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Ghostly Metamorphoses: Chapman, Marlowe, and Ovid's Philomela

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Traditionally, Chapman's metamorphosis of Marlowe's lovers into birds at the conclusion of his *Hero and Leander* has been regarded as a deliberate move away from the kind of Ovidianism embraced by Marlowe. From this perspective, Raymond B. Waddington advances that Chapman invents the myth of Neptune pitying the lovers and transforming them into Thistle-warps in order to turn from the impropriety of the *Amores* to the instructive value of the *Metamorphoses*.[1] Millar Maclure proposes that Chapman uses the metamorphosis to transform an exercise in libertine wit into a Platonic "mirror for lovers."[2] D. J. Gordon argues that Chapman intends the metamorphosis to invoke the mystery of ancient aetiology and, by relation, to elevate the status of the poem to that of transcendant epic.[3] It would be inappropriate fully to contest these observations. Chapman's departure with the metamorphosis from not only Marlowe, but also Marlowe's primary source, the *Hero and Leander* of the "divine Musaeus,"[4] must surely signal ambition and intent. Yet there is a marked limitation to the assumptions regarding Marlowe's reading of Ovid that lie behind such observations: Waddington, Maclure, and Gordon consistently privilege Marlowe's relatively straightforward debt in *Hero and Leander* to the *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria* over his more complex, and more nuanced, referencing of the *Metamorphoses*.

Where Marlowe borrows the rhetoric of sexual knowledge from the *Ars Amatoria* and an eroticized imagery of beauty and desire from the *Amores*, he borrows several things simultaneously from the *Metamorphoses*. Some of his allusions in *Hero and Leander* to the *Metamorphoses* exploit Ovid's subversive tendencies therein towards the grotesque

and towards antidecorous, outrageous spectacle;[5] other allusions, more subtly, disclose Marlowe's interest in the portentous power of certain images in Ovid's poem. Patrick Cheney's recent mapping of Marlowe's career as an Ovidian *cursus* from amatory to epic verse is relevant to the present study.[6] Like Cheney, I contend that we need to revise our understanding of Marlowe's debt to Ovid; by relation, we need also to revise our understanding of Chapman's response to Marlowe's Ovidian poetics. To these ends, this essay will focus on the presence of an allusion to Ovid's Philomela issued near the end of Marlowe's poem, on the ironic, darkening function of that allusion as deployed by Marlowe, and on the ways in which the allusion subtends, and necesssarily complicates the allegory of, Chapman's metamorphosis of the lovers into birds.

Marlowe's allusion to Philomela punctuates his work at a crucial turn. It prefaces Hero and Leander's much anticipated surrender to intercourse. Immediately before he describes Hero and Leander's consummation of their love, Marlowe's narrator avows (in what is now a notorious aside):

> Love is not full of pity (as men say)
> But deaf and cruel where he means to prey.
> Even as a bird, which in our hands we wring,
> Forth plungeth, and oft flutters with her wing,
> She trembling strove; this strife of hers (like that
> Which made the world) another world begat
> Of unknown joy. . . (II. 287-293)[7]

David Lee Miller was the first to discern a reference to Philomela in this description of the beloved as a seized and violated bird.[8] For Miller, the image refers to the final consequences of Philomela's sexual violation: her transformation into a nightingale. Evoking an archetypal victim of rape in the image of the terrorized bird, Marlowe, in Miller's reading, problematizes our perception of both Hero's ensuing surrender to Leander as well as the consequences of that surrender, which shroud the

final moments of Marlowe's poem in images of silence and estrangement. It might seem strange that a poet would invoke Philomela just as he prepares to describe a woman who, quite unlike Ovid's Philomela, would seem "cunningly" (II. 294) to advance the courtship that leads to the loss of her virginity. But there is the precedent of George Gascoigne, who identifies Philomela, in his 1575 *Complainte of Phylomene*, as contributing to her own tragedy by means of her coquettish pride in and vain display of her physical beauty. Gascoigne's poem, moreover, may well be a specially marked text for Marlowe, inasmuch as it anticipates Marlowe's phrase, "Love always makes those eloquent who have it" (II.72), in its own implication of the relationship between sexual and rhetorical aggression within the vaunting Tereus: "Love made him eloquent."[9]

Appropriated and retold by countless early modern poets (including Gascoigne, Spenser, and Shakespeare), the story of Philomela's rape is most famously told by Ovid in *Metamorphoses* VI. Ovid recounts how Philomela is raped by Tereus, her brother-in-law; how her violater attempts to insure that she cannot speak of the crime he has committed by cutting out her tongue, imprisoning her in a hut hidden in a dark wood, and telling her sister that she is dead; and how Philomela, in time, discovers a way to reveal what she has suffered. Philomela weaves the story of her rape in a tapestry, which she sends, by the hand of an unknowing servant, to her sister, Procne. Once it is interpreted by Procne, Philomela's tapestry inspires violent retribution. Procne determines to avenge the crimes of the father through the sacrifice of his son; for Tereus's rape of Philomela, as Philomela and Procne separately realize, has already confounded ordinary familial bonds. With Philomela's willing assistance, then, Procne dismembers Itys, cooks him, and serves him, at something resembling a high feast, to Tereus. When Philomela responds to her brother-in-law's repeated request that Itys be brought before him by entering from the shadows and tossing the boy's bloody head onto the table, he rises to kill her and Procne. But the daughters of Pandion escape Tereus. They fly from him, according to Ovid, as if "they were poised on wings" (*Met.* VI. 668-669). Finally, Ovid literalizes that which would seem merely to be

a figure of terrorized flight, and Procne and Philomela turn into a swallow and a nightingale.

This is the image of Philomela that Miller sees flickering within Marlowe's text: the image of the nightingle as a darkly vexed token of woe. But Marlowe does not merely invoke the generalized typology of the transformed Philomela in his image of a violated bird. He develops a highly programmatic allusion to Philomela as her transformation is prefigured by an earlier bird simile in *Metamorphoses* VI. Recalling Ovid's text through pointed verbal and rhetorical echo, as well as through the suggested image of the transformed Philomela, Marlowe goes beyond marking Hero's sexual fear as disturbingly resonant with (or anticipatory of) the extremity of terror suffered by Philomela. He also marks his art as containing, in certain secret, unexpected passages, an Ovidian richness of inevitable meaning.

The crucial lines for Marlowe in Ovid are 529 and 530; there, Ovid's narrator describes Philomela after her rape (but before her metamorphosis) to be "like a dove which, with its own blood all smeared over its plumage, still palpitates with fright, still fears those greedy claws that have pierced it" (*utque columba suo madefactis sanguine plumis / horret adhuc avidosque timet, quibus haeserat, ungues*).[6] In *Metamorphoses* VI, the bird simile serves two immediate functions. First, its imagery of trembling confirms the psychological effects of the rape that Ovid has just recounted; the charged phrase, *illa tremit*, issued in line 527, in the midst of Ovid's description of the rape, links a brief, conventional simile of a lamb torn and cast aside by a wolf to the more elaborate simile cited above: that of the dove pierced and bloodied by avid claws. In a similar manner and to similar ends, the image of the dove pierced by claws also recalls Ovid's earlier comparison of Tereus, as he is raping Philomela, to a hawk, and Philomela, as she is raped, to a clawed hare as the hawk's hapless prey (516-518).

Ovid's bird simile does not, however, merely recapitulate (and thereby intensify our impression of) the predatory dynamics of Tereus's rape of Philomela; the simile also anticipates specific aspects of her metamorphosis. Ovid achieves the effect of foreshadowing through pointed verbal repetition: the phrase *sanguine plumis* (529) used in the

image of the trembling dove, an image invoked in the scene of Philomela's rape, is repeated in the phrase *sanguine pluma* (670) that describes how the nightingale's flickering feathers appear to be forever steeped in blood. The immediate explanation for these blood-colored feathers is of course that Philomela retains in her metamorphosis the bloodstains she has acquired in her butchery of Itys (whose throat she stabs even after he has died at his mother's hands). And yet, the repetition of *sanguine plumis* in *sanguine pluma* would seem simultaneously to suggest that Philomela's metamorphosis is a sign of her suffering as well as her violence. Glancing forward and back in the narrative, the simile of the trembling bird functions then in *Metamorphoses* VI to link several images of victimization and violence that might otherwise seem to be removed. Ovid's technique is to superimpose an image of abject terror onto one of murderous guilt in a process of repetition and variation that embodies the shape-shifting matter of the *Metamorphoses*'s own account of "heady riots, incest, rapes" (I. 144).

Marlowe recontextualizes two details crucially centered in Ovid's simile in his narrator's description of love's "cruelty": images of trembling and of winged strife. But Marlowe alters the point in the narrative of sexual transgression at which these details are invoked. Ovid presents the image of the hapless, trembling bird immediately after he recounts Philomela's rape by Tereus; Marlowe presents it immediately before he recounts Hero's surrender to Leander. Given the ways in which the simile in *Metamorphoses* VI recalls the violence visited upon Philomela and foreshadows how her metamorphosis will memorialize that violence (along with the violence she has practiced on Itys), Marlowe's shift would seem to heighten the dark, premonitory function of Ovid's image; it is as if Marlowe uses his predecessor's charged image to forecast that Hero, in spite of her "cunning" yielding of herself to Leander (II. 294), will implicitly sustain something like the loss suffered by Philomela. In Marlowe's poem, as in Ovid's, the bird simile may also be seen to recall, and thereby to intensify or complete, earlier images of sexual aggression; these include the birdlike image of Leander stooping to embrace Hero as she attempts to "cast" herself away "from his spreading arms" (I. 341-342) and, closer to the

appearance of the simile of the trembling bird itself, the predatory image of Leander's hands "cast upon [Hero] like a snare" (II. 259). Like Ovid, Marlowe would seem to use such recollections to foreground the terror that will inform certain succeeding images. Glancing ahead to the fear which Hero experiences in her initial surrender to intercourse, Marlowe also follows Ovid in using the verb "tremble" (*illa tremit* ; "she trembling strove") to forge an unsettling link between two images. The phrase, "she trembling strove" (II. 291), transfers the reader's focus from an image of a bird wrung in human hands, a universalized and even abstracted emblem referencing love's capacity to be cruel, to an image that is far less generalized and far more immediate: that of Hero embattled by desire and fear as she enters the throes of intercourse. In several ways, then, the bird simile lifted from *Metamorphoses* VI.529-530 marks Ovid's elaboration of Philomela's fate as an ironic, darkening subtext for Hero and Leander's story. Most obviously, this subtext associates love in its illicit or forbidden forms with terror. Implicitly, it offers an explanation as to why Marlowe creates an effect of *dissimilitudo* in his treatment of sexual abandon by referencing several other victims of transgressive sexuality from the *Metamorphoses* (including Diana in II. 261-262 as the victim of Actaeon's interdicted gaze and Proserpina in II. 224-226 as the unwilling bride of Dis).

Marlowe of course ignores the third function advanced by the bird simile in *Metamorphoses* VI: the foreshadowing of Philomela's avian metamorphosis.[11] It is Chapman, not Marlowe, who fulfills the simile's portent-like power in the metamorphosis which he appends to his conclusion. Yet Chapman effects this fulfillment only as Ovid's avian image has been inscribed, interpreted, and privileged within Marlowe's allusion to *Metamorphoses* VI.529-530. However veiled and incomplete, Marlowe's allusion to the fate of Philomela through his referencing of Ovid's image of the trembling bird may also be discerned to function proleptically. Anticipating the emotions of "anguish, shame, and rage" (II. 333) that darken his final lines, Marlowe's fleeting allusion may even subtend his final description of Hero as being unable to "speak to him who in a moment took / That which so long, so charily she kept" (II. 308-309). Ovid's Philomela is physically deprived of

verbal agency as a consequence of Tereus's cutting out her tongue; Marlowe's Hero is psychically bereft of such agency as a consequence of her own divisive shame and fear. Recalling the night she has shared with Leander (II. 240), Hero's response is so intense that speech is inhibited and denied. The transformation of the silenced Philomela of *Metamorphoses* VI into the silenced Hero who inhabits the close of Marlowe's supposedly libertine poem is a highy suggestive revision: between Ovid's ancient tragedy of Philomela and Marlowe's more ambivalent story of Hero there is a constancy in loss but a change in the terms explaining, and in the terms compensating for, that loss. Marlowe's Philomela will never find release in song.

Summoned by Marlowe, Philomela's specter is impossible for Chapman to repress. In the continuation, Chapman presents Hero as a rewritten Philomela who is released in song at several turns: Chapman invokes Philomela not only in his allegory of the lovers' avian metamorphosis, but also in his description of Hero as a furiously inspired weaver. At the same time, Chapman uses the altered figure of Philomela to comment on his own experience and transformation as revelatory poet. Such appropriation should not be surprising, given the widespread presentation of Philomela as a figure of the poet in late medieval and early modern English and European literature.[12] In Spenser's "Teares of the Muses," the metamorphosed Philomela is a Muse whose dark "plaints . . . comfort wakefull Lovers"; in "Virgil's Gnat," she is an Orphic power whose "voyce" summons nature to respond to her "complaint."[13] Shakespeare, in "The Rape of Lucrece," presents Philomela's lamentations in terms of an agency that summons and dispells night (1079-1080) and, Orpheus-like, makes the earth to weep at the nightingale's languishment (1130).[14] Gascoigne, in "The Complaint of Phylomene," explicitly identifies the song of the nightingale with the song of Orpheus; in "The Steele Glas," he honors the nightingale as an originary source of inspiration, asserting that "This worthy bird hath taught my weary Muze, / To sing a song."[15]

Surely cognizant of such associations, as well as the traditional status of the tapestry as a figure for and endeavor in textuality,[16] Chapman first turns to the model of Philomela in Sestiad IV, in which

Hero embroiders a scarf "of wondrous frame" (IV. 37). Meditating on what has passed and what is to come, Hero here reinterprets her fornication with Leander in plied and colored silks to discover what Sophocles, in reference to Philomela, was to call "the voice of the shuttle."[17] Like Philomela, Hero elevates a craft associated with obedient domesticity to the status of an art that is revelatory and uncanny. As Chapman describes Hero's scarf, the reader quickly discerns that the motives which take shape within its frame metamorphose in form and meaning. At one turn, Leander's eye is a gaping hole; at the next, it "[grows] more perfect still" (IV. 66). In one moment, an ocean of "pure sea green" graces and reveals Leander's every limb; in the next, stars shoot and light bleeds from the sky as the face of nature looks towards violence.

In an essay focused on Sophocles' trope, Geoffrey Hartman attributes the powers of the Fates to Philomela; for Hartman, the text which Philomela looms becomes a link in an inexorable chain of violence that avenges her rape and mutilation.[18] Chapman, in emphasizing the violent dynamism of Hero's woven artifact, would seem to attribute similar powers to Hero. Yet Chapman endows Hero's work with less autonomy than that which Hartman ascribes to Philomela; overall, Chapman presents Hero as the medium through which the oracular is made known (rather than as an independent agent of fateful retribution). In the argument to Sestiad IV, Chapman describes Hero's scarf as being "wrought by Fate" (IV. 3) and identifies its motives as "ostents" (IV. 4). In the ecphrasis, he concludes that the scarf's "ominous fancies" make Hero's "every finger . . . a prophetess" (IV. 109). The irony remains, however, that when Hero wraps herself within the "furious shroud" that she has crafted, she wraps herself in meanings that would appear to exceed her own possession and intent.

There are several ways in which Hero's shroud provokes associations with a text that is already written. Evoking associations with Musaeus's *Hero and Leander* and Ovid's *Heroides* XVIII in its motives of oceanic power and threat, the tapestry seems persistently to extend images that are uncanny or secretly familiar. Hero's representation of a fisherman whose body and sight extend in frustrated desire

as he draws his nets from the sea (IV. 84-89) takes us not only to a scene in Theocritus's *Idylls*, but also to that moment described by Leander in *Heroides* XVIII in which he, sitting on a rock, extends himself in arduous thought to where his body cannot go (*Heroides* XVIII. 29-30).[19] The succeeding image, that of the fisherman stung dead by a serpent that rises from the sea (IV. 90-91), returns (at least in some implicit sense) to the scene of Leander's watery death recounted by Musaeus even as it anticipates the death by drowning that Chapman's conclusion will ascribe to the spinning of "the curst Fates" (VI. 206).

Yet Hero, in contrast to Philomela, also labors over a text which is, at times, less an agent of uncanny revelation than it is a medium of fetishistic pretense.[20] In several ways, the scarf is devised as an erotic fiction that permits Hero to exercise power and mastery over Leander. To this end, in its center, she embroiders a fiery blush that seems quite opposite from that blush that "betray'd" her, against her apparent will, "all naked to [Leander's] sight," at the end of Marlowe's poem (II. 322-323). Chasing two crimson flames from a virgin's cheeks (IV. 37-40), the blush represented on the scarf is a token neither of shame nor embarassment (the emotions suggested by the ambivalent image of the blush in Marlowe's lines), but of power. In one of the flames streaming from the blush, Hero creates an ocean and represents therein Leander as that "ship where all her wealth did pass" (IV. 50). Here she turns emblematic figure into literal embodiment:

> For in that sea she naked figur'd him;
> Her diving needle taught him how to swim,
> And to each thread did such resemblance give,
> For joy to be so like him it did live. (IV. 52-55)

Hero's naked figuring appropriates art as an analogue to and substitute for sexual encounter.[21] Charged with phallic associations realized in Chapman's later repetition of the verb "to prick," her "diving needle" mimes the activity of intercourse, yet displaces its threat. For with the needle, it is Hero who exercises phallic mastery; she penetrates Leander (or a strangely animate representation of Leander) to initiate him in the

rites of sexuality. Endowing with joy each thread that represents her lover, Hero transfers to her work her own libidinal desire and achieves therein a frightening verisimilitude, making "things senseless [seem to] live" (IV. 56) as she effaces any clear distinction between presence and absence, the animate and the inanimate, the living and the dead.

Throughout the scarf's description, Chapman emphasizes the strange, substitutive power inherent in Hero's rewriting of the scene of sexual loss. Yet he also emphasizes how the reality that Hero's art attempts to repress rises inexorably to the fore. Even as she "pricks" Leander, Hero relives sexual terror. In one moment, she experiences a fearful sympathy with and for her absent lover, whom she imagines is victimized "in her strength of thought" (IV. 58). In the next moment, however, she imagines that Leander retains the power to victimize her:

> And then as she was working of his eye,
> She thought to prick it out to quench her ill;
> But as she prick'd, it grew more perfect still. (IV. 65-67)

Chapman finally suggests that Hero can redress her pain neither by using her art as a fetishistic substitute denying loss nor by using it to maim a representation of Leander. The scarf possesses an alien signifying power that exceeds such immediate intent. In the second flame streaming from the virgin's blush, Hero's embroidery reveals not only what "by fate into her mind was sent" (IV. 92): the image of the fisherman killed by the sea serpent which surely portends Leander's watery death as elaborated by Ovid and Musaeus. Her embroidery also reveals, in the image of a virgin robbed of her "fruitful vine" (IV. 106), the loss that has been written upon her own body to make her a sign, or symptom, of death. Distinct from those motives worked into the scarf as expressions of their maker's preemptive desire, these images define Hero's fiery shroud (even as they define Hero herself) as a medium through which an already written text—that of death itself—is made manifest. Hero's scarf does not merely disclose its articulation by prior works like the first idyll of Theocritus, from which, for instance, its image of the fisherman derives. It also discloses its articulation by

death; for, like all fetish objects which imaginatively make present in picture, sign, or relic that which has been lost, Hero's scarf inexorably returns to that death which it endeavors to efface.

By the close of the scarf's description, Philomela may seem far removed from the explicit purposes and effects of Hero's devising. In an aside succeeding the description, Chapman names a weaver from *Metamorphoses* VI to comment on the scarf's achievement, but that weaver is Arachne, not Philomela (IV. 121). In several senses, Arachne serves as a compelling analogue to Hero. Both maidens create art which is metamorphic (the motives which fill Arachne's tapestry do not merely recapitulate the metamorphoses of the gods, but also seem to dissolve into one another); both achieve immediacy and verisimilitude in their work (Ovid notes, in reference to Arachne's representation of Jove and Europa, that one would take it to be a real bull and a real maid); both endeavor to deny their place in the order of divine judgment (Arachne by challenging Minerva to a weaving contest; Hero by presuming that her vow to Venus can be superseded). Nevertheless, Chapman invokes an image and achievement associated with Philomela, rather than Arachne, when he describes how "number'd silks" (IV. 118) like the tapestry crafted by Hero might "[lead] affection prisoner through their own-built cities / Pinion'd with stories and Arachnean ditties" (IV. 119-121). Arachne's name defines such works as achievements in elevated and metamorphic art. But it is, of course, Philomela, not Arachne, who is associated in *Metamorphoses* VI (and in early modern reinterpretations thereof) with song and flight. Reflecting on the ways in which Hero's art would seem to be mysteriously empowered, Chapman reveals its affiliation with the metapoetic achievement of Arachne's weaving and the compensatory function of Philomela's release in song alike. When he describes the silken threads that define the interstices of something like Hero's scarf as being "number'd," Chapman emphasizes how such a creation may be seen as an analogue to a poem. In the descriptive context, "number'd" refers primarily to the definition of a textile by patterns, but it could also reference the metrical divisions which define verse. When he asserts that something like Hero's shroud should possess the power to "pinion" affection, Chapman

evokes other associations. A pinion, in sixteenth-century usage, refers both to an elaborate sleeve affixed to a costume or dress and, more suggestively, to a wing (the word derives from the Latin word, *pennae*, or feathers). Superimposing the image of feathers upon an image of storiated tapestry, Chapman returns to the association of the metamorphosed Philomela with song and flight and muses, however briefly, upon the ways in which his own art, imped upon the flight of its own "stern muse," takes on something of the transformative agency of that which is created by Hero, Arachne, and, most crucially, Philomela.

Throughout the continuation, Chapman seems to turn from the pathos of Philomela, as invoked by Marlowe in the image of the raped bird, to invoke the associations of Philomela with what Cheney and others have identified as a "type of Orphic power."[22] Chapman's allusions to Philomela are, to be sure, even less explict and programmatic than Marlowe's referencing of Ovid's simile of the trembling bird; screened and dialectical, Chapman's allusions tend to summon Philomela through references to related figures in the *Metamorphoses*. In the ecphrasis of the scarf, Philomela is recalled through Chapman's cross-reference to Arachne, whose furious weaving constitutes a second model of revelatory art canonized in the sixth book of the *Metamorphoses*.[23] In the metamorphosis of the lovers, Philomela comes within view through the poet's implicit reference to Ceyx and Alcyone, whose avian transformation concludes an episode in *Metamorphoses* XI that is defined (even as Chapman's *Hero and Leander* is defined) by an ambitious, dense, and crucially revisionist poetry of allusion.

As numerous commentators have observed, the story of Ceyx and Alcyone parallels that of *Hero and Leander* in a number of salient details. It tells how two devoted lovers are separated by the sea, how the male lover drowns in a storm, and how the female beloved dies in sympathetic grief. It includes the theme, central in Chapman's continuation, of a goddess' anger towards her female subject; it elaborates an experience of phantasmic delusion within that subject; it figures the morning's sorrow as the dawn bears witness to the death of the male lover. Chapman, as Waddington points out, may "have been led to this

story by Ovid, who by alluding twice to Ceyx and Alcyone in *Heroides* XVIII and XIX (XVIII.81-82; XIX.191-204) underscores the parallels in the two myths."[24] Glossed by Golding as representing "most constant love" and by Sandys as honoring, even as birds, "their conjugall affections,"[25] Ceyx and Alycone become images of Hero and Leander, whom Chapman finally valorizes as being "still" or forever coupled in flight in their metamorphosis (VI. 278).

Yet Chapman's transformed lovers, unlike Ceyx and Alcyone, retain in their metamorphosis tokens of the violence and grief which they themselves engendered. Evoking so much from Ovid's narrative of Ceyx and Alcyone's ideal love, Chapman evokes one detail that returns to Ovid's description of Philomela's rape: the detail of the significant coloration of the birds' feathers. Ovid omits this motif in his account of Ceyx and Alycone's metamorphosis. But he emphasizes, in describing Philomela's metamorphosis, how her plumage memorializes the stain of her crime against Itys as well as that of her violation by Tereus: "*neque adhuc de pectore caedis / excessere notae, signataque sanguine pluma est*" (And even now their breasts have not lost the marks of their murderous deed, their feathers are stained with blood) (*Met.* VI. 669-670). It is here that Ovid echoes, with crucial, ironic difference, the detail of blood centered in the simile invoked by Marlowe: "*utque columba suo madefactis sanguine plumis*" (and like a dove which, with its own blood all smeared over its plumage) (*Met.* VI. 529).

When Chapman reveals the coloration of Hero and Leander's plumage and explicates its meaning in relation to their past, the model of Ceyx and Alcyone's metamorphosis collapses into that of Philomela's:

> Their wings, blue, red, and yellow, mix'd appear;
> Colours that, as we construe colours, paint
> Their states to life; the yellow shows their saint,
> The devil Venus, left them; blue, their truth;
> The red and black, ensigns of death and ruth.
> (VI. 287-291)

Given the stylistic and figural density of much of Chapman's poem, these lines are remarkable in their simplicity. Their straightforward, declarative syntax and heavy use of monosyllables create an impression of interpretive certainty; their self-interpreting content elides ambiguity. Orderly and prescriptive, these lines demystify Hero and Leander even as they ask the reader to divine their flight. Yet Chapman's "construing" of the thistle-warps' "colors" in relation to the lovers' "states of life" is problematized by the darker subtext of Philomela, whose bloody plumage is similarly construed by Ovid in *Metamorphoses* VI.

The lines cited above finally extend in mystery through implicit allusion to Philomela. Her avian presence hovers between Marlowe's narrative of rape and Chapman's poem of metamorphosis, reminding us of Hero and Leander's first experience of violence (in the strife of sexuality) and unsettling Chapman's gesture towards textual resolution. Through Philomela, Chapman opens the close of his poem to that of Marlowe's, and signals, in the very gesture that might have rewritten *Hero and Leander* as uniquely his own, that he cannot—or will not—be dispossessed of Marlowe's influence. If Chapman's invention of the lovers' metamorphosis serves to elevate the genre of his poem, it serves also to recall the intertextual complexity of Marlowe's own conclusion. In ghostly allusions that open the story of Hero and Leander to darker stories of rape and loss (which are, strangely enough, simultaneously stories of artistic mediation), Marlowe and Chapman similarly disclose how the project of rewriting *Hero and Leander* is subject to uncanny conspiracies, rather than canny divisions, of poetic meaning and intent.

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Notes

1. Raymond B. Waddington, *The Mind's Empire: Myth and Form in George Chapman's Narrative Poems* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1974), pp. 157-158.

2. Millar Maclure, *George Chapman: A Critical Study* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), p. 63.

3. D. J. Gordon, "The Renaissance Poet as Classicist: Chapman's *Hero and Leander*," in *The Renaissance Imagination: Essays and Lectures by D. J. Gordon*, ed. Stephen Orgel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 103.

4. For a detailed discussion of Marlowe's indebtedness to Musaeus and of Marlowe's poetics of heuristic imitation where Musaeus was concerned, see Gordon Braden, "The Divine Poem of Musaeus," in *The Classics and English Renaissance Poetry: Three Case Sudies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), pp. 119-153; see also Clark Hulse, *Metamorphic Verse: The Elizabethan Minor Epic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

5. William Keach offers an extended study of Marlowe's imitation (and heightening) of Ovid's tendency in the *Metamorphoses* to slide from grotesque comedy to disturbing pathos in *Elizabethan Erotic Narratives: Irony and Pathos in the Ovidian Poetry of Shakespeare, Marlowe, and Their Contemporaries* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1977), pp. 105-116.

6. Patrick Cheney, *Marlowe's Counterfeit Profession: Ovid, Spenser, Counter-Nationhood* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), especially pp. 238-258.

7. All citations from Marlowe's and Chapman's *Hero and Leander* are from *The Poems of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Millar Maclure (London: Methuen, 1968).

8. See David Lee Miller, "The Death of the Modern: Gender and Desire in Marlowe's 'Hero and Leander,'" *South Atlantic Quarterly* 88 (1989): 775.

9. George Gascoigne, *The Steele Glas and the Complainte of Phylomene: A Critical Edition*, with an introduction by William L. Wallace. Salzburg Studies in English Literature, vol. 24 (1975), p. 151 (line 97).

10. All citations from the *Metamorphoses* are from G. P. Goold's revised edition, trans. Frank Justus Miller, Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann, 1977).

11. For a discussion of the third (portent-like) function of Ovid's bird simile, see William S. Anderson's commentary, *Ovid's Metamorphoses: Books 6-10* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), p. 222.

12. Patrick Cheney provides a suggestive overview of "metapoetic" referencings of Philomela in *Spenser's Famous Flight: A Renaissance Idea of a Literary Career* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), p. 81.

13. Citations are from Edmund Spenser, *Poetical Works*, eds. J. C. Smith and E. De Selincourt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970).

14. Citations are from William Shakespeare, *The Narrative Poems*, ed. Maurice Evans (London: Penguin, 1989).

15. Citations are from George Gascoigne, *The Steele Glas and The Complainte of Phylomene: A Critical Edition*, ed. William L. Wallace. Salzburg Studies in English Literature, vol. 24 (1975).

16. Philip Sidney, in *A Defence of Poetry*, for instance, valorizes the analogy between the poet and the tapestry-maker in celebrating how the poet, "not enclosed within the narrow warrant of [nature's] gifts, but freely ranging within the zodiac of his own wit," sets forth a "rich tapestry" that exceeds that set forth by Nature in color, variety, beauty, and form; cited from the edition by Jan Van Dorsten (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 24.

17. Geoffrey Hartman takes Sophocles' phrase, recorded by Aristotle in the *Poetics* (16.4), as the starting point for his essay, "The Voice of the Shuttle: Language from the Point of View of Literature." See *Beyond Formalism: Literary Essays 1958-1970* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 337. For a feminist reading of the myth and its appropriation as a metaphor for literature, see Patricia Klindiest Joplin, "The Voice of the Shuttle is Ours," *Stanford Literature Review* 1 (1984): 25-53 and Ann Rosalind Jones, "New Songs for the Swallow: Ovid's Philomela in Tullia d'Aragona and Gaspara Stamps," in *Refiguring Woman: Perspectives on Gender and the Italian Renaissance*, ed. Marilyn Migiel and Juliana Schiesari (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 263-277.

18. Hartman, p. 347.

19. Maclure identifies the reference to Theocritus's idyll (note 84ff., page 64), but not to the *Heroides*: "*rupe sedens aliqua specto tua litora tristis / et, quo non possum corpore, mente feror*" (citation from *Heroides* XVI-XXI, edited with a commentary by E. J. Kenney [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996]).

20. Julia Kristeva's interrogation of art as "the fetish par excellence, one that badly camoflauges its archaeology," is relevant to my reading of Hero's weaving; see *The Revolution in Poetic Language*, trans. Margaret Waller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), pp. 65-67.

21. For an extended discussion of Hero's weaving as an analogue to and substitute for sexual experience, see Macfie, "Unraveling the Ecphrasis in Chapman's *Hero and Leander*," *South Atlantic Review* 49 (1984): 43-53.

22. Cheney, *Spenser's Famous Flight*, p. 82. Jonathan Bate also explores the associations between Philomela and Orpheus in *Shakespeare and Ovid* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 75-77, 111-117.

23. On the status of Arachne's tapestry as an image of Ovid's art, see Frederick Ahl, *Metaformations: Soundplay and Wordplay in Ovid and Other Classical Poets* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 225-226; G. Karl Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses: An Introduction to the Basic Aspects* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 82-83; Leonard Barkan, *The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 1-5.

24. Waddington, p. 179.

25. William Golding, "Epistle to Leicester," lines 232-233, cited from the edition of W. H. D. Rouse, *Shakespeare's Ovid* (London, 1904; repr. 1961); George Sandys, *Ovid's Metamorphosis Englished, Mythologiz'd, and Represented in Figures* (Oxford, 1632), cited from the facsimile edition of Stephen Orgel (New York: Garland, 1976), p. 397.