45–69, at 53 argues that Nape (from the Greek *váπη*, or 'grove') is an outright analogy for hair as an extension of Nape's role as hairdresser. A. Keith, 'Naming the elegiac mistress: elegiac onomastics in Roman inscriptions', in A. Keith and J. Edmondson (edd.), *Roman Literary Cultures: Domestic Politics, Revolutionary Poetics, Civic Spectacle* (Toronto, 2016), 59–88 has recently noted that eighteen women have been catalogued from the Augustan period who were named 'Nape', two freeborn, nine of uncertain status, and seven enslaved and freedwomen.

<sup>5</sup> W. Fitzgerald, *Slavery and the Roman Literary Imagination* (Cambridge, 2000), 59–62 (quotation from 60).

<sup>6</sup> K.S. Myers, 'The poet and the procuress: the *lena* in Latin love elegy', *JRS* 86 (1996), 1–21, at 9–10 notes that the *lena* of elegy is 'bibulous, mercenary, and dangerously magical, a witch'. K. O'Neill, 'Ovid and Propertius: reflexive annotation in *Amores* 1.8', *Mnemosyne* 52 (1999), 286–307, at 290–2 extensively demonstrates the similarities between Ovid's Dipsas and Propertius' Acanthis and their magical powers.

<sup>7</sup> *OLD*<sup>2</sup> s.v. *uerto* 22b.

<sup>8</sup> McKeown (n. 1), 331–2.

<sup>9</sup> O'Neill (n. 6), 294 discusses the general assumption amongst scholars that Dipsas becomes a *strix*.

creating intratextual connections between Dipsas and the tablets and thus between Dipsas and Nape.

The poem's final couplet also links Nape and the tablets with the age of Dipsas, when Ovid offers a final curse (*Am.* 1.12.29–30):

quid precer iratus, nisi uos cariosa senectus  
rodāt, et immundo cera sit alba situ?

Enraged, what should I wish for if not that decaying age  
might rot you and your wax become white with foul neglect?<sup>10</sup>

Just as the older Dipsas in *Amores* 1.8 has *albam raramque comam* 'sparse white locks' (1.8.111), here the wax is cursed to become white with age as well.

Finally, we return to the beginning (of this article, at least), with the connections built between Nape, the tablets and Dipsas through the descriptor *duplices*. Outside of the notable appearance of this adjective in *Amores* 1.12, the only other appearances of *duplex/duplices* occur in *Amores* 1.8. First at 1.8.15, Ovid includes in his description of Dipsas her *pupula duplex* or 'double pupils' which Pliny explains give women the power of the evil eye (Plin. *HN* 7.18): *feminas quidem omnes ubique uisu nocere quae duplices pupillas habeant* 'Indeed, all women everywhere who might have double pupils harm with their vision.' The second appearance of *duplex/duplices* in *Amores* 1.8 comes only seven lines later at 1.8.22 immediately prior to Dipsas' monologue to describe the doors which keep the narrator's eavesdropping from being discovered: *me duplices occultare fores* 'the double doors conceal me'. The duplicitous meaning holds true in *Amores* 1.8 as well, with the double door, just as the double-tablets, being both literally double and duplicitous in their ability to conceal the eavesdropper and later allowing the narrator's betrayal by his own shadow (1.8.109): *cum me mea prodidit umbra* 'when my shadow betrayed me'.

Thus we see that the connections between Nape and Dipsas are more complex than simply through their drinking habits. Instead, they (along with the tablets) are supernaturally transformed just as a *lena*, like Dipsas, can transform into a *strix*, and, just as Dipsas, the tablets too need to fear the curse of age. Finally, the double-tablets are connected back to Dipsas through the use of the adjective *duplex* in *Amores* 1.8, both as a reminder of the mystical powers of the *lena* as well as foreshadowing the coming duplicitous doubling of the writing tablets in the double doors which allow 'Ovid' to eavesdrop and later also allow for his presence's betrayal. In this way we find an additional level of connection between these three figures and, although Dipsas is not present here in *Amores* 1.12, she is present through these connections with Nape and the tablets.

The significance of this magical connection between Nape, the tablets and Dipsas further reveals the complexity of the web of associations braided through the *Amores*. Owing to this complex web, the magical elements of this connection between Nape/Dipsas/the tablets further impacts the possible reading of 'Ovid' himself. In her discussion of Nape, Papaioannou suggests that the enslaved woman's skills as a hairdresser, when viewed through the clear analogy between hairstyling and poetics in *Amores* 1.14, make her an equal to or even interchangeable with 'Ovid' himself.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Here the translation of *situ* as 'neglect' reflects Dipsas' similar use of *situ* at 1.8.52.

<sup>11</sup> Papaioannou (n. 4), 53–6.

Dipsas too has been linked with ‘Ovid’ through her art, and Myers writes that ‘The *lena*’s shared status as erotic expert reveals her to be less an “other”, *altera*, than an alter-ego to elegy’s first-person narrator.’<sup>12</sup> Thus the focus on magical powers as the nexus of connections between Dipsas, Nape and the writing tablets forces the reader to wonder about the nature of the narrator’s *carmina* as well.<sup>13</sup> If the educated Nape and Dipsas are connected in part through their witchy transformations and are connected through their art with the poet, then we are forced to wonder if the *carmina* produced by ‘Ovid’ (especially the one that appeared on the tablets of *Amores* 1.11 and 1.12), may not simply be a form of attempted persuasion but of persuasion *magic*.

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## DIDYMUS’ COMMENTARY ON PINDAR’S *PAEANS*\*

### ABSTRACT

*This article examines the citation of Didymus’ ‘first’ commentary on Pindar’s Paeans in Ammon. Diff. 231 Nickau. It argues that the commentary on the Paeans was the first volume in Didymus’ commentary to all of Pindar.*

**Keywords:** Didymus; Ammonius; Pindar; *Paeans*; commentaries; bibliography

The beginning of the entry in the epitome of Herennius Philo ascribed to Ammonius on the difference between ‘Thebans’ and ‘Thebes-born’, along with its twin in the epitome of Herennius Philo which circulated as Herennius Philo (91 Palmieri), contains the only explicit quotation of Didymus’ commentary on Pindar’s *Paeans* (fr. 68 Braswell = °172 Coward–Prodi):<sup>1</sup>

Θηβαῖοι καὶ Θηβαγενεῖς διαφέρουσιν, καθὼς Δίδυμος ἐν ὑπομνήματι τῷ πρώτῳ τῶν παιάνων Πινδάρου φησὶν. “καὶ τὸν τρίτοδα ἀπὸ τούτου Θηβαγενεῖς πέμπουσιν τὸν χρύσειον εἰς Ἰσμήνιον πρῶτον”. (Ammon. *Diff.* 231 Nickau)

‘Thebans’ and ‘Theban-born’ are different, as Didymus says in the first commentary on Pindar’s *Paeans*: ‘and from there the Theban-born escort the golden tripod to the Ismenion first’.

<sup>12</sup> Myers (n. 6), 1.

<sup>13</sup> *carmen* in Latin means both ‘a magical chant, spell, or incantation’ and ‘a song, poem, play’: OLD<sup>2</sup> s.v. *carmen* 1b and 2.

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<sup>1</sup> Here and henceforth ‘Braswell’ = B.K. Braswell, *Didymos of Alexandria: Commentary on Pindar* (Basel, 2017<sup>2</sup>); ‘Coward–Prodi’ = T.R.P. Coward and E.E. Prodi, ‘A checklist of the testimonia and fragments of Didymus’, *BICS* 63 (2020), 95–120.