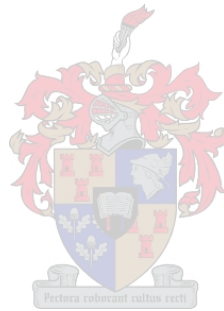# "Giving Up the Ghost in Ancient Roman Literature"

A Comparative Discussion of the Ghosts in selected texts from Plautus, Virgil, Ovid, and Pliny the Younger

by Belinda Sheryn Duke

Thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MA in Ancient Cultures in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, at Stellenbosch University

Supervisor: Prof. A. Kotzé

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Department of Ancient Studies

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Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

April 2019

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English Abstract

Through an intensive comparative discussion of selected texts from Plautus, Virgil, Ovid, and Pliny the Younger, this thesis aims to bring forward insights into the ancient Roman understanding of death and the dead. The chosen works (Plautus' *Mostellaria*, Books II and III of Virgil's *Aeneid*, Books II and V of Ovid's *Fasti*, and *Letter* 7.27 from Pliny's *Epistles*) each feature a manifestation of the dead, or "ghost". The introductory chapter establishes the definitions and approaches used in this thesis, the criteria for the selection of texts, and the rationale for my topic. The second chapter is a brief presentation of the existing scholarship on death in the Roman world. This includes a brief discussion of the Roman beliefs and rites concerning death, the concept of ghosts in the Roman culture, and a contextualization and summary of the selected texts. The third chapter compares and contrasts the selected works according to the Latin terminology used, the ways in which the featured ghosts are characterized in their approaches and interactions with the living, and the extent to which the overarching theme of Tragic Death and its supporting motif, Laying the Ghost to Rest, are present in these works. The insights into Roman thought about death and the dead that are found in this research are highlighted in the concluding chapter's summary and reflection.

Afrikaans Opsomming

Deur 'n intensiewe vergelykende bespreking van geselekteerde werke van Plautus, Vergilius, Ovidius en Plinius die Jongere, beoog hierdie tesis om by te dra tot die verstaan van antieke Romeinse denke oor sterftes en die afgestorwenes. Die gekose werke (Plautus se *Mostellaria*, Boeke II en III van Vergilius se *Aeneïs*, Boek II en V van Ovidius se *Fasti*, en *Brief 7.27* van Plinius se *Briewe*) beeld elk 'n manifestering van 'n afgestorwene of "spook" uit. Die inleidende hoofstuk stel die definisies en benaderings wat in hierdie tesis gebruik word, die kriteria vir die seleksie van tekste en die rasionaal vir my onderwerp. Die tweede hoofstuk bied 'n kort oorsig oor die stand van navorsing oor die dood in die Romeinse wêreld. Dit sluit 'n kort bespreking in van Romeinse opvattings en rituele rakende sterftes, die konsep van spoke in die Romeinse kultuur en 'n kontekstualisering en oorsig oor die geselekteerde tekste. Die derde hoofstuk vergelyk en kontrasteer die geselekteerde werke in terme van die Latynse terminologie wat gebruik word en die maniere waarop die spoke uitgebeeld word: hoe moes hulle benader word en hoedanig was hulle interaksie met die lewendes? Ook die oorkoepelende tema van Tragiese Dood en die meegaande motief, Die Spook tot Ruste Bring, word hier

ondersoek. Die insigte in Romeinse denke oor sterftes en die afgestorwenes wat uit hierdie navorsing na vore gekom het, word in die afsluitende hoofstuk se opsomming en refleksie beklemtoon.

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During the process of writing my thesis, there have been countless emotional break-downs, manic fits of sobbing, and table-flipping bouts of frustration. To my amazing friends and my not-so-little little sisters, thank you for dealing with ALL of my emotional outbursts. I honestly do not think that I would have made it this far without their help. I want to thank my sisters, Kate and Emily, for being there for me and for bringing me disgruntled cats when I was down. To Jen, I thank her for letting me vent all my frustrations, for all the master's advice, and for teaching me the value of list-making and having people to hold me accountable. To Lily, I would like to thank her for all the encouragement cartoons, the words of comfort, and all the love she sent me despite going through her own emotional rollercoaster of a year. To Rebecca, I want to thank for letting me pester her with questions at midnight, and for continuing to check up on me all year to make sure that I had met all my word-count goals. I would also like to thank Anria, who so graciously agreed to translate my abstract into Afrikaans when she heard me pluralize "spook" incorrectly. A big thank you also goes to Corlene, for editing the Afrikaans abstract so beautifully, despite being asked to do so at the very last minute.

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Last, but certainly not least, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Kotzé. I would like to thank her for all her patience with me over the course of this degree. I know that she has had her own enormous pile of work to deal with, and so I really appreciate the time she has taken to give me feedback and advice. My thesis would be an absolute mess if it had not been for all of her help and suggestions. I am so deeply grateful.

Thank you.

memoriae aeternae mei avae

Preface

Having recently lost my grandmother to cancer, the subject of mortality is something that has often since frequented my thoughts. Although my grandmother and grandfather found some solace in reading scripture and receiving visits from a minister, I was not as willing to accept such sentiments, being someone who is not in any way religious. Instead, in an attempt to console myself and come to terms with her imminent passing, I turned to my chosen field of academic study and consulted Virgil's representation of death in Book VI of the *Aeneid*. The interaction between Aeneas and the spirit of his father, Anchises, in the Elysian Fields struck a chord and inspired my search for more information about the ancient Romans' beliefs about death and the afterlife. In the days before she passed, I told my grandmother about Virgil's Elysian Fields, the thousand years of peace and joy, and the rebirth of souls who were owed a second body by the Fates. She was in a great deal of pain and her ability to speak was waning, but she was able to muster up enough strength to tell me that she thought that it was a beautiful idea. She told my mother later that she had seen her own mother (who had passed away fifteen years prior) sitting in the chair in her hospital room, keeping her company.

After my grandmother passed, I began to think more about what she had said about seeing my great-grandmother. I wondered about the existence of the soul and, if it did exist, whether or not hers had been reunited with her mother's. Recalling how Aeneas was visited by the spirit of his wife, Creusa, in Book II of the *Aeneid*, and by that of his father's in Book V, I decided to explore further Latin literature containing instances wherein the spirits of the dead appeared to the living. Upon discovering a wealth of stunning epitaphs and literature about the dead, I decided to make this investigation of the Romans' ideas about death the subject of my thesis. Even in the early stages of my research, I had already found a degree of clarity and comfort from the ideas of this society that existed more than two thousand years ago. The exploration of this literature has provided me with some closure, and I believe that it can do the same for other people who have experienced the death of a loved one. I believe that my research not only reminds modern readers of alternative views of death, but it also serves to highlight contemporary understandings of mortality and the ways in which people come to terms with death today.

My grandmother and I both shared a great love of history and learning, and having been able to use a piece of ancient history to bring a smile to her face in her last days is a gift that I will always cherish. For this reason, my research into the ancient Romans' understanding of death

and their accounts of interactions with lost loved ones stands as a personal tribute to the memory of my grandmother.

Lesley Gayle de Villiers

8 May 1947 – 10 December 2015

Requiescat in Pace

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1. Chapter 1: Introduction

Death is a universal and timeless concept. However, much variation can be found throughout time and space with regard to different cultural understandings about what happens to the human spirit (where there is a belief in such) after death. While there are many beliefs in an afterlife (such as Heaven or Hell, Hades, Nirvana, Valhalla), there are also numerous different cultural beliefs about the souls who do not enter the afterlife, but remain restless in the living world. The notion of a ghost, or a manifestation of the dead, is not uncommon in modern literature and entertainment, nor was it unheard of in the literature of the ancient Romans. In fact, a vast number of narratives and accounts of manifestations of the dead appearing to the living exists within the surviving corpus of Roman literature. However, there is little secondary scholarship which focuses primarily on the various qualities of ancient Roman ghosts. This thesis will explore a selection of the most poignant Latin texts in which spirits of the dead are featured.

Using Debbie Felton's (1999) book, *Haunted Greece and Rome*, as a starting point for the definitions and discourse in my work, I will conduct an exploration of the following research question: What insights into the ancient Romans' understanding of death and the dead can be brought to light through a comparison of the ghosts that feature in the selected texts from Plautus, Virgil, Ovid, and Pliny? The specific texts to be examined here are those of Plautus' *Mostellaria*,[1] Books II and III of Virgil's *Aeneid*,[2] Books II and V of Ovid's *Fasti*,[3] and *Letter* 7.27 in Pliny the Younger's *Epistles*.[4] Following the introductory establishment of the various definitions and parameters of my thesis, my second chapter will provide a brief overview of the ancient Roman beliefs about death and the dead, for the sake of contextualization in the arguments that follow. Chapter 3 contains the crux of my argument and presents a comparative discussion of the selected works.

Comparisons and contrasts will be made first in terms of the Latin terminology denoting the spirits of the dead as it is used by the various Roman writers. Following this, the ways in which the spirits of the dead are characterized and portrayed will be examined with regard to their

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[1] All Latin extracts and English translations from Plautus' *Mostellaria* are taken from De Melo (2011).

[2] All Latin extracts from Book II of Virgil's *Aeneid* are taken from Ganiban (2008), those from Book III are found in Perkell (2010) and those in Book VI are from Johnston (2012). All English translations of Virgil's *Aeneid* are taken from Fagles (2010).

[3] All Latin extracts and English translations of Ovid's *Fasti* are taken from Frazer (1996).

[4] All Latin extracts from Pliny the Younger's *Epistles* are taken from Sherwin-White (1969) and all English translations are taken from Radice (1977).

approaches and interactions with the living. Lastly, the similarities and differences that exist in the presentation of the theme of Tragic Death and its supporting motif, Laying the Ghost to Rest, will be discussed. Upon conclusion of my thesis, the insights offered by my comparative discussion will be brought to light through a final summation of and reflection on the arguments presented. It can be hypothesized here that the findings of this argument will not only shed light on the significance placed on death in the ancient Roman world, but it will further demonstrate the effects of different forms of death on the reasons and manners by which the restless dead manifest themselves in the living world.

1.1.   Definitions and Approaches

In this thesis, the term "ghost" will be used regularly in reference to the various manifestations of the dead. "Ghost" will be defined here as a manifestation of the soul after death which remains restlessly in the living world and is unable to reach the ultimate resting place of Dis: Elysium.[5] Here, this term also denotes manifestations of the dead who appear to the living either in dreams or in waking, and who use visual, auditory, and tactile sensory appeals in their interactions with the living. Although such synonyms as "spirit," "phantom," and "spectre" will also be used here, "ghost" will be employed as the primary umbrella term signifying manifestations of the dead on the grounds that its English connotations make it the most accurate descriptor of the non-living characters in my selection of texts. In fact, the Oxford English Dictionary's definition of "ghost" is "an apparition of a dead person which is believed to appear or become manifest to the living, typically as a nebulous image" (*English Oxford Living Dictionaries*, 2018).[6] In this definition, "ghost" not only refers to a manifestation of the soul of a deceased person, but it also includes the characteristic behaviour of approaching the living. While the English synonyms for "ghost" ("spirit," "phantom," and "spectre" – among others) can be used in reference to manifestations of the dead, the most common definitions of these words do not mention both the dead and their approaches to the living.[7] In addition to using "ghost" due to its English connotations, this term will also be used here for the sake of being consistent with the secondary scholars and translators whose works are used in my thesis and who also refer to "ghosts." Such scholars and translators include Felton (1999), Toynbee (1971), and Hopkins (1983) in secondary literature, and De Melo (2011), Fagles (2010), Frazer (1996), and Radice (1977) in their translations of the selected texts.

In this thesis, the entities described as ghosts are also separated into different categories according to the nature of their behaviour and the circumstances under which they appear. Such

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[5] The souls of the dead who are unable to reach Elysium include those who dwell in the Fields of Mourning and the Stygian Marshes as they are presented by Virgil in Book VI of the *Aeneid.*

[6] This definition is echoed by *Merriam-Webster* (2018) which defines "ghost" as "the soul of a dead person believed to be an inhabitant of the unseen world or to appear to the living in bodily likeness."

[7] "Spirit" is a close second as my choice of wording in this thesis, but as seen in the Oxford English Dictionary, this word is defined as "the non-physical part of a person regarded as their true self and as capable of surviving physical death or separation" (*English Oxford Living Dictionaries*, 2018). This definition extends further and even includes "ghost" as part of its explanation: "The non-physical part of a person manifested as an apparition after their death; a ghost" (*English Oxford Living Dictionaries*, 2018). In this case, the fact that the term "ghost" is used to demonstrate the meaning of "spirit" lends more authority to my chosen term. There is no mention of the dead in *Merriam-Webster*'s (2018) definition of "spirit": "An often malevolent being that is bodiless but can become visible." The lack of reference to the dead in this definition of "spirit" results in it being a less than accurate descriptor of the entities around which my thesis revolves.

categories of ghosts are extensively described by Felton (1999:29-37), and for this reason, the spectral groupings as they are presented in *Haunted Greece and Rome* will be applied in my thesis. The most common type of ghost discussed is that of the "interactive ghost." Interactive ghosts fall under Felton's (1999:35) category of "continual apparitions."[8] These are those spirits who return to the living world in order to communicate with the living, usually in order to advise or comfort their surviving kin, to ask for a proper burial, or to reveal the identity of their killer, relay the way in which they died, or to seek revenge on the living who had done them wrong while they were alive (Felton, 1999:37). Felton (1999:37) defines interactive ghosts as being receptive to speech and gestures as well as being capable of delivering their own speech and gestures on occasion. It is also mentioned in Felton's (1999:37) work that the ghosts who haunt houses usually fall into the category of interactive ghosts. The beckoning spirit of the old man who haunts the Athenian house in Pliny's *Letter* 7.27 is an excellent example of an interactive continual apparition and his case is discussed in further detail in the following chapter.

In addition to interactive continual apparitions, crisis apparitions and portents are also among the spirits in my selected texts. According to Felton (1999:29), crisis apparitions are usually the ghosts of recently deceased kin or loved ones who appear to the living in times of crisis. These ghosts are often seen as warning the living of some impending danger, communicating the circumstances of their death, or consoling the living in their grief over the loss of the person whose spectre has approached them (Felton, 1999:29). In Chapter 3, the ways in which the ghost of Creusa in Book II of Virgil's *Aeneid* can be considered a crisis apparition are examined.[9] In the case of portents, the Oxford English Dictionary defines such entities as "sign[s] or warning[s] that a momentous or calamitous event is likely to happen" (*English*

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[8] Along with interactive ghosts, Felton (1999:35) also explains that continual apparitions can appear as "recordings." Recordings concern instances in which a spectral scene of the past is replayed in particular buildings or at certain locations (Felton, 1999:36). Examples of this would be reports of seeing the ghost of Anne Boleyn in the Tower of London, or ancient reports of long-dead armies being seen and heard engaging in battle at historical sites such as Marathon. The latter ghostly recording is described by Pausanias (1.32.4) when he remarks in his *Description of Greece* how the sounds of fighting men and horses could be heard at night on the plains of Marathon long after the battle was won (Felton, 1999:36).

[9] Similar to crisis apparitions, warning apparitions are also described by Felton (1999:30) as appearing to the living in order to deliver a cautionary message. However, these entities are not necessarily spirits of the dead or relatives of the person to whom they approach (Felton, 1999:30). The warnings which these apparitions deliver are also more prophetic in nature than those messages issued by crisis apparitions. In many instances of warning apparitions, such as the one which appears to Curtius Rufus in *Letter* 7.27, the figures are described as larger than life. This is not to say that the two groupings are mutually exclusive, however. The ghost of Creusa is an example of a manifestation of the dead who embodies the familial and consolatory characteristics of a crisis apparition as well as the large stature and prophetic purpose of a warning apparition. It is for this reason that Felton's (1999:30) definition of warning apparitions is included here. The example of Creusa is discussed at length in Chapter 3.

Oxford Living Dictionaries, 2018). Examples such as "showers of stones, doors opening by themselves, and disembodied voices," are among the phenomena that would have been considered portentous by the ancient Greeks and Romans (Felton, 1999:xii).[10] The ghost of Polydorus in Book III of the *Aeneid* manifests as a disembodied voice and his representation as such is discussed further in Chapter 3.

Although Felton's research and definitions pertaining to spirits of the dead in the ancient Graeco-Roman world play a large role in my thesis, it must be noted that the nature of my research differs from hers on a number of levels. Most obvious is the fact that Felton's work focuses primarily on ancient literature about haunted houses,[11] whereas my thesis takes a broader approach to the literature in the sense that I examine other instances in which ghosts feature that do not necessarily take place in a haunted house.[12] Although Felton and I both examine Plautus' *Mostellaria* and Pliny's *Letter* 7.27, it is important to note that the aim of her research is to determine what such haunted house stories could have meant to the Greek and Roman audiences for which they were composed (Mayor, 2001:110). In contrast, my thesis aims to shed light only on the Roman understanding of death and the dead through a comparative discussion of Latin literature featuring ghosts (regardless of whether or not said ghosts haunt a dwelling place). Moreover, topics such as the uncertainty surrounding Latin terminology for ghosts and the ways in which these spectres approach and interact with the living are presented as the core points of my discussion while they are only mentioned briefly in Felton's (1999:23-25;38-40;55-57) work. The inclusion of an examination of the main underlying theme (Tragic Death) and motif (Laying the Ghost to Rest) featured in each of my selected texts further sets my thesis apart from Felton's book, which does not make use of such literary analyses. Additionally, Felton (1999:89-97) concludes her research with a discussion about the modern reception of the ancient ghost story, as well as an exploration of the ways in which such stories have developed over time. Since my work is focused solely on Roman thought about death and the dead, no such comparison with modern ghost stories is presented in my thesis.

The scope of my thesis will largely focus on Latin texts composed by Roman writers within the time frame of 250 BCE – 250 CE. These parameters allow for the focus of my arguments to remain centred on ancient Roman literature from both the Roman Republic and the Roman

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[10] Felton (1999:xii) remarks that such inexplicable happenings fall into the category of poltergeist activity today.

[11] Namely Plautus' *Mostellaria*, Pliny the Younger's *Letter* 7.27, and Lucian's *Philopseudes*.

[12] I.e: Books II and III of Virgil's *Aeneid*, and Books II and V of Ovid's *Fasti*.

Empire. Considering literature about ghosts over the expanse of five hundred years during such crucial eras of Roman societal development will allow for a more extensive study of Roman thought about death and the dead. However, this is not to say that accounts of ghosts that exist outside of these parameters will be completely excluded. Where it is appropriate to the argument, tales of spirits of the dead that were told before or after my time frame are included, as well as some accounts from Greek writers, and Roman citizens who composed in Greek. By way of example, selected texts from writers in Greek such as Pausanias and Plutarch are used to illustrate further a number of points in my arguments in Chapter 3.

Of course, it must be noted that the addition of Greek literature about ghosts is done so in moderation and only in support of the Roman sources at the core of my arguments. In this thesis, it is pertinent to include such Greek literature due to the strong relationship between the ancient Greek and Roman cultures. In fact, a number of the Roman literary works in my selection of texts can be shown as having developed from earlier Greek accounts. The *Mostellaria* of Plautus is a prime example. According to De Melo (2011:307), Plautus' comedy is a Romanized adaptation of an earlier Greek play by the name of *Phasma*. He notes that there existed three Greek plays of this name which are attributed to Theognetus, Menander, and Philemon – the latter of whom is generally argued to be the most likely inspiration for Plautus' *Mostellaria* (De Melo, 2011:307). The description of Polydorus' tragic death in Book III of Virgil's *Aeneid* is also an example of a story with earlier Greek ties. Versions of Polydorus' fate exist in Euripides' *Hecuba* and in Pacuvius' *Iliona*, to name a few. In this regard, the inclusion of minor extracts from Greek literature in support of my primary Latin texts is highly beneficial to my argument, not only in terms of what these sources contribute to the overall discussion, but also in the way that such literature serves to contextualize further my selection of texts.

Secondary scholarship will also contribute to the contextualization of the selected texts in my thesis. As mentioned earlier, such scholars include Felton (1999), Toynbee (1971), and Hopkins (1983) – all of whom are well-established and authoritative researchers on the notion of death in the ancient Graeco-Roman world. As a classicist, Felton (1999) brings new information to classical studies through her research on the seldom-discussed Greek and Roman haunted house tales (Mayor, 2001:112). The research gap which Felton fills (i.e.: the lack of secondary scholarship on ancient Greek and Roman haunted house stories) allows for her work to be considered a pioneering example in the research on Graeco-Roman ghost stories. Jocelyn Toynbee's (1971) *Death and Burial in the Roman World* is of great value, not only to

my thesis, but also to the study of Roman thought about death. Authority is lent to Toynbee's work by the fact that she possessed an extensive knowledge of ancient Roman art, and specialized in the interpretation of Roman funerary art (Richardson Jr., 1973:221). In addition to this, her research on the Roman concept of death is used extensively in the later secondary literature of Retief and Cilliers (2005), Erasmo (2001), Felton (1999) and Hopkins (1983). Although somewhat disorganised in his presentation of the data (Harris, 1986:445), the aforementioned Keith Hopkins (1983) presents persuasive arguments and innovative analyses of information (Macmullen, 1984:741). His book, *Death and Renewal*, is also consulted by later academics such as Felton (1999), and Retief and Cilliers (2005).

Older sources such as Lacy Collison-Morley's (1912) *Greek and Roman Ghost Stories* and Franz Cumont's (1922) *After Life in Roman Paganism* are also included in this thesis, despite their early publication dates. The reason for this is that these works can be seen as valuable precursors to the relatively modern scholarship on death in the Roman world. In the case of Collison-Morley, it is apparent in Felton's (1999) work that she takes much of her inspiration and cues from the former's 1912 publication. Since Collison-Morley's (1912) work is the platform upon which my source of inspiration (Felton) develops her arguments, it is appropriate to make use of the information presented in *Greek and Roman Ghost Stories* in my own work. Cumont's (1922) book provides the starting point for a number of arguments in the secondary literature of other scholars. Felton (1999), Toynbee (1971), and Hopkins (1983) all reference Cumont's (1922) *After Life in Roman Paganism* in their works. Although Cumont's (1922) book has been reviewed and his arguments described as "vague", it must be noted that this book and the lectures within it should only be considered as "general outline[s] of the subject" (Halliday, 1923:87). Furthermore, the value of Cumont's (1922) work lies not only in his scholarly authority in the field of death in the Roman world, but also in the fact that so many scholars still make positive use of his ideas decades later. Here, credibility of these sources is not ruled out by their publication dates, but rather it is sustained through the continued use of their arguments in successive secondary scholarship.

1.2.   Criteria for Selection of Texts

The reasoning behind my specific choice of texts lies predominantly in the fact that they represent the most complete portrayals of ghosts in ancient Latin literature. The main criteria for each work is that it must be a relatively complete Latin text,[13] composed between 250 BCE and 250 CE, which is longer than a few sentences or lines in length, and of course, makes reference to a manifestation of the dead who approaches the living in the living world. In addition to these requirements, there is also a need for diversity in the content and plot, and for this reason, I have chosen a combination of stories about manifestations of the dead that take place in different locations,[14] feature different types of ghosts,[15] and demonstrate the various ways in which the spirits of the dead behave and manifest themselves in their interactions with the living.[16]

As a lengthy comedy of five acts, with a large portion of the second being dedicated to the featuring ghost, Plautus' *Mostellaria* certainly meets the quantitative requirements for my thesis. Although it has been argued convincingly by De Melo (2011:307) that the *Mostellaria* is an adaptation of a Greek play, Plautus' choice of Latin vocabulary used in reference to the ghost is of great worth to my comparative discussion of the Latin terminology for the dead – as will be seen in Chapter 3. The portrayal of the ghost in this work is also unusually diverse, and so the examination of this text will make a valuable contribution to the comparisons in my main argument.

The ghosts of Creusa and Polydorus in Books II and III of Virgil's *Aeneid* are also of great importance to my work. While the main character, Aeneas, does encounter other manifestations of the dead, the circumstances in which they are met do not fit the criteria for my selection of texts.[17] However, Aeneas' interactions with Creusa's and Polydorus' ghosts in the living word, as well as Virgil's descriptions of the encounters over several lines, mean that these two ghosts

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[13] I.e.: The surviving primary text must not be heavily fragmented or missing several lines or sections.

[14] Here, the haunted house setting (featured in Plautus' *Mostellaria* and Pliny's second story in *Letter* 7.27) is accompanied by city locations (Troy in Book II of the *Aeneid* and Rome in Book II of the *Fasti*) as well as the shoreline (Book III of the *Aeneid*) and in the courtyards and bedrooms of the living (the first and third story in *Letter* 7.27, and Book V of the *Fasti*).

[15] I.e.: Interactive continual apparitions, crisis apparitions, warning apparitions, and portents.

[16] I.e.: Whether they approach the living in dreams or in waking, and whether they manifest themselves through sight, sound, and/or touch.

[17] Many of these interactions (such as those with Deiphobus and Dido) do not take place in the living world, but rather in the underworld in Book VI. Other instances, such as Aeneas' dream in which the ghost of Hector approaches him in Book II, are too brief in length to be discussed in great detail.

do meet my requirements. Further motivating my decision to study the ghosts of Creusa and Polydorus is the fact that they represent some of the more uncommon types of ghosts: crisis apparitions and portents.

As for my selection of extracts from Books II and V of Ovid's *Fasti*, the accounts of Remus' spirit and the ghosts who were neglected during the Parentalia are not only set in the living world, but they also demonstrate different behavioural elements of the dead. By this, I refer to Remus' approach through his parents' dreams and the angered spirits' torment of the living while they are awake. The contrast between the two approaches here adds another very significant point of comparison for my main argument. Of additional value is the fact that both of these instances pertain to the two Roman festivals held in honour of the spirits of the dead: the Parentalia and the Lemuria. By including these texts, an opportunity is presented to examine the Roman understanding of death in relation to such festivals.

Pliny's *Letter* 7.27 is valuable not only in that it meets all of my criteria (being a lengthy sixteen sections of Latin, with reference to not one but three instances of ghosts), but also in the richness and variation of its stories. Although the second story in this letter is my focal point, the other two tales are also important for their phantasmal characters. In the second tale, both the spirit's approach and his manifestation is described in extensive detail – an element which provides qualitative subject matter for my comparative discussions. Additionally, the first account features a warning apparition while the third portrays an approach through dreams and interactions through touch. In this way, the diversity offered by Pliny's *Letter* 7.27 provides numerous points of comparison by which I will be able to elevate and vary my arguments.

1.3.   Rationale

While the rationale for my choice of topic is also grounded in personal experiences (as mentioned in my preface), I have also made my decision with great consideration to the potential academic benefits that may arise from a study of ancient Latin literature about ghosts. From a Classical standpoint, my choice of subject matter is motivated by the gap in the existing research on ancient Roman ghost stories. Although Collison-Morley (1912) and Felton (1999) both address such literature, their works are among the very few which focus on the spirits of the dead in ancient Greece and Rome. Even so, Collison-Morley's (1912) book serves mainly as an outline of the ghost stories and the various terms[18] and concepts[19] associated with them, while Felton (1999), as I have said, focuses specifically on the ghosts of haunted houses in the Graeco-Roman world. There are very few in depth comparative discussions of ancient Latin accounts of ghosts (Felton, 1999:xi-xii),[20] and there is a lack of scholarship on the ways in which such literature can lend insight into the Roman understanding of death and the dead. This gap in the research is where my thesis can potentially make its contribution. Inspired by the work of Collison-Morley and, in particular, Felton, I hope to be able to make my own contribution (through my thesis) to this gap in the research on ancient ghosts and their relationship with Roman thought about death.

Should my work prove successful in its aim to fill the research gap, there exists the further possibility that it will benefit the wider field of Classics, in addition to the existing scholarship on death in the Roman world. In this regard, my ultimate hope is to provide greater insight into Roman thought about death in order to develop a more comprehensive idea of Roman society as a whole.

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[18] These include the Greek and Latin words used to describe spirits of the dead, and what they mean.

[19] These include ideas about how the dead should be honoured, as well as the functions of the Parentalia and Lemuria festivals.

[20] According to Felton (1999:xii), the reason for this lack of research is possibly due to the fragmentary nature of many of the surviving texts about ghosts, as well as the uncertainty surrounding the semantics and usage of terms denoting spirits of the dead. I aim to dispel such apprehensions by demonstrating the value of a selection of those surviving texts which are relatively complete. As for the terminological problems, I hope to remove a degree of the uncertainty by conducting an in depth comparison of the Latin terms which refer to ghosts.

2. Chapter 2: A Brief Overview of Roman Beliefs Concerning Death and the Dead

2.1. Chapter Introduction

In order to provide sufficient contextualization for the arguments presented in Chapter 3, this chapter will briefly highlight and elaborate on the most pertinent elements pertaining to the ancient Roman understanding of death and the dead. The elements discussed here will address the Roman beliefs about death and the associative funerary rites and rituals as they are presented in existing secondary scholarship. Since my research question concerns Roman ideas about death and the dead, it is necessary to take note of the existing secondary literature on this subject. The sections entitled "Roman Beliefs and Rites Concerning the Dead"[21] and "Ghosts in Roman Culture"[22] work together to serve as the platform of knowledge upon which I base my main argument. In addition to this, a full contextualization of the selected texts discussed establishes the content through which the insights into the Roman understandings of death and the dead will be brought to light. Throughout my thesis, frequent references to Roman thought about death, the afterlife of the soul, and the various funerary processes are made. Moreover, much attention will be given to the idea of the Roman underworld as it is presented in Book VI of Virgil's *Aeneid* and in Book IV of his *Georgics*.[23] In light of this, it is necessary to present an overview of such crucial information for the sake of presenting a more comprehensive argument in Chapter 3.

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[21] In which discussions on death and funerary practices, posthumous respect and judgement, and the underworld are conducted.

[22] Which explores the ancient Roman beliefs about how spirits of the dead could approach the living in sleep and in waking, as well as the ways in which they were thought to manifest in their interactions with the living.

[23] These texts are the chosen representations of the underworld due to their being the most comprehensive and extensive descriptions of Dis in Latin literature.

2.2.   Roman Beliefs and Rites Concerning the Dead

The majority of the scholarship on Roman beliefs about death and the dead is derived from archaeological evidence (from gravesites, epitaphs, cinerary urns, funerary monuments, and mausoleums) and the poetry of Virgil (specifically, the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*) and Ovid (the *Fasti* and the *Metamorphoses*). While tales of ghosts do feature in Virgil and Ovid's works, these stories are not the focal points of scholarly discussion about the Roman concept of death, as is the case in my thesis. Nevertheless, it is important to review what knowledge has been gleaned from archaeological evidence and poetry in order to evaluate, by comparison, the insights found in Roman literature which features ghosts. Here, such existing knowledge about death in the Roman world, especially concerning issues like the fate of the soul, funerary practices, posthumous respect and judgement, and the underworld are discussed.

2.2.1. The Fates of the Soul and the Body

While no one can say for certain what becomes of a person after death, a great many cultures do believe in the possibility of the survival of the soul after one's physical body perishes. Here, the concept of the "soul" is treated as the essence or ether that animates a person, generating personality and attributes that differentiate one person from another (Johnston, 2012:92). In ancient Roman culture, there is much argument advocating that there existed a popular belief in some form of life after death (Toynbee, 1971:34). According to Cumont (1922:78-79), the Roman culture generally held that, in death, the soul became a shade (*umbra*) which took on the likeness (*simulacrum*) of the person to whom it belonged in life. Although these findings of Toynbee's and Cumont's have been derived from their research on Roman thought about death, I will conduct my own brief exploration of the evidence for a Roman belief in life after death in order to provide a more recent, alternative source of information with which the work of such scholars can be compared and the validity of their arguments evaluated.

In the argument for the existence of a Roman belief that one's soul lived on after death, evidence such as epitaphs can be considered. The following epitaph entitled *On the Tomb of a Happy Man* (translated into Latin and paraphrased by Ausonius[24] as part of his *Epitaphs on the Heroes Who Took Part in the Trojan War*)[25] can be seen to demonstrate the concept that death

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[24] All Latin extracts and English translations of Ausonius' works are taken from Evelyn-White (1921).

[25] *Epitaphia Heroum Qui Bello Troico Interfuerunt*.

was not an end, but rather a change in one's state of being – i.e.: changing from a mortal, physical state of being to an immortal soul after the death of the body.

> "Sprinkle my ashes with pure wine and fragrant oil of spikenard:
>
> Bring balsam, too, O stranger, with crimson roses.
>
> Unending spring pervades my tearless urn:
>
> I have but changed my state, and have not died.
>
> I have not lost a single joy of my old life,   5
>
> Whether you think that I remember all or none" (*Epit.* 31).[26]

Through this example, the line, "I have but changed my state, and have not died," presents a clear indication that the death of the body and the interring of ashes in a "tearless urn" does not signal the termination of the soul (*Epit.* 31.3-4).[27] Rather, this line supports the idea that the soul does not die, but lives on in a state of being which is devoid of a physical body. The subsequent line, "I have not lost a single joy of my old life," not only highlights the change in the state of being of the speaker (i.e.: the deceased), but by referring to his mortal life as "old," he implies that his current state of being is, by comparison, a new life (*Epit.* 31.5).[28] In this regard then, the epitaph demonstrates that the concept of death is merely a process of transformation in which a person's physical body becomes ash while the soul continues to exist and enters a new stage of life.

In addition to representing the concept of life after death, this epitaph also illustrates the nature of the hereafter as an "unending spring" (*perpetuum ver*) (*Epit.* 31.3). Through this description, the connoting imagery of green fields and flowers in bloom recalls the depiction of the Elysian Fields as they are presented in Book VI of Virgil's *Aeneid*:

> "Aeneas sees in the valley's depths a sheltered grove and rustling wooded brakes and the Lethe flowing past the homes of peace. Around it hovered numberless races, nations of souls like bees in meadowlands on a cloudless summer day that settle in flowers,

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[26] *sparge mero cineres bene olentis et unguine nardi,*

hospes, et adde rosis balsama puniceis.

perpetuum mihi ver agit inlacrimabilis urna

et commutavi saecula, non obii.

nulla mihi veteris perierunt gaudia vitae,   5

seu meminisse putes omnia, sive nihil (*Epit.* 31).

[27] *perpetuum mihi ver agit inlacrimabilis urna*

et commutavi saecula, non obii (*Epit.* 31.3-4).

[28] *nulla mihi veteris perierunt gaudia vitae* (*Epit.* 31.5).

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riots of colour, swarming round the lilies' lustrous sheen, and the whole field comes alive with a humming murmur" (*Aen*. 6.703-709).[29]

In this case, the concept of an eternal spring is presented in both the epitaph and in Book VI of the *Aeneid*, and the fact that the former was published by Ausonius in the 4th century CE while Virgil's work was completed in 19 BCE further suggests that the concept of life after death and the nature of the hereafter was a long-standing idea in Roman thought about death.

Accepting the idea that Romans believed in the continued existence of the soul after death, the fate of the physical body must also be discussed. Using a combination of primary and secondary sources, I try to highlight the role played by funerary practices and how the extent to which they were sufficiently carried out in terms of the physical remains can be seen to have a significant effect on the ultimate fate of the soul. The following discussions of aspects of funerary practices are necessary to provide context for the discussions in Chapter 3.

As will be seen in Chapter 3, those who received a proper burial could expect to enter the underworld and enjoy the eternal spring of the Elysian Fields – barring that they did not die an undesirable death.[30] However, those dead whose bodies were left *insepultum*, or improperly buried without due rites, are shown in literature to have been denied access into the underworld. This is demonstrated in Book VI of the *Aeneid* when Aeneas comes across the spirit of Palinurus along the banks of the River Acheron.[31]

Here, Palinurus explains that he survived the storm that swept him from Aeneas' ship, only to wash ashore where a "band of brutes… ran [him] through with knives," and left his body unburied on the beach (*Aen*. 6.359-361).[32] Since "the tide holds [him] now and the stormwinds roll [his] body down the shore," Palinurus is unable to enter the afterlife (*Aen*. 6.362).[33] He

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[29] *interea videt Aeneas in valle reducta seclusum nemus et virgulta sonantia silvae, Lethaeumque domos placidas qui praenatat amnem. hunc circum innumerae gentes populique volabant, ac veluti in pratis ubi apes aestate serena floribus insidunt variis et candida circum lilia funduntur, strepit omnis murmure campus* (*Aen*. 6.701-709).

[30] For the ancient Romans, an unfavourable death meant dying in an unnatural or honourless manner. Examples of these types of death predominantly feature those who died young: e.g.: those who died in infancy, murder victims, those who committed suicide, died from a harsh disease, were victims of matricide/patricide, or died as a result of "cruel love" (*Aen*. 6. 426-444). Virgil highlights the untimely nature of these deaths by using the verb *acerbus* in his descriptions: "… All, snatched from the breast on that black day that swept them off and drowned them in bitter death" – *et ab ubere raptos abstulit atra dies et funere mersit acerbo* (*Aen*. 6.428-429). Other undesirable ends include violent deaths, death by starvation/dehydration, and death as a result of violated guest-friendship laws. Such unfortunate deaths will be discussed further in 2.2.3 and again throughout Chapter 3.

[31] Palinurus was one of the men who sailed out of Troy with Aeneas but was swept overboard during a storm.

[32] *iam tuta tenebam, ni gens crudelis madida cum veste gravatum prensantemque uncis manibus capita aspera montis ferro invasisset praedamque ignara putasset* (*Aen*. 6.358-361).

[33] *nunc me fluctus habet versantque in litore venti* (*Aen*. 6.362).

remarks that in order to board Charon's ferry, he must either wait for a hundred years, or be given a proper burial. The Sibyl reinforces this concept of appropriate burial as a prerequisite for entering the afterlife when she tells Palinurus that while unburied,[34] he cannot hope to "lay [his] eyes on the Styx's flood, the Furies' ruthless stream," but that he will be able to reach the other side of the river when "neighbouring people… build [him] a tomb and pay [his] tomb due rites" (*Aen.* 6.378-380).[35]

The case of Palinurus clearly illustrates the notion that proper burial (or cremation) was necessary in order for the deceased to enter the underworld. While this concept reflects the reverence and honour for the dead that was part of the Roman funerary culture, it must be noted that the importance placed on the performance of proper funerary rites may also be owed to a need for essential practical considerations in the way of hygiene. Death in the Roman world was believed to be "unclean" and polluting (Toynbee, 1971:43). Although much emphasis is placed on respect for the dead and their journey into the afterlife, Retief and Cilliers (2005:130) explain that the obligation of burying or cremating the bodies of the dead stemmed largely from the need to dispose of corpses in order to avoid the contraction of disease. As a result of the fear of infection, anyone who came into contact with a dead person was considered contaminated and had to be purified before they could be rid of the pollution of death (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:129).[36] For the surviving family members, a nine-day period of mourning had to take place (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:141). As the family and the household of the deceased were deemed to be polluted by the death, they were required to mark their front entrance with cypress or mountain pine branches as a means of warning passers-by that someone in the family had died and that the house was a site of pollution (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:138).[37] It was only when the mourning period had ended and the deceased had been interred that those who had participated in the funerary affairs could be purified by being

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[34] Although Palinurus is described as "unburied" (*inhumatus*) (*Aen.* 6.374), thus implying that burial is the solution, his entrance into the underworld could also have been granted through the cremation of his body. Recorded in Table X of the *Twelve Tables* (a set of laws inscribed on twelve tablets between 451 and 449 BCE which were placed in the Roman Forum), it is indicated that either burial or cremation was acceptable in funerary rituals (Johnson et al., 2009:12).

[35] *nam tua finitimi, longe lateque per urbes prodigiis acti caelestibus, ossa piabunt et statuent tumulum et tumulo sollemnia mittent* (*Aen.* 6.378-380).

[36] For the sake of practicality on the battlefield, generals and soldiers engaged in extended periods of war were the only ones who were not susceptible to the pollution of death. Death was a regular and wide-spread occurrence in battle and so they were seen as being exempt from contamination and therefore did not have to undergo purification rituals (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:142).

[37] The presence of cypress in association with death is also seen in Book III of Virgil's *Aeneid*. The significance of this is discussed further in section 3.4.2.

anointed with water from a laurel branch and by walking under a flame (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:141).

With regard to the funerary arrangements for the deceased, the law of the *Twelve Tables* commanded that "a dead person shall not be buried or burned in the city" (Johnson et al., 2009:12). As a result, the funerals for the dead were held at the gravesites beyond the city walls, or *pomerium* (Erasmo, 2001:31). The funerary preparations began from the moment of death – considered as the point at which the departed released his or her final sigh of breath (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:137). Following this, a relative of the deceased had to "catch" the soul with a kiss as it was released from the body (Toynbee, 1971:43).[38] Since the soul could not reach the afterlife until the funerary processes had been completed, it was believed that it could be held temporarily by a relative during the mourning period (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:129;137). In order to ascertain that the person was indeed dead, the Romans would then commence with the process of *conclamatio*,[39] in which the family would call the name of the deceased repeatedly until the funeral (Toynbee, 1971:44; Retief and Cilliers, 2005:137). On the ninth and final day of mourning, the funeral procession would begin from the house and end beyond the city walls.[40] According to the *Twelve Tables*, funeral processions were limited to "three mourners wearing veils… one mourner wearing an inexpensive purple tunic, and ten [flautists]" (Johnson et al., 2009:12). Furthermore, the behaviour at funerals was also regulated as women were not permitted to "tear their cheeks or… make a sorrowful outcry" (Johnson et al., 2009:12). Once the body was buried (or the ashes laid to rest) beyond the city's *pomerium*, the deceased's family would hold a feast at the gravesite at which offerings[41] of food and wine would be provided for the departed (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:141).

The significance of proper interment is reinforced by Ausonius in the preface to his *Parentalia*:[42]

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[38] Reference to this act is made by Seneca in *Ad Marciam* 3.2 when he describes how Livia was not permitted to draw out her son Drusus' final kiss: *non licuerat matri ultima filii oscula gratumque extremi sermonem oris haurire*. Ovid also provides an example of this final kiss in Book IV of the *Fasti* wherein he describes Romulus' performance of the funerary honours for his brother Remus: "When they set down the bier, he gave it a last kiss, and said, 'Snatched from thy brother, loath to part, brother, farewell!'" – *osculaque adplicuit posito suprema fereto atque ait "invite frater adempte, vale!"* (*Fast*. 4-851-852).

[39] "Shouting/crying together in grief" (Morwood, 2008:53).

[40] In Rome, the dead were buried along the Via Appia just outside the city (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:134).

[41] Excavations of gravesites in present-day Rome and in the Welsh town of Caerleon have revealed a system of pipes which lead from the surface into the graves. These are thought to be a means by which offerings of food and drink could be delivered to the dead (Hopkins, 1983:234).

[42] In this instance, *Parentalia* refers to Ausonius' tributes in verse to his departed family members.

"For the buried, as for those who lack earth to cover them, one rite suffices:

To call on the soul by name counts for the full ceremony.   10

Our dead ones laid to rest rejoice to hear their names:

And thus even the lettered stones above their graves would have us do.

Even he who lacks the sad urn of burial will be well-nigh as though interred,

If his name be uttered thrice" (*Item Praefatio Versibus Adnotata*, 9-14).[43]

Ausonius highlights the importance of the rite of calling the name of the deceased, both in the case of those who have been buried and for those "who lack earth to cover them" (*Item Praefatio Versibus Adnotata*, 9).[44] Here, the calling of the name of the deceased is not only presented as the appropriate funeral rite for those who have been improperly buried (*insepultum*), but it is also shown to be suitable for those whose bodies could not be recovered for burial. This sentiment is reiterated as Ausonius remarks that "even he who lacks the sad urn of burial will be well-nigh as though interred, if his name be uttered thrice" (*Item Praefatio Versibus Adnotata*, 13-14).[45] Indeed, the concept of calling the deceased's name as it is explained by Ausonius further serves as an example of the process of *conclamatio* which Toynbee (1971:44) and Retief and Cilliers (2005:137) mention in their works and which plays an important role in my discussions in Chapter 3.

It also recalls the way in which Aeneas conducts the last rites for Priam's son, Deiphobus, when his body could not be recovered (*Aen*. 6.500-508). In the underworld, Aeneas explains to Deiphobus' shade how he "called out to [his] shade three times with a ringing voice," and that only "[his] name and armour mark the site," since he "could not find [him], could not bury [his] bones in native soil" (*Aen*. 6.506-508).[46] This performance on Aeneas' part is then confirmed as having been a sufficient substitute for burial when Deiphobus tells him that he has "left nothing undone. All that's owed to Deiphobus and his shadow [Aeneas] has paid in

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[43] *hoc satis est tumulis, satis est telluris egenis:*

voce ciere animas funeris instar habet.   10

gaudent conpositi cineres sua nomina dici:

frontibus hoc scriptis et monumenta iubent.

ille etiam, maesti cui defuit urna sepulcri,

nomine ter dicto paene sepultus erit (*Item Praefatio Versibus Adnotata*, 9-14).

[44] *satis est telluris egenis* (*Item Praefatio Versibus Adnotata*, 9).

[45] *ille etiam, maesti cui defuit urna sepulcri,*

nomine ter dicto paene sepultus erit (*Item Praefatio Versibus Adnotata*, 13-14).

[46] *tunc egomet tumulum Rhoeteo litore inanem constitui et magna manis ter voce vocavi. nomen et arma locum servant; te, amice, nequivi conspicere et patria decedens ponere terra* (*Aen*. 6.505-508).

full" (*Aen*. 6.509-510).[47] The similarities between the concept of burial as it is shown in Ausonius' preface and in Virgil's *Aeneid* argue that the two writers, despite having composed centuries apart, share in a similar culture of burial. While this comparison arguably indicates the longevity of this Roman notion of sufficient interment, it is also possible that Ausonius' notes on burial had been influenced by such examples as are presented in Virgil's *Aeneid*. Considering the widespread use of Virgil's works as textbooks throughout the Roman world (Williams, 1999), the likelihood of his influence being present in Ausonius' work is high. Still, there is some justification for postulating a continuous cultural practice on the basis of these texts.

2.2.2. Posthumous Respect and Judgement

In addition to placing great importance on the adequate performance of funerary rites, it can be seen that the ancient Romans also paid heed to post-funerary rites of respect.[48] This presentation of the forms of posthumous respect and judgment is of great importance in my main argument. Such rites will be the central focus of section 3.4.2, in which the effects of post-mortem punishment and post-funerary propitiation of the dead in the Roman world are discussed in detail. Foremost among these rites were the annual celebrations of the dead in the form of the Parentalia and Lemuria festivals. Although Ovid remarks that the Lemuria originated before the Parentalia (*Fast*. 5.423-426), these festivals both allowed for the living to celebrate their departed ancestors and commemorate the deceased who had no surviving kin to remember them (Toynbee, 1971:63-64; Hopkins, 1983:233). While the finer points of these festivals are discussed further in the contextualization of the *Fasti* (in 2.4.3), it can be said that the various rites and rituals performed in association with the Parentalia and Lemuria serve as examples of posthumous respect paid to the dead.

An example of such posthumous respect in literature can be found in Book V of Virgil's *Aeneid*.[49] In this book, Aeneas and his men are swept ashore during a storm and they realise that they are back in Sicily exactly one year after having buried Aeneas' father there. Aeneas

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[47] *nihil o tibi, amice, relictum; omnia Deiphobo solvisti et funeris umbris* (*Aen*. 6.509-510).

[48] It is important to note here the distinction between funerary and post-funerary rites and rituals. In this thesis, funerary ritual refers to the ceremonial processes of burying the deceased and holding celebratory feasts shortly after his/her interment. The ritual cleansing of the living survivors to remove the pollution of death also falls under this term. Post-funerary ritual denotes the recurring paying of homage to the dead (e.g.: at festivals that celebrate the dead like the Parentalia and Lemuria, or on the anniversary of the person's passing). Also falling into the category of post-funerary ritual is the purging and cleansing of old offences that the spirits of the dead must undergo in Dis in order to enter Elysium (*Aen*. 6.735-47).

[49] All Latin extracts from Book V of Virgil's *Aeneid* are taken from Farrell (2013).

acknowledges this by saying, "The day has returned, if I am not mistaken, the day always harsh to my heart, I'll always hold in honour. So you gods have willed" (*Aen*. 5.49-50).[50] He then proceeds to tell his men that even if he had not found himself back in Sicily on the anniversary of his father's death, he would still perform the rites he believes are due to the memory of his late sire: "Were I passing the hours, an exile lost in the swirling sands of Carthage or caught in Greek seas, imprisoned in Mycenae, I would still perform my anniversary vows, carry out our processions grand and grave and heap the altars high with fitting gifts" (*Aen*. 5.51-53).[51] In this instance, the gifts, processions, and later, the funerary games, that Aeneas arranges in honour of his late father are clear examples of posthumous respect. More than this, Aeneas vows in this book that such post-funerary honours will become an annual occurrence once his quest to found Rome is complete: "And may it please my father, once my city is built with temples in his name, that I offer him these rites year in, year out" (*Aen*. 5.59-60).[52] Indeed, Ovid goes so far as to name Aeneas as the source of origin for the post-funerary rituals of the Parentalia: "This custom was introduced into thy lands, righteous Latinus, by Aeneas, fit patron of piety. He to his father's spirit solemn offerings brought; from him the peoples learned the pious rites" (*Fast*. 2.543-546).[53] While it cannot be said for certain that Virgil's hero was the mythological origin of such rites, the continued demonstration of such posthumous respect (as indicated by the aforementioned odes of Ausonius to his late family members in the 4th century CE) is testament to the importance of it in Roman funerary culture.

Of course, where there are examples of posthumous respect and celebration, demonstrations can also be found of posthumous judgement or punishment. Most pertinent to my main argument in Chapter 3 is the concept of *poena post mortem* (or "posthumous punishment" in English). According to Varner (2001:57), this punishment came in the form of corpse desecration and could include instances of mutilation and post-mortem beheading. Such an act was most common in the case of criminals and other lower-class offenders (Varner, 2001:57). In such instances, the goal was the physical disfiguration of the body, as it was believed that a person's shade would take on the likeness of his or her mortal form as it was at the point of death (Varner, 2001:57). This notion is also mentioned in the earlier work of Cumont

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[50] *iamque dies, nisi fallor, adest, quem semper acerbum, semper honoratum (sic di voluistis) habebo* (*Aen*. 5.49-50).

[51] *hunc ego Gaetulis agerem si Syrtibus exsul, Argolicove mari deprensus et urbe Mycenae, annua vota tamen sollemnisque ordine pompas exsequerer strueremque suis altaria donis* (*Aen*. 5.51-53).

[52] *atque haec me sacra quotannis urbe velit posita templis sibi ferre dicatis* (*Aen*. 5.59-60).

[53] *hunc morem Aeneas, pietatis idoneus auctor, attulit in terras, iuste Latine, tuas; ille patris Genio sollemnia dona ferebat: hinc populi ritus edidicere pios* (*Fast*. 2.543-546).

(1922:165). Here, he remarks that in Roman descriptions of ghosts, "they were sometimes given the appearance not of the living being but of the corpse" (Cumont, 1922:165). In literature, the figure of Dido as she appears in Book VI of Virgil's *Aeneid* further supports such an idea; she is described as moving among the shades in the Fields of Mourning[54] with her "wound still fresh" (*recens a vulnere*) from where she had fallen upon Aeneas' sword in her grief at his departure (*Aen*. 6.450). In this sense then, the act of *poena post mortem* served to provide perpetual discomfort to the soul in death.

In fact, Cumont (1922:65) notes that in some instances, the bodies of criminal offenders who had been executed were not interred at all, thus condemning the soul to an eternal exile from the underworld. In the case of the Praetorian Praefect Sejanus, Cassius Dio writes in his *Roman History*[55] that Sejanus' body was not only subjected to *poena post mortem* in the form of mutilation, but he was also denied burial when his corpse was thrown into the Tiber three days after his death: "By [the senate's] order he was executed and his body cast down the Stairway, where the rabble abused it for three whole days and afterwards threw it into the river" (58.11.5).[56] The unpopular Emperor Caligula was also subjected to posthumous judgement. In Book LIX of *Roman History*, Dio narrates Caligula's fate and post-mortem punishment at the hands of the conspirators, Chaerea and Sabinus: "When he had fallen, none of the men present kept hands off him, but all fell to stabbing him savagely, even though he was dead; and some even tasted of his flesh" (59.29.7).[57]

In addition to this *poena post mortem*, Suetonius (in his *De Vita Caesarum*)[58] tells of how Caligula's corpse was "moved secretly to the Lamian Gardens, half-cremated on a hastily built pyre, and then buried beneath a shallow covering of sods" (*Calig*. 59).[59] The effectiveness of such post-mortem punishment as mutilation and improper burial is demonstrated by Suetonius' subsequent remark that until Caligula's sisters (who were in exile at the time of his assassination) performed the appropriate funerary rites, and the building in which he was killed

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[54] *Lugentes campi* (*Aen*. 6.441).

[55] All English translations and Greek extracts from Dio's *Roman History* are taken from Cary (1955).

[56] αὐτοῦ κατεψηφίσατο. καὶ οὕτω δικαιωθεὶς κατά τε τῶν ἀναβασμῶν ἐρρίφη, καὶ αὐτὸν ὁ ὅμιλος τρισὶν ὅλαις ἡμέραις ἐλυμήνατο, καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο ἐς τὸν ποταμὸν ἐνέβαλε (Dio, 58.11.5).

[57] καὶ αὐτοῦ πεσόντος οὐδεὶς τῶν παρόντων ἀπέσχετο, ἀλλὰ καὶ νεκρὸν αὐτὸν ὄντα ὠμῶς ἐτίτρωσκον: καί τινες καὶ τῶν σαρκῶν αὐτοῦ ἐγεύσαντο (Dio, 59.29.7).

[58] All English translations of Suetonius' *De Vita Caesarum* are taken from Graves (2007). All Latin extracts are taken from Rolfe (1997).

[59] *cadauer eius clam in hortos Lamianos asportatum et tumultuario rogo semiambustum levi caespite obrutum est, postea per sorores ab exilio reversas erutum et crematum sepultumque* (*Calig*. 59).

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was burnt down, "the gardens had been haunted… by his ghost, and… something horrible appeared every night at the scene of the murder" (*Calig*. 59).[60] Of course, Caligula's ghost is not the only example of such spectral restlessness due to posthumous judgement and punishment. Other instances of this which appear in my selection of texts are discussed further in Chapter 3.

2.2.3. The Underworld

Although many of the spirits discussed in my thesis are prevented from entering the underworld due to the circumstances of their deaths, many references are still made to the nature of the underworld and the various places within it that accommodate those souls who did receive appropriate funerary rites. While my selection of texts focuses on the dead who did not receive proper funerary rites, there are a few residents of Dis (the ghosts of Dido and Deiphobus, in particular) who feature in my thesis as supplementary examples in my main argument. For this reason, their circumstances and their posthumous fates are included in this section. In addition to this, the various places throughout the underworld are mentioned in my main argument and so it is necessary to provide a brief outline of Dis for the sake of contextualization. As mentioned previously, Virgil's descriptions of the underworld as presented in Book VI of the *Aeneid* and in Book IV of the *Georgics* are used here as the standard for the Roman underworld.[61] Here, the fates of those aforementioned souls who met undesirable ends are revealed as each facet of the Virgilian underworld is detailed. It is important to mention here that the underworld was known to the Romans by many names, chief among them being Dis, Orcus, and Avernus. It was believed that this realm was presided over by the god Orcus and his wife Proserpina (Gransden, 2004:73).

Beginning with the first instance of unfortunate souls in the underworld, those dead who did not receiver proper burial and therefore cannot enter the underworld are met by Aeneas on the banks of the River Acheron. Here, the unburied wait, envious of those who were able to board the boat of Charon the ferryman, who transports the dead to the opposite bank so that they may reach their ultimate destination beyond (*Aen*. 6.295). According to Virgil, those dead that were

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[60] *satis constat, prius quam id fieret, hortorum custodes umbris inquietatos; in ea quoque domo, in qua occubuerit, nullam noctem sine aliquo terrore transactam, donec ipsa domus incendio consumpta sit* (*Calig*. 59).

[61] All English translations of Virgil's *Georgics* are taken from Lee and Johnson (2015).

permitted into Dis were numerous and varied. This idea is doubly noted in both the *Aeneid* and the *Georgics*:[62]

> "Mothers and grown men and ghosts of great-souled heroes, their bodies stripped of life, and boys and unwed girls and sons laid on the pyre before their parents' eyes" (*Aen*. 6.306-308);

> "Mothers and men and, emptied of life, the bodies of bold-hearted heroes, boys and unwed maidens and youths lain on the pyres before their parents' stares" (*Geo.* 4.475-477).[63]

According to Virgil, those who died untimely or unfortunate deaths were destined either for the Stygian Marshes or for the Fields of Mourning. The Stygian Marshes are described as being home to those spirits who died before their time, either in infancy, as a result of wrongful execution, or through suicide. Here are those "ghosts of infants weeping, robbed of their share of this sweet life… Beside them [are] those condemned to die on a false charge… [and] the region next to them is held by those sad ghosts, innocents all, who brought on death by their own hands" (*Aen*. 6.426-436).[64] The Fields of Mourning, however, are the designated resting place for those who were "consumed by the harsh, wasting sickness, [of] cruel love" (*Aen*. 6.442-444).[65] The Phoenician queen Dido wanders here, for when Aeneas left Carthage in pursuit of Italy in Book IV of the *Aeneid*, she was so consumed by her heartbreak that she was driven to commit suicide. In addition to the victims of cruel love, the outermost reaches of the Fields of Mourning are marked as the dwelling place of the great heroes of war, particularly those who fought at Troy: "[Aeneas and the Sibyl] labour along the charted path and at last they gain the utmost outer fields where throngs of the great war heroes live apart" (*Aen*. 6.477-

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[62] *matres atque viri defunctaque corpora vita magnanimum heroum, pueri innuptaeque puellae, impositique rogis iuvenes ante ora parentum* (*Aen*. 6.306-308; *Geo*. 4.475-477).

[63] In his introduction to Fagles (2010) translation of the *Aeneid*, Knox (2010:9) argues that the use of these same Latin lines in both the *Aeneid* and the *Georgics* could possibly be due to the description of the underworld in the *Georgics* serving as Virgil's precursor to the more detailed illustrations of it in Book VI of the *Aeneid*. Virgil's presentations of the Stygian Marshes and the Fields of Mourning in each work are also remarkably alike.

[64] *continuo auditae voces vagitus et ingens infantumque animae flentes, in limine primo quos dulcis vitae exsortis et ab ubere raptos abstulit atra dies et funere mersit acerbo. hos iuxta falso damnati crimine mortis. nec vero hae sine sorte datae, sine iudice, sedes: quaesitor Minos urnam movet; ille silentum conciliumque vocat vitasque et crimina discit. Proxima deinde tenant maesti loca qui sibi letum insontes peperere manu lucemque perosi proiecere animas* (*Aen*. 6.426-436).

[65] *hic quos durus amor crudeli tabe peredit secreti celant calles et myrtea circum silva tegit* (*Aen*. 6.442-444).

478).[66] Among these war heroes is the spirit of Deiphobus for whom Aeneas had performed the appropriate funerary rites.

Beyond the Stygian Marshes and Fields of Mourning, Virgil narrates how Aeneas comes to a fork in the path. In the *Aeneid*, Virgil presents the left fork as leading to Tartarus: "An enormous fortress ringed with triple walls and raging all around it, a blazing flood of lava, Tartarus' River of Fire, whirling thunderous boulders" (*Aen*. 6.548-551).[67] Virgil has the Sibyl identify this as the place in which those who committed crimes and died unpunished were brought to justice.

In contrast, the right-hand fork is described as leading to a very different locale: the Elysian Fields, where "the blessed [made] their homes… and [where] the spirits possess[ed] their own sun, their own stars" (*Aen*. 6.639-641).[68] It is in this place that Aeneas meets the spirit of his father Anchises, whose insights into the fate of the soul will be noted in my main argument. Those souls whose ultimate destination was Elysium were those men who had fought for their country, the pure priests, the "faithful poets whose songs were fit for Phoebus," and those who were "remember[ed] well for the good they did mankind" (*Aen*. 6.660-664).[69] Here, Anchises' shade explains that once the souls have rested in Elysium for a thousand years, they "drink deep of the river Lethe's currents," to forget their previous lives so that they may be reborn into new bodies (*Aen*. 6.713-751).[70] At the end of Book VI of the *Aeneid*, Virgil speaks of what he himself has heard of the way out of Dis: the twin Gates of Sleep.[71] He explains that one gate is made of horn, and "offers easy passage to all true shades," while the other gate is of ivory, and serves as a means by which the "dead send false dreams up toward the sky" (*Aen*. 6.893-

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[66] *inde datum molitur iter. Iamque arva tenebant ultima, quae bello clari secreta frequentant* (*Aen*. 6.477-478).

[67] *respicit Aeneas subito et sub rupe sinistra moenia lata videt triplici circumdata muro, quae rapidus flammis ambit torrentibus amnis, Tartareus Phlegethon, torquetque sonantia saxa* (*Aen*. 6.548-551).

[68] *his demum exactis, perfecto munere divae, devenere locos laetos et amoena virecta fortunatorum nemorum sedesque beatas. largior hic campos aether et lumine vestit purpureo, solemque suum, sua sidera norunt* (*Aen*. 6.637-641).

[69] *hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi, quique sacerdotes casti, dum vita manebat, quique pii vates et Phoebo digna locuti, inventas aut qui vitam excluere per artis, quique sui memores alios fecere merendo* (*Aen*. 6.660-664).

[70] *Lethaei ad fluminis undam securos latices et longa oblivia potant* (*Aen*. 6.714-715).

[71] These twin Gates of Sleep have sparked much debate among scholars as Virgil's protagonist leaves the underworld through the Gate of Ivory – the gate by which false dreams exit Dis (Johnston, 2012:109). As a result, this action has been interpreted as being an indication that Aeneas' journey through the underworld was merely a dream. Others argue that Aeneas had to depart through the Ivory Gate because he was not a "true shade" and so could not leave via the Horn Gate (Johnston, 2012:109). The latter argument therefore implies that Gate of Horn marked the exit for spirits, while the Gate of Ivory stood as the way out for those who did not belong in Avernus.

899).[72] In the underworld described by Virgil, these gates mark the only exit and path from Dis to the world of the living.

Through this discussion of the various aspects of the underworld (as well as the presentation of the existing scholarship on Roman beliefs about the soul and its fate, the nature of Roman funerary procedures, and the ways in which the dead could be both honoured and punished), a brief overview of the Roman understanding of death is given. To complement this knowledge, the following section establishes what is known about the Roman conception of the dead themselves.

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[72] *sunt geminae Somni portae, quarum altera fertur cornea, qua veris facilis datur exitus umbris, altera candenti perfecta nitens elephanto, sed falsa ad caelum mittunt insomnia manes* (*Aen.* 6.893-896).

2.3. Ghosts in Roman Culture

Although there was some scepticism among the ancient Romans regarding the existence of ghosts, as evidenced by Pliny the Younger when he asks Sura whether or not he believes in the possibility of their existence (*Ep.* 7.27.1), there are indications in literature of a Roman culture that did accept the notion of manifestations of the dead. Ovid's accounts of the Parentalia and Lemuria festivals alone are examples of such literary indicators. In this section, the concept of the dead as ghosts within Roman culture and the ways in which such entities interacted with the living will be discussed in order to provide a better contextualization of the discussions that will be presented in the following chapter regarding the various spirits featured in my selected texts. This discussion will elaborate on the different states of consciousness in which the Romans believed ghosts could approach the living; either as dream-ghosts or as waking apparitions. Furthermore, the means by which these spirits were thought to be able to interact with the living (through sight, sound, and touch) will also be discussed. In this section, ancient Roman beliefs about the dead are discussed according to the existing research as it is presented by such scholars as Felton (1999) and Cumont (1922), among others.

2.3.1. The Dead in Dreams and in Waking

The differentiation between ghosts that appear in dreams and those that appear to the living during waking hours is discussed at length by Felton (1999:55-61) as she examines the flaws in Tranio's presentation of the ghost in the *Mostellaria*. As Felton's (1999:22-37) definitions and classifications of the various types of spirits are followed throughout this thesis, her descriptions of the ways in which Roman ghosts approached the living are also utilized here. Importantly, she points out that while the ghosts of ancient Rome typically appeared to the living either in dreams or in waking, the two approaches are usually mutually exclusive (Felton, 1999:60).[73]

To start with those manifestations of the dead that only approached the living in slumber: Roman dream-ghosts were usually those of the recently-deceased who returned to comfort, warn, or ask for help from their surviving kin while they slept (Felton, 1999:56). In this regard, a visit from the spirit of a deceased person in one's dreams most often indicated a need for the dead to communicate with the living. Since these types of spirits are presented as pursuing

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[73] The ghost invented by Tranio in Plautus' *Mostellaria* is the only spirit in Latin literature that is presented as both a dream-ghost and a waking ghost (Felton, 1999:55). However, the details of this particular spectre's approach to the living will be explored further in the following chapter.

purely communicative purposes, they are not described as threatening or potentially violent as the spectres of the waking world are (Felton, 1999:56). Dream-ghosts were not bound to the place in which they died or were buried, and as a result, they did not haunt certain locations or people (Felton, 1999:56). There are, of course, some instances in which individuals had reported a ghost who appeared in a dream and subsequently haunted them, but according to Felton (1999:116), these cases were dismissed by the Romans and attributed to some form of mental instability or guilt in the individual.

An example of such a case of "haunting" dream-ghosts is that of the Spartan Pausanias, who is described by Plutarch in his *Lives* (*Cim*. 6.4-6)[74] as having been repeatedly harassed in his sleep by the phantom of a Byzantine girl named Cleonice. According to Plutarch, Pausanias had summoned the highborn Byzantium maiden, Cleonice, to his chambers one evening (*Cim*. 6.4-5). But before entering, Cleonice asked that the lamps be extinguished, and as she approached the place in which Pausanias lay asleep, she stumbled in the dark and overturned a lamp-holder (Plutarch, *Cim*. 6.4). Pausanias, thinking that he was being attacked, drew a dagger and slew the maiden (Plutarch, *Cim*. 6.5). Thereafter, the angry ghost of the girl "kept coming into his sleep by night in phantom form," in order to threaten him and berate his "wanton" actions (Plutarch, *Cim*. 6.5).[75] In this case, the description of the repeated visits, as well as the threatening words, do not fit the typically singularly-occurring and relatively calm approaches of dream-ghosts. Rather, Pausanias' experience is more likely to be a product of his guilt over killing the maiden.

In contrast to dream-ghosts, ancient Roman descriptions of manifestations of the dead who appeared to the living while they were awake typically show the ghosts as being restricted to the place in which they died or were buried (Felton, 1999:56). This concept of the spirit being bound to a certain locale then contributes to the belief in ghosts who haunted houses (*larvae*) and appeared to the living during consciousness (Felton, 1999:24). According to Felton (1999:56), the spirits who approached the inhabitants of the house they haunted were usually waking ghosts. This premise is supported by the descriptions which present the ghosts of Plautus' *Mostellaria* and the second story in Pliny's *Letter* 7.27 as waking spirits. These spirits will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter (3.3.1).

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[74] All English translations and Greek extracts of Plutarch's *Cimon* are taken from Perrin (1968).

[75] *τὸ λυχνίον ἄκουσαν: τὸν δ' ὑπὸ τοῦ ψόφου ταραχθέντα καὶ σπασάμενον τὸ παρακείμενον ἐγχειρίδιον, ὥς τινος ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἐχθροῦ βαδίζοντος, πατάξαι καὶ καταβαλεῖν τὴν παρθένον, ἐκ δὲ τῆς πληγῆς ἀποθανοῦσαν αὐτὴν οὐκ ἐᾶν τὸν Παυσανίαν ἡσυχάζειν, ἀλλὰ νύκτωρ εἴδωλον αὐτῷ φοιτῶσαν εἰς τὸν ὕπνον ὀργῇ λέγειν τόδε τὸ ἡρῷον: στεῖχε δίκης ἆσσον: μάλα τοι κακὸν ἀνδράσιν ὕβρις (Cim. 6.5).*

In addition to being associated with haunted houses, waking ghosts who appeared at night often required the presence of a lit lamp in order to be seen by the living. According to Felton (1999:55), none of the descriptions of ghosts in ancient Latin texts indicate any form of light emanating from the spirit, and so the idea that a lamp was needed seems logical in order for the living to see such a manifestation in the dark. In fact, the ghosts of the ancient Roman world were not believed to be luminous or pearly or translucent as the ghosts of today are presented in popular culture.[76] Rather, the Roman spirits of the dead were described as either white or black, or occasionally smoky as though still smouldering from being burnt on a pyre (Felton, 1999:55). In most instances, manifestations of the dead still retained the appearance they had while they were alive or at the point of death (Felton, 1999:55). It is worth noting here that, according to Felton (1999:55), there are no instances in Roman literature (aside from the hastily-invented ghost of Diapontius in the *Mostellaria*) where dream-ghosts required a lit lamp in order to be seen at night. However, the element of visibility is not limited to waking ghosts, and indeed, neither are the senses of being heard or felt. The following section explores the ways in which both dream-ghosts and waking ghosts were believed to have been able to interact with the living through appeals to their senses.

2.3.2. Interactions with the Living

According to various accounts of interactions with manifestations of the dead (including the texts selected for this thesis), it appears that the ancient Romans believed that the spirits of the dead could interact with the living by appealing to one or more of the five senses. Ancient literature abounds with examples of ghosts and how they interact with the living and Felton (1999:39) provides a useful overview of how such interactions are represented in secondary scholarship on Roman ghosts. I discuss a few such examples in section 3.3.2 of the following chapter. Felton (1999:39) refers to sight and sound as the two most common means of interaction employed by ancient Roman ghosts. With regard to touch, appeals to this sense are uncommon among ancient Roman ghosts. However, the few instances in which a spirit of the dead is able to invoke the sense of touch is elaborated on in this thesis.[77]

According to Cumont (1922:164;166), the characteristics of the deceased souls depended greatly on the Roman belief that the soul left the body at the point of death as a light breath.

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[76] E.g.: Sam Wheat in *Ghost* (1990), Casper the Friendly Ghost in *Casper* (1995), and Nearly-Headless Nick in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (2001).

[77] There are no examples of manifestations of the dead interacting with the living through smell and taste in ancient Roman literature (Felton, 1999:40).

He goes on to explain that when appearing to the living in dreams or during waking hours, the soul was able to manifest itself as a reproduction of how he or she looked at the time of death (Cumont, 1922:164-165). This notion of the soul's manifestation in his or her mortal form stands as an indication of such spirits' ability to appeal to the visual senses of the living as a means of communication. Furthermore, Cumont (1922:22) notes that the ghosts of the Roman world sometimes appeared as a reflection of his or her body in death. As a result, the spirits of the departed were often described as having a pale or "bloodless" pallor, and in some cases of long dead individuals, the spirits would appear as skeletons (Cumont, 1922:165). The fact that descriptions of the dead extend to include such details as pallor, wounds, and states of deterioration further suggests that they could not only be seen, but that they could also be seen clearly and in great detail.

An example of a ghost who appeals to the living's sense of sight is the spirit of the *infelix* Dido as she appears to her sister, Anna, in Book III of Ovid's *Fasti*. This occurrence takes place following the events of Virgil's *Aeneid*. In Ovid's continuation of the epic, the hero Aeneas has married Lavinia, the daughter of King Latinus, and the pair receive Anna as a guest when it is learned that she is in Italy (*Fast*. 3.601). However, Lavinia, having heard about Aeneas' history with Anna's late sister, becomes suspicious and jealous and so plots to have Anna killed (*Fast*. 3.637-638). That night, the ghost of Dido appears to her sister to warn her of the plot against her: "'Twas night: before [Anna's] bed it seemed that Dido stood, her unkempt hair dabbled in blood" (*Fast*. 3.639-640).[78] Here, Dido's spectre is not only visible to the point of identification, but her form also echoes the tragic manner of her death through the inclusion of the details of her bloody hair.

Featuring a similarly gruesome ghostly appearance is the story of a miller who was murdered by his wife, as told by Apuleius in Book IX of his *Metamorphoses*.[79] In this tale, the miller's wife arranges with a witch for her husband to be killed (*Met*. 9.29). Apuleius tells of how the ghost, who is summoned by the witch to kill the miller, appears in the mill around midday and leads the miller into his room (*Met*. 9.30). When the mill workers go to the room to request a new order of grain, they receive no answer from the miller and so they break the hinges on the door; there, the miller is found dead, hanging from a noose (*Met*. 9.30). Here, the withered ghost stands as an example of the extent to which ghosts could interact with the living on a

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[78] *nox erat: ante torum visa est adstare sororis squalenti Dido sanguinulenta coma* (*Fast*. 3.639-640).

[79] The English translations from Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* are taken from Odgen (2009). All Latin extracts come from Hanson (1989).

visual level. In this case, the spirit is that of a woman who died a violent death, and her visual appearance reflects this through her "bare and uncovered" feet, her "yellow… and foully emaciated" complexion, and her "unkempt hair [which] was partially grey and caked in the ashes that had been scattered over it" (*Met.* 9.30).[80] While this description is a good illustration of the visual qualities of ghosts, the fact that this spirit was summoned by a witch and sent to kill the miller adds another dimension to this case that would be more appropriate to discuss as an avenue of further study.

Nevertheless, the story continues and dead miller returns as a ghost who presents yet another instance of the ability of spirits of the dead to manifest visually. In this case, the spirit of the dead miller appears to his daughter in a dream on the night of his death so as to warn her about her stepmother's treachery and to tell her how he had died (*Met.* 9.31). When "the tearful visage of [the miller] had brought itself to [his daughter] as she slept", his visual manifestation reflects the cause of his death, for "his neck [was] still bound by the noose" (*Met.* 9.31).[81] Thus, in the case of both Dido and the miller, their spectral manifestations not only mirror their earthly bodies, but the visual markers (i.e.: their fatal wounds) that each displays further contributes to the effectiveness of their attempts at communication. Indeed, the presence of the noose as part of the miller's ghostly visage reinforces his explanation of how he died, while the image of the summoned ghost clearly reflects that of a body that has long been dead. Moreover, it can be argued that the less appealing visual portrayals of these spirits (such as unkempt hair, emaciated forms, and visible wounds) increase the extent to which their communications are understood on the grounds that such terrifying forms would warrant undivided attention from the living recipient. Instances in the texts selected for analysis here, where appeals to the livings' sense of sight are made, are discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

In addition to sight, the ancient Roman ghosts are also shown to interact with the living through their sense of hearing. The ability of the dead to communicate with the living through sound is commented on by Cicero in his *Tusculanae Disputationes*.[82] He remarks that the spirits of the dead, who lack a physical body containing the necessary organs of speech, should not logically be able to speak, and yet they are meant to do so: "And they must needs have these appearances

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[80] *diem ferme circa mediam repente intra pistrinum mulier reatu miraque tristitie deformis apparuit flebili centunculo semiamicta, nudis et intectis pedibus, lurore buxeo macieque foedata, et discerptae comae semicanae sordentes inspersu cineris pleramque eius anteventulae contegebant faciem* (*Met.* 9.30).

[81] *sed ei per quietem obtulit sese flebilis patris sui facies, adhuc nodo revincta cervice* (*Met.* 9.31).

[82] All English translations of Cicero's *Tusculanae Disputationes* are taken from Yonge (2007). All Latin extracts are taken from King (1945).

speak, which is not possible without a tongue, and a palate, and jaws, and without the help of lungs and sides, and without some shape or figure" (*Tusc*. 1.16.37).[83] In this study, it will be shown that some restless spirits not only speak, but howl and shriek their displeasure at the living.[84] Such blatantly vocal ghosts clearly demonstrate the ways in which the dead communicate through the sense of sound. Those spirits who make use of howls, groans, or shrieks, or who manipulate objects in their surroundings to create noise will be addressed in this thesis as spirits who manifest themselves through sound.[85] Felton (1999:39;103) also points to a number of instances of reports of such sonorous ghosts in the works of Plutarch and Ammianus Marcellinus.[86]

In his *Cimon*, Plutarch tells of the fate of the fugitive, Damon, and how his end was met in the town of Chaeronea, Greece (*Cim*. 1.6). Wanted for murder, Damon had been living in the countryside near Chaeronea, and in an effort to recall the fugitive to the town and bring him to justice, the local people decided to name him gymnasiarch (*Cim*. 1.6).[87] The plan was successful and Damon returned to the town. But while he was anointing himself in the baths, he was ambushed and killed (*Cim*. 1.6). Plutarch notes that, according to his elders, "certain phantoms appeared in the place, and groans were heard there" after this incident, and so the entrances to the baths were sealed shut (Cim. 1.6).[88] He goes on to say that even in his time, "the neighbours [still] think [the baths to be] the source of alarming sights and sounds" (*Cim*. 1.6).[89] Although the "phantoms" (*εἰδώλων*, or *idolon* in Latin) described here have visual qualities, the fact that Plutarch mentions auditory evidence twice (i.e.: "groans" or *στεναγμα*, and "sounds" or *φωνη*) suggests that in addition to appealing to sight, these particular ghosts interacted with the living through auditory signals as well.

Perhaps a more striking example of ghosts who employ sound is that of the Emperor Constantius II's nightmares (Felton, 1999:103). In his *Rerum Gestarum*, Ammianus

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[83] *has tamen imagines loqui volunt, quod fieri nec sine lingua nec sine palato nec sine faucium laterum pulmonum vi et figura potest* (*Tusc*. 1.16.37).

[84] Examples of such spirits in my selected texts are those of the angry ghosts in Book II of Ovid's *Fasti* and Polydorus in Book III of Virgil's *Aeneid*. These are discussed in 3.3.2.

[85] For example, ghosts who are described as knocking or banging on doors (such as Diapontius in the *Mostellaria*), or rattling phantom chains (as the ghost of the old man does in Pliny's second story of *Letter* 7.27).

[86] All English translations and Latin extracts from Ammianus' *Rerum Gestarum* are taken from Rolfe (1950).

[87] A gymnasiarch was "one responsible for the training of athletes in ancient Greece" (*Merriam-Webster*, 2018).

[88] *ἐπὶ πολὺν δὲ χρόνον εἰδώλων τινῶν ἐν τῷ τόπῳ προφαινομένων καὶ στεναγμῶν ἐξακουομένων, ὡς οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν λέγουσι, τὰς θύρας ἀνῳκοδόμησαν τοῦ πυριατηρίου· καὶ μέχρι νῦν οἱ τῷ τόπῳ γειτνιῶντες οἴονταί τινας ὄψεις καὶ φωνὰς ταραχώδεις φέρεσθαι* (*Cim*. 1.6).

[89] Ibid.

Marcellinus writes of how the emperor's dreams were plagued by those whom he had killed during his reign (14.11.17). These ghosts of masses slain are described as being primarily auditory in their approach to Constantius II in the way that these "frightful spectres (*larvae*)… shrieked about him" (14.11.17).[90] The fact that Ammianus remarks that Constantius II's "senses were wounded" further indicates the ability of the dead to appeal to the various senses of the living in order to communicate (14.11.17).[91] In the case of Constantius II, the dead employ the sense of sound so as to communicate their fury over being killed on his orders. Here, the ghosts that haunt the baths at Chaeronea and those that terrorized the Emperor Constantius II share a commonality in the sense that their appeals to the living's sense of hearing allowed for an effective means of expressing their anguish and fury. As a part of my main argument in 3.3.2, such instances of sound-based appeals on the part of the spirits of the dead are also considered according to the effectiveness with which they are able to interact with the living.

As for the dead's tangibility, or their appeal to the livings' sense of touch, the concept of the soul as a breath must be recalled (Cumont, 1922:164). In this sense, the weightlessness of a breath is transposed onto the manifestation of the departed soul and so, although appearing corporeal, the spirits of the dead are not as tangible as they seem. However, this is not to say that such ghosts do not at all appeal to the living's sense of touch or leave behind tactile evidence of their having been present. In many instances in which the living tries to embrace or grasp the ghost of a deceased person, the evasive soul is compared to the wind (Cumont, 1922:166) – an element which can be felt by the living through his or her sense of touch.[92] In other cases, the spirits of the dead are described as leaving physical, tangible evidence of their visit. While the instances in which the spirits of the dead evade the arms of the living are only discussed further in Chapter 3 (section 3.3.2), some of the cases in which ghosts leave behind tactile evidence are considered here.

The third example given by Pliny the Younger in *Letter* 7.27 is one such case. Here, Pliny recalls how this occurrence took place in his own home, while the household was asleep (*Ep.* 7.27.12). On two separate occasions, two of Pliny's freedmen reported having dreamt that

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[90] *inter haec tamen per indutias naturae conquiescentis, sauciabantur eius sensus circumstridentium terrore larvarum, interfectorumque catervae* (14.11.17).

[91] *sauciabantur eius sensus* (14.11.17).

[92] Such attempts to embrace the dead appear in Book II of the *Aeneid* and in Book V of the *Fasti*. These instances will be discussed in the following chapter.

figures "clad in white" had cut their hair as they slept (*Ep.* 7.27.12-13).[93] In the morning following each incident, the men's shorn locks of hair were found scattered about them (*Ep.* 7.27.12-13).[94] Assuming that the servants were telling the truth, and not playing a joke on their master (Felton, 1999:63), the remaining hair serves as tactile evidence of the phantasmal visitation. Nevertheless, this case is not the only one that demonstrates the ability of spirits to appeal to the living's sense of touch.

Pausanias[95] recounts another story in which a ghost left physical, albeit gruesome, evidence of his having been there: the murdered victims of his anger (6.6.7-11). In his *Description of Greece*, Pausanias tells of how the Iliadic hero, Odysseus, visited Temesa on his journeys (6.6.7). Here, one of his sailors is said to have imbibed too much and raped a maiden. The local people consequently stoned him to death. However, the ghost of the sailor returned to torment the people of Temesa, attacking and killing the inhabitants (Pausanias, 6.6.8). Although the killings stopped when the spirit was appeased and eventually driven from the city,[96] the corpses of those whom he had killed certainly stand as tactile remnants of his having been present.[97]

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[93] *venerunt per fenestras (ita narrat) in tunicis albis duo cubantemque detonderunt et qua venerant recesserunt* (*Ep.* 7.27.13).

[94] As Felton (1999:119) points out, cutting one's hair was often associated with mourning. She notes how the Greek heroes, Achilles and Orestes, are both said to have placed locks of hair on the burial containers of their departed kin: Patrocles and Agamemnon, respectively (Felton, 1999:119). However, cut hair was also left as an offering at sanctuaries (Felton, 1999:119). The latter symbolism of cut hair is perhaps more appropriate to Pliny's tale in that the shorn locks of his freedmen are later considered by him to be representative of his own safety from prosecution by Domitian (who died before Pliny could be brought to trial). Such symbolism is further strengthened when Pliny explains that it was "custom for accused persons to let their hair grow long" (*Ep.* 7.27.14). After the incident, he remarks that "one may interpret the cutting of [his] slaves' hair as a sign that the danger threatening [him] was averted" (*Ep.* 7.27.14). In this regard, the spirits that appeared to Pliny's freedmen can be considered here as portents (Felton, 1999:63).

[95] All English translations from Pausanias' *Description of Greece* are taken from Jones (1933).

[96] In order to appease the vengeful spirit, the people of Temesa built a temple for him and named him a Hero, whilst also providing him with the fairest maiden in the city as his wife each year (Pausanias, 6.6.8). However, when the Locrian Euthymus came to Temesa and fell in love with the maid who was to propitiate the ghost that year, he fought, bested, and drove the ghost from the city and into the sea (Pausanias, 6.6.8-10). Thereafter the ghost dwelt, "horribly black in colour, and exceedingly dreadful in all his appearance," while the city of Temesa was tormented no more (Pausanias, 6.6.11). It is worth noting here that in addition to being presented as a spirit capable of leaving tactile traces of his presence, the fact that Pausanias describes the ghost as "black in colour" demonstrates that he manifested himself visually as well.

[97] Suetonius describes another instance in which a degree of physical force was used on the living (*Aug.* 6). In this case, he tells of how the people who lived in the neighbourhood in which Caesar Augustus' childhood home stood dared not enter that building for fear of the "awful terror" that gripped any who entered without solicitation (*Aug.* 6). He narrates an incident in which a new tenant decided to test this rumour by spending the night in the room: "A few hours later he was hurled out of bed by a supernatural agency and found half-dead against the door, bedclothes and all" (*evenit ut post paucissimas noctis horas exturbatus inde subita vi et incerta paene semianimis cum strato simul ante fores inveniretur*) (*Aug.* 6). However, it is unclear if the entity described here is a manifestation of the dead (as it is defined in my thesis) or some other supernatural phenomenon, such as a poltergeist – the latter of which is described by Felton (1999:34-35) as a "noisy ghost" possessing very physical and often violent capabilities.

Thus, despite being insubstantial forms themselves, the ghosts of ancient Rome can be presented as possessing the ability to interact with the living though their sense of touch, either by means of rushing out of the living's grasp as a breeze, or by leaving behind such tactile evidence of their visit as shorn locks or the bodies of their victims.

Having expanded on the various concepts associated with ghosts in ancient Roman culture, the following chapter can be presented sufficiently in terms of the context and information explained in this section. Here, the ghosts of ancient Rome have been shown as multidimensional in the ways in which they approach and interact with the living. Not only are the spirits of the dead in such ancient literature able to appear to the living in both sleep and in waking, but these entities are also shown to be able to interact and communicate with the living by appealing to their senses of sight, sound, and touch. Chapter 3 will explore these concepts as they appear within the selected texts in order to determine what insights into the Roman understanding of death and the dead can be brought to light.

2.4.   Contextualization and Summary of the Selected Texts

Before progressing to the main argument of my thesis, it is critical to have a pre-existing knowledge of the selected primary texts, their contexts, and their plots. The following presentation of the selections from Plautus, Virgil, Ovid, and Pliny the Younger will allow for a more complex level of comprehension in Chapter 3. Although various other primary sources are discussed in this thesis, these are considered only as minor, supporting examples. The information on the primary sources in this section provides the basis upon which I analyse the ancient Roman understanding of death and the dead. Here, the *Mostellaria*, Books II and III of the *Aeneid*, Books II and V of the *Fasti*, and *Letter* 7.27 are discussed in terms of their respective writers, the time periods in which each text was composed, and the ways in which manifestations of the dead feature in each work.

2.4.1. Plautus' *Mostellaria*

The *Mostellaria*, written by Titus Maccius Plautus, is believed to have been completed in the early 2nd century BCE and is one of the comedian's most well-known works among scholars today (De Melo, 2011:ix;308). Although the exact date of completion is unknown, it can be placed within the parameters of Plautus' writing career, between 205 BCE and 184 BCE (De Melo, 2011:308). In order to understand the *Mostellaria* and the context into which it falls, it must be remembered that this piece, along with many others by Plautus, is an adaptation of an earlier Greek comedy (De Melo, 2011:307). Of course, Plautus does incorporate a number of typically Roman elements into his work. This is done chiefly through the Latin language, references to Greek behaviour as such, and the differences in character of those who live in the city and those who live in the countryside (Leigh, 2004: 9;103). These elements help to Romanize the work and make it more relatable to Plautus' predominantly Roman audiences. Indeed, the Roman audiences would not only have been able to identify with the Romanized elements of Plautus' comedy, but it may be argued that they would have been familiar with the type of ghost story featured in this play as well. The familiarity of the audience with such tales of spectral hauntings is explored in detail in the following chapter.

The ghost story featured in the *Mostellaria* must also be considered in terms of its context within the entirety of the comedy itself. The telling of this tale of haunting is the core element of the work and the main source of action in the plot. Told by the servant character Tranio, the ghost story that defines the *Mostellaria* centres on the malevolent ghost of a murdered man who haunts the house of Theopropides – which also happens to be the place in which he was

killed. Theopropides, who has been away on business for three years, is the wealthy merchant whom Tranio serves (De Melo, 2011:308). In his master's absence, Tranio's servitude has fallen to Theopropides' son Philolaches, whom the servant has led astray in terms of morality and good judgement (De Melo, 2011:308-309). When the play begins, Philolaches, encouraged by Tranio, has already spent all of his father's money on parties and on buying and freeing the prostitute Philematium (De Melo, 2011:308-309). As a result, Philolaches finds himself in debt to the money-lender, Misargyrides (*Most.* 3.589-591).

When Theopropides returns unexpectedly, Tranio tells Theopropides that he cannot enter his house on account of its being haunted by a ghost. This is done so as to hide from him the misadventures of his son and the ongoing party he is hosting within. An elaborate tale about the ghost and its haunting of Theopropides' house ensues, along with a fictional speech on behalf of the ghost in which the cause of his death, and his reason for remaining in the living world, is established. Tranio tells his master how the previous tenant had murdered his guest and stolen his gold, thus violating the concept of guest-friendship (*fas omne*)[98] while simultaneously neglecting the proper funerary rituals by burying the body in the house (*Most.* 2.475-484). Tranio even ventures so far as to give the ghost a name – Diapontius, which De Melo (2011:367) explains as meaning "man from overseas". He then claims that the ghost spoke to Philolaches in a dream, telling him that Orcus himself gave the house to his wandering spirit (*Most.* 2.497-504). Tranio adds that the ghost was denied access into the underworld on account of his premature death and his being deceived by his host (*Most.* 2.499-504). Although Theopropides initially believes Tranio's story and even goes to inspect his neighbour's house (which Tranio has told him that his son has purchased on account of the haunting), the confusion is eventually resolved when Theopropides learns the truth. Nevertheless, the details of the ghost story told by Tranio are of utmost importance to my main argument, and so this contextualization and summation of the *Mostellaria* is certainly not without purpose.

2.4.2. Virgil's *Aeneid*: Books II and III

His most famous poem, and an integral piece of literature in the Roman culture (Williams, 1999), Virgil's *Aeneid* is often considered to be the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* of Roman epic poetry (Knox, 2010:2). This work follows the journey of the Trojan, Aeneas, as he leads the surviving

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[98] Known in Greek as *xenia*, *fas omne* was the term used to denote the obligatory act of hospitality that one was required to show visitors who requested food and shelter for the night (Perkell, 2010:27). *Fas omne* called for a degree of trust between host and guest, and violation of that trust by either party was considered a serious offense (Perkell, 2010:27).

people from the besieged city of Troy to a new life in Italy. According to legend, these Trojan survivors would later become the founding fathers of the ancient Roman civilization (Knox, 2010:15). While the entire work of the *Aeneid* was completed (albeit unedited) in 19 BCE, Books II, IV, and VI were written and read to the emperor Augustus prior to the completion of the work as a whole (Knox, 2010:3;11). It is noteworthy that when Virgil was creating the *Aeneid*, Augustus' rule had just begun (Johnston, 2012:3-5). However, people were hesitant to believe that the years of civil war were over (Johnston, 2012:5). Considering this, as well as the friendship between Virgil and Augustus, it is plausible that the *Aeneid* was partly composed as a means by which the Roman people could be swayed to accept this new Augustan peace. Indeed, Knox (2010:2) argues that Virgil's poem is not only a Homeric-style telling of Rome's origins and history, but it also brings the events of Rome's past to the fore in order to highlight its destiny to become an empire. In this regard, the *Aeneid* stands as both a poetic masterpiece and a reflection of the political context in which it was created.

With regard to the sections of the *Aeneid* which play a significant role in my main argument (Books II and III), each features the manifestation of a dead character who appears to and addresses Aeneas. In Book II, the ghost of Aeneas' wife, Creusa, materializes when the protagonist, having seen his people to safety, realizes that his wife is not among them and heads back to Troy to search for her (*Aen*. 2.730-771). The appearance of Creusa's spirit indicates her sad fate: she had fallen behind and perished as she attempted to flee the burning city of Troy with her family. When Aeneas realises that Creusa is dead, her ghost comforts him by telling him that her death was "the will of the gods" and that he ought to "dispel [his] tears for [her]" (*Aen*. 2.777-778;784).[99] She then enlightens Aeneas on his destiny to travel to the "Hesperian land" where "great joy and a kingdom [will be] [his] to claim, [with] a queen to make [his] wife" (*Aen*. 2.781;783-784).[100] Creusa's ghost not only serves the purpose of comforting her surviving husband, but it also takes on a prophetic role. Before disappearing like a gust of wind, Creusa beseeches her husband to care for their son Ascanius.

As Book III of the *Aeneid* opens, the spirit of Polydorus appears to Aeneas and the surviving Trojans. As Aeneas and his people are preparing for their arduous journey to Italy, they come across the haphazard burial site of Polydorus, who was one of King Priam's sons (*Aen*. 3.24-

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[99] *non haec sine numine divum eveniunt* (*Aen*. 2.777-778);

lacrimas dilectae pelle Creusae (*Aen*. 2.784).

[100] *longa tibi exsilia et vastum maris aequor arandum, et terram Hesperiam venies, ubi Lydius arva inter opima virum leni fluit agmine Thybris: illic res laetae regnumque et regia coniunx parta tibi* (*Aen*. 2.780-784).

26). The manifestation of Polydorus warns Aeneas and his men not to come too close to his bones, for fear that they might be stained by the pollution of death (*Aen*. 3.41-42). Aeneas recalls how Polydorus had been sent in secret by his father to take a wealth of gold to the King of Thrace for safe-keeping. However, the Thracian king had betrayed him and, having sided with Agamemnon, killed Polydorus and took the gold for himself (*Aen*. 3.48-57). His body was then left "impaled" by "an iron planting of lances", and being improperly buried, his spirit is prevented from moving on to the next realm: Dis (*Aen*. 3.45-46).[101] Polydorus' bewailing of the state of his corpse serves as his call for a proper burial. Aeneas notes his troubles and "give[s] Polydorus a fresh new burial, piling masses of earth on his first mound," and performs the funerary rites, bestowing offerings as was befitting a proper funeral (*Aen*. 3.62-68).[102] Here, the aftermath of the Trojan War and its theme of betrayal is still present in Book III and so Polydorus is not only presented as a victim of a violent death, but he is also shown to be the victim of violated hospitality (*fas omne*).

2.4.3. Ovid's *Fasti*: Books II and V

Publius Ovidius Naso (Ovid) is well-known for such elegiac poetry as the *Amores* and the *Ars Amatoria*, and for his great epic work, the *Metamorphoses*. However, his poetic catalogue of the Roman calendar and its festivals, the *Fasti*, is of great value to the study of Roman funerary beliefs and rituals. In the *Fasti*, Ovid explains the importance of various annual festivals and presents their origins through several myths and legends. Although Ovid's *Fasti* was originally twelve books in length (one book for each of the months of the year), only the first six remain to us today (Frazer, 1996:xxi). The poem in its entirety may have been near completion around 8 CE, but at this time, Ovid was sentenced to a life-long exile in Tomis by the Emperor Augustus (Frazer, 1996:xv;xxiii).[103] His exile to the furthermost reaches of the Roman world arguably hindered his progress on the *Fasti*, and so may have resulted in the work being left incomplete (Frazer, 1996:xxii). Many scholars argue that the last six books were either lost, or were merely unfinished or unedited at the time of Ovid's death, and so were never published (Frazer, 1996:xxii).

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[101] *hic confixum ferrea texit telorum seges et iaculis increvit acutis* (*Aen*. 3.45-46).

[102] *ergo instauramus Polydoro funus: et ingens aggeritur tumulo tellus* (*Aen*. 3.62-63).

[103] The precise reason for Ovid's banishment remains a mystery, but in the *Tristia*, the writer refers to "a poem and a mistake" (*carmen et error*) (*Tris*. 2.207). However, he never specifies the nature of the mistake, wishing only that he had not seen something: "Why did I see anything? Why make my eyes guilty?"[103] (*Tris*. 2:103).

Among the festivals listed in this poem, two are of special relevance to my thesis. These festivals are the Parentalia and the Lemuria. Both celebrate the spirits of the dead, albeit with noted differences in purpose and origin. The first festival, the Parentalia (featured in Book II of the *Fasti*), was celebrated in February and focused on honouring one's deceased ancestors (Collison-Morley, 1912:3). During this festival, relatives would visit the graves of their ancestors and deliver offerings of food and drink to the dead, before holding a feast known as the Feralia at the grave-site (Hopkins, 1983:233; Frazer, 1996:96). Ovid includes a cautionary tale as a means of motivating the necessary perpetuation of such a celebration. In this story, Ovid describes an instance in which the Romans, engaged in an extended period of warfare, failed to uphold the annual rites of the Parentalia. As a result, the neglected ancestral spirits took to "moan[ing] in the hours of stilly night," and "howl[ing] about the city streets and wide fields," while Rome itself "grew hot with the funeral fires that burned throughout the city" (*Fast*. 2.551-554).[104] It was not until the due rites had been performed that the ghosts were pacified.

The second festival to honour the dead, the Lemuria, was held in May, and is described in Book V of Ovid's *Fasti*. The Lemuria differed from the Parentalia in the sense that it was held chiefly in order to appease evil or restless spirits, in addition to the ghosts of their forefathers (Toynbee, 1971:64). These spirits were known as the *lemures* and the *larvae*: respectively, spirits who were hungry and without kin, and mischievous ghosts who haunted houses (Collison-Morley, 1912:7; Toynbee, 1971:64). At the end of the Lemuria, it was required of the head of the household to perform a specific ritual to dispel any remaining ancestral or restless spirits from the house (*Fast.* 5.429-444; Toynbee, 1971:64). Ovid explains that the rites of the Lemuria were long-standing, having been performed by the Romans even before the additions of the months of January and February to the calendar (*Fast.* 5.423-424). He goes on to describe the origin of the festival as being rooted in the legend of Romulus and Remus. The Lemuria, Ovid writes, came about after the death of Remus. It is important to note that Romulus did have his brother cremated and his remains were duly buried and accompanied by the appropriate funerary rites (*Fast*. 5.451-454). However, since Remus was murdered (by Romulus' builder, Celer, according to Ovid), his spirit was not able to rest and his "gory ghost" is said to have appeared to his adoptive parents, Faustulus and Acca, in the middle of the night (*Fast.*

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[104] *nam dicitur omine ab isto Roma suburbinis incaluisse rogis. vix equidem credo: bustis exisse feruntur et tacitae questi tempore noctis avi, perque vias urbis latosque ululasse per agros deformes animas, volgus inane, ferunt* (*Fast*. 2:549-554).

5.457).[105] He spoke to them, bewailing his fate and cursing his murderer, and demanded that his brother "celebrate a day by signal honour done to [him]" (*Fast.* 5.473-474).[106] Romulus carried out his brother's wishes, and so the "Remuria" was born. As a concluding remark, Ovid claims that over the course of time, the name of the festival eventually changed to "Lemuria" as the sound of the letter "L" was more graceful and smooth on the tongue than the rough sound of "R" (*Fast.* 5.481-483).

2.4.4. Pliny the Younger's *Epistles*: *Letter* 7.27

Comprised of sixteen sections, Pliny the Younger's *Letter* 27, from Book VII of his *Epistles*, is believed to have been published between approximately 100 and 109 CE (Felton, 1999:62). It is interesting to note that the Younger Pliny held a number of political positions, including that of consul in 100 CE (Sherwin-White, 1969:xi). But despite this political standing, Pliny also fostered a great love for literature, and Sherwin-White (1969:xii) notes in his introduction to *Fifty Letters of Pliny*, that many of his letters were composed with the intention of eventual recital and public presentation. Consequentially, many of Pliny's letters were not only written as a means of communication, but they also incorporated a number of literary structures, paying close attention to style and composition (Sherwin-White, 1969:xvi). In fact, he would often supplement the communicative component of his letters with a brief historical narrative or character outline, thus giving his letters the appearance of a short essay (Sherwin-White, 1969:xvi). This particular type of letter is termed *epistulae curatius scriptae* (Sherwin-White, 1969:xv).[107]

Like many of his other formally published letters, Pliny's *Letter* 7.27 also falls into the category of *epistulae curatius scriptae* (Sherwin-White, 1969:xv). This letter was written to the senator Lucius Licinius Sura, who was a frequent correspondent of Pliny's (Reeves, 1958:103; Felton, 1999:62). Pliny begins his correspondence by asking Sura to share his thoughts about the existence of ghosts (*Ep.* 7.27.1). He proceeds to say that he is inclined to believe in their existence himself based on three different spectral encounters of which he has heard. Here onwards, the letter adopts a more literary form as Pliny recounts each of the stories.

The first tale involves the Roman magistrate, Curtius Rufus. Pliny narrates the story of how his future was prophesied by the figure of a woman who claimed to be the "spirit of Africa" and

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[105] *umbra cruenta Remi visa est adsistere lecto* (*Fast.* 5.457).

[106] *hunc vos per lacrimas, per vestra alimenta rogate, ut celebrem nostro signet honore diem* (*Fast.* 5:473-474).

[107] Literally translated as, "carefully written letters" (Morwood, 2008:67;88;229).

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was "of superhuman size and beauty" (*Ep*. 7.27.2).[108] This woman reportedly told Rufus of his future positions of office in Rome, and of his eventual death in Africa. Pliny adds that Rufus was met once more by this same being upon his arrival in Carthage (*Ep*. 7.27.3).

Pliny introduces his next account of a ghostly encounter by asking Sura to "consider whether the following story, which [he] will tell just as it was told to [him], is not quite as remarkable and even more terrifying" (*Ep*. 7.27.4).[109] It is this second tale that features most prominently in my main argument. In this story, Pliny presents a protagonist in the form of the philosopher Athenodorus, who seeks to rent a house in Athens, and upon hearing that it is haunted, appears all the more enthusiastic about it (*Ep*. 7.27:7). Athenodorus then waits for the ghost to appear to him, and when it does, he follows the ghost until it vanishes. After discovering a chained corpse in the ground below the ghost's vanishing point, he promptly arranges for the proper funerary rites and a public burial (*Ep*. 7.27:8-11).

Referring to the first and second ghost stories, Pliny notes that he has had to "rely on the evidence of others, but [the last account] is a story [he] can vouch for [himself]" (*Ep*. 7.27.12).[110] This third tale on the theme of ghosts and their possible existence features the brother of Pliny's freedman Marcus, as well as one of his slave-boys. As mentioned earlier, the story goes that both claimed that their hair was shorn off in the dead of night by mysterious figures "clad in white," and when they awoke the morning after each incident, locks of their hair were found strewn on the floor (*Ep*. 7.27:12-14).[111]

Having presented these three examples as the motivation for his inclination to believe in the existence of ghosts, Pliny concludes his letter to Sura, saying, "So please apply your learned mind to this question; it deserves your long and careful consideration" (*Ep*. 7.27.15).[112] And like Pliny, I ask the same of my readers with regard to my main argument in the following chapter.

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[108] *inclinato die spatiabatur in porticu; offertur ei mulieris figura humana grandior pulchiorque. perterrito Africam se futurorum praenuntiam dixit* (*Ep*. 7.27.2).

[109] *iam illud nonne et magis terribile et non minus mirum est quod exponam ut accepi?* (*Ep*. 7.27.4).

[110] *et haec quidem adfirmantibus credo; illud adfirmare aliis possum* (*Ep*. 7.27.12).

[111] *venerunt per fenestras (ita narrat) in tunicis albis duo cubantemque detonderunt et qua venerant recesserunt* (*Ep*. 7.27:13).

[112] *proinde rogo, eruditionem tuam intendas. digna res est quam diu multumque consideres* (*Ep*. 7.27.15)

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3. Chapter 3: Comparative Discussion of the Selected Works

3.1. Chapter Introduction

The main argument of my thesis is presented in this chapter. Through a series of comparative discussions, I analyse my selection of texts in order to determine what insights into the Roman understanding of death and the dead may be gleaned. Beginning with each writer's employment of Latin terminology pertaining to spirits of the dead, I compare and contrast recurring terms in order to reveal semantic nuances. Following the exploration of terms, I turn to the ghosts themselves as I explore their portrayals as literary characters. Here, the ways in which the various ghosts of my chosen texts approach the living and interact with them through appeals to the senses are compared and then examined in great detail. The differences and similarities between such spectral character portrayals will then be argued in terms of how they reflect Roman ideas about death and the dead. The spirits of the dead that are present in each of my selected texts will also be considered with respect to the overarching theme of Tragic Death and its accompanying motif, Laying the Ghost to Rest. While the chosen works do display other themes and motifs, the ones discussed here are most pertinent to my argumentative goal of highlighting insights into Roman thought about death and the dead through the comparative discussion of ancient Roman ghost literature.

3.2.   Terminology

When comparing and analysing the descriptions of spirits of the dead as they appear in each of the selected texts, the foremost element to consider is that of terminology usage. It is important to note that while the term "ghost" is used to denote spirits or manifestations of the dead in this thesis, it is of modern coinage. In fact, the ancient Romans did not have a specific Latin term for "ghost" at all (Felton, 1999:23). Rather, they made use of a loose combination of terms such as *phantasmata*, *umbra*, *anima*, *imago*, and, *effigies* – among others (Felton, 1999:24). There is some argumentation for nuances of difference between terms like *manes*,[113] *lemures*,[114] and, *larvae*,[115] – as indicated by a brief classification of spirit types in Apuleius' *De Deo Socratis*[116] (Felton, 1999:24).[117] However, the range of Latin words used in reference to spirits of the dead is generally accepted to be interchangeable, much in the same way that the English words, "phantom," and, "spirit," are often used as synonyms for, "ghost" (Felton, 1999:24). Particular attention will be given to the terms used to portray the ghosts in Plautus' *Mostellaria*, in Books II, III, and VI of Virgil's *Aeneid*,[118] in Books II and V of Ovid's *Fasti*, and in *Letter* 7.27 of Pliny's *Epistles*. This study of the terminology used for "ghost" in the selected Latin literature is conducted in order to gain more insight into the Roman understanding of death and the dead. The degree of interchangeability of the words is also kept in mind here.

Of the many words used by Latin writers in reference to manifestations of the dead, a number of these do demonstrate some specificity, despite the assumption of their interchangeability. In

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[113] *Manes*, according to Apuleius (in Felton, 1999:24), refers to benign spirits. However, it was believed that these spirits only remained so if their honorary rites were dutifully performed each year (Collison-Morley, 1912:7).

[114] The *lemures* were known as unpredictable, evil, and often dangerous spirits (Collison-Morley, 1912:7-9; Felton, 1999:24).

[115] *Larvae* were ghosts that haunted houses (Collison-Morley, 1912:7). According to Felton (1999:24), the phrase *larvis infestus* was used to describe a haunted house.

[116] All English translations of Apuleius' *De Deo Socratis* are taken from Ogden (2009).

[117] According to Apuleius in his exploration of the concept of "demons" in Graeco-Roman culture, "another variety of "demon" consists of the human soul that abandons its body when it has finished its services in life" (*Soc*. 15). He adds to this, saying, "I note that in the old Latin language these used to be termed *lemures*. Now, to some of these *lemures* was allotted the care of their descendants. These occupy houses with a propitious and peaceful attitude, and they are called *Lares* of the family. But others, because of their misdeeds in life, are punished with a kind of exile, namely, with the denial of a home and with undirected wanderings. They can only be harmless terrors to good men, but they are dangerous to bad men. People usually call these *larvae*" (*Soc*. 15). While the categories of *Lares* and *larvae* are echoed in the secondary literature of Collison-Morley (1912) and Felton (1999), Ogden (2009:149) does note that Apuleius' definition of *lemures* does not correspond with other ancient Latin writers, and that this term is generally used in reference to restless or dangerous spirits in other accounts of ghosts.

[118] Although Book VI of the *Aeneid* is not one of the main texts around which I base my primary argument, it is included in this study of the terminology on account of its quantitative and qualitative Latin descriptions of the dead.

Book VI of Virgil's *Aeneid*, the word *anima* is used in reference to a number of inhabitants of the underworld. As the hero Aeneas enters the Stygian Marshes, Virgil describes the spirits of children who died in infancy as the "weeping ghosts (*animae flentes*) … robbed of their share of this sweet life" (*Aen*. 6.426-429).[119] In the same realm of Dis are "those sad ghosts (*animae*)… who brought on death by their own hands" (*Aen*. 6.434-436).[120] These references to the residents of the infernal marshes each make use of *anima*. Also, in the Elysian Fields, Aeneas' father calls those who drink from the Lethe River *animae*; they are "the spirits (*animae*) [who are] owed a second body by the Fates" – a statement to which Aeneas responds by asking why "any spirits (*animas*)… [would] return once more to the shackles of the body" (*Aen*. 6.713-721).[121] Anchises' answer to Aeneas' question is not important here. What is significant is that both Anchises and Aeneas use the term *anima* in reference to a group of Elysian inhabitants. Drawing on the other examples mentioned here, it appears that Virgil applies the term *anima* in Book VI of the *Aeneid* primarily in reference to various groups of the dead in the underworld.

It is worth noting that Virgil does not use the term *anima* for the ghost of Creusa or for that of Polydorus while each is present in the living world. Creusa's ghost is described with the words *simulacrum*, *umbra*, and *imago* (*Aen*. 2.772-773;793), while Polydorus' physical appearance is not mentioned; only the sounds he makes are described as "a wrenching groan," and "a cry heaving into the air" (*Aen*. 3.39-40).[122] However, once Polydorus' body is properly buried – the point at which it was believed that the deceased's soul entered the afterlife – Virgil finally refers to his spirit as *anima*. He has Aeneas narrate how he and the other Trojans "[gave] Polydorus a fresh new burial," and "[laid] his soul (*animam*) in the grave as [their] voices raise[d] his name, the resounding last farewell" (*Aen*. 3.62;67-68).[123] It is possible that in Virgil's *Aeneid*, the word *anima* (when used in reference to the dead) denotes those manifestations of the deceased who have already entered and now reside in Dis. However, it is important to note that *anima* is not the only term used in such a nuanced way by Virgil. He also

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[119] *infantumque animae flentes, in limine primo quos dulcis vitae exsortis et ab ubere raptos abstulit atra dies et funere mersit acerbo* (*Aen*. 6.427-429).

[120] *qui sibi letum insontes peperere manu lucemque perosi proiecere animas* (*Aen*. 6.434-436).

[121] *animae, quibus altera fato corpora debentur* (*Aen*. 6.713-714);

animas iterumque ad tarda reverti corpora (*Aen*. 6.720-721).

[122] *gemitus lacrimabilis imo auditor tumulo, et vox reddita fertur ad auris* (*Aen*. 3.39-40).

[123] *ergo instauramus Polydoro funus* (*Aen*. 3.62);

animamque sepulcro condimus et magna supremum voce ciemus (*Aen*. 3.67-68).

refers to the spirits in the underworld as *imago*, *umbrae*, and *manes*, among others. These terms and their nuances will be discussed in the sections to follow.

Imago is not only used by Virgil, but it is also used by Ovid and Pliny the Younger in their descriptions of various ghosts in the selected texts. In Book II of the *Aeneid*, when Aeneas scours the ruins of Troy for his wife Creusa, the ghost of his spouse appears and is referred to as *imago* on two occasions: once when her spectral form is described as "larger than life," and again, when Aeneas tries unsuccessfully to embrace her, "her phantom (*imago*) sifting through [his] fingers" (*Aen*. 2.773;793).[124] Later, in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas comes across the great heroes of war, among whom are "Tydeus…, Parthenopaeus in shining arms, and Adrastus' pallid phantom (*pallentis imago*)" (*Aen*. 6.479-480).[125] And in the Elysian Fields, Aeneas explains how it was Anchises' "grieving ghost", or *tristis imago*, who instructed him to make the journey into the underworld (*Aen*. 6.695-696).[126] In each of these instances, the ghosts who are referred to as *imago* are mentioned by name: Creusa, Adrastus, and Anchises. Here, *imago* can be seen as having been used in association with particular, identified spirits.

Indeed, this notion is reflected further in Book V of Ovid's *Fasti*, when Ovid portrays the ghost of Remus using *imago* (*Fast*. 5.463;477). In his presentation of the origins of the Lemuria festival, Ovid has the late Remus describe himself as *inanis imago*: "an empty wraith, escaped from the flames of the pyre" (*Fast*. 5.463).[127] In the same way that Aeneas attempted to embrace his wife, so too did Remus' parents, Faustulus and Acca, try to hold their adoptive son, but alas, "the vision (*imago*) [of him] fled" (*Fast*. 5.477).[128] In this case too, the name of the ghost is mentioned and the term *imago* is used. It is important to note that of the spirits described in Books II and V of the *Fasti*, Remus is the only one who is mentioned by name and referred to as *imago*. Ovid does speak of the angry, howling, and neglected ghosts in his explanation of the Parentalia in Book II (*Fast*. 2.547-556), but there, he does not use *imago* at all. Instead, he refers to these dead and their manifestations using *anima*, *umbra*, and *manes*. The absence of both named ghosts and the term *imago* in Book II supports the suggestion that Ovid, like Virgil, applies the term only to ghosts whose names are specified.

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[124] *visa mihi ante oculos et nota maior imago* (*Aen*. 2.773);

ter frustra comprensa manus effugit imago (*Aen*. 2.793).

[125] *hic illi occurrit Tydeus, hic inclutus armis Parthenopaeus et Adrasti pallentis imago* (*Aen*. 6.479-480).

[126] *"tua me, genitor, tua tristis imago saepius occurens haec limina tendere adegit"* (*Aen*. 6.695-696).

[127] *nunc sum elapsa rogi flammis et inanis imago* (*Fast*. 5.463).

[128] *ut secum fugiens somnos abduxit imago* (*Fast*. 5.477).

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The word *imagines* also features in the second story of Pliny the Younger's *Letter* 7.27; however, it does not share the same nuance of meaning that is found in Virgil's and Ovid's use of it. *Imago* is merely used here to denote the object of the tenants' fear in the haunted Athenian house: "For even during the day, when the apparition (*imago*) had vanished, the memory of it was in their mind's eye, so that their terror remained after the cause of it had gone" (*Ep.* 7.27:6).[129] The difference between Pliny's employment of *imago* and that of the aforementioned poets' may be attributed to contextual differences. Where Virgil's and Ovid's works were separated by less than thirty years – the *Aeneid* was completed around 19 BCE (Knox, 2010:11) and the *Fasti* was written circa 8 CE (Frazer, 1996:xv) – Pliny's *Epistles* were composed between 100 and 109 CE (Felton, 1999:62). It is possobile that the proximity of the writing periods for Virgil and Ovid may account for the similarities in their use of the terminology; both composed within the same Augustan cultural climate. With Pliny writing almost a century later, under a different emperor (Trajan) and in a more established era of the Roman Empire, it is reasonable that his use of a particular word like *imago* would have differed from that of his predecessors since the cultural climate in which he wrote was vastly different. Furthermore, the chronological gap between the Augustan poets and Pliny presents a likely shift not only in culture, but in language too. The use of the same word such as *imago* may have held different meanings in different time periods. Moreover, it is plausible that Ovid's writing may have been influenced by Virgil's. Ovid, born in 43 BCE, would have been a young man at the time of the *Aeneid*'s publication. It is also known from Ovid's praises of other Roman poets – such as Horace, Propertius, and Tibullus (Frazer, 1996:xiii) – that he was familiar with Virgil's work and that he had even seen him once: "I only saw Virgil" (*Tris.* 4.10.51).[130] On these grounds, it is possible that the commonalities between Virgil's and Ovid's use of Latin may derive from the former's influence over the latter.

Nonetheless, *imago* is not the only Latin term for ghosts that is used by two or more poets in a similar fashion. Virgil, Ovid, and even Pliny the Younger, all apply the word *manes* to ghosts within the context of funerary and post-funerary rituals. Indeed, this term is used almost exclusively in these situations in Books III and VI of the *Aeneid*, in Books II and V of the *Fasti*, and in *Letter* 7.27 of the *Epistles*. In Book III of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas narrates how he carried out the funerary rites for Polydorus. He tells of how, after he had buried Polydorus' body, the

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[129] *nam interdiu quoque, quamquam abscesserat imago, memoria imaginis oculis inerrabat, longiorque causis timoris timor erat* (*Ep.* 7.27:6).

[130] *Vergilium vidi tantum* (*Tris.* 4.10.51).

Trojans "rais[ed] to all the shades (*manibus*) below an altar dark with wreaths of grief and dead-black cypress" (*Aen*. 3.63-64).[131] Thus we have here the use of the term *manes* within the context of funerary ritual. This involvement of *manes* in funerary processes is repeated in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*. In the underworld's Fields of Mourning, Aeneas comes across the mangled ghost of Polydorus' brother, Deiphobus (*Aen*. 6.495). Aeneas asks Deiphobus' shade how it is that he has not been able to reach the Elysian Fields, since he had performed the appropriate funeral rites by "rais[ing] [Deiphobus'] empty tomb… and call[ing] out to [his] shade (*manis*)[132] three times with a ringing voice" (*Aen*. 6.505-506;510).[133] Although Aeneas' efforts did not secure a peaceful afterlife for Deiphobus,[134] the fact that his ghost is referred to as *manis* in connection with the funeral process is significant.[135] In both of these examples, *manes* is used in association with a funeral and the performance of the proper rituals. This application of *manes* is seen again in Pliny's *Letter* 7.27; Athenodorus, having discovered the manacled body of the man whose spirit haunts the house, approaches the magistrates to arrange for "the bones [to be] collected and given a public burial" (*Ep.* 7.27:11).[136] It is then noted that "after the shades had been duly laid to rest the house saw them no more"[137] (*domus postea rite conditis manibus caruit*) (*Ep.* 7.27:11).[138]

However, it can also be shown that the use of *manes* in ritual extends beyond those rites performed on the day of the funeral in the living world, i.e.: in post-funerary ritual. In Book VI of the *Aeneid*, Anchises speaks about the purification rites the spirits must go through before being accepted into Elysium. He explains that they must first be "purged of all the taints…

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[131] *stant manibus arae, caeruleis maestae vittis atraque cupresso* (*Aen*. 3.63-64).

[132] It is important to note that the term *manis* used here is merely a variant of the more common *manes*.

[133] *tumulum Rhoeteo litore inanem constitui et magna manis ter voce vocavi* (*Aen*. 6. 505-506).

[134] Deiphobus' unrest is attributed to his spousal betrayal by Helen (Johnston, 2012:70).

[135] In Book VI of Virgil's *Aeneid*, *manes* is also used in reference to the spirits who send "false dreams" through the Gates of Ivory, while the "true shades" who exit Dis through the Gates of Horn are referred to as *umbra* (*Aen*. 6.894-896). However, this section of the *Aeneid* is problematic in that it signals a break in the narrative, and as a result, has been a much-debated topic among scholars for years (Johnston, 2012:108). There does not yet appear to be a consensus on what the language of this passage means, nor on how it relates to the epic as a whole. Due to the ambiguous context in which it appears, this instance of *manes* will not be addressed further in this thesis. It stands instead as a subject for future study rather than present discussion.

[136] *collecta publice sepeliuntur* (*Ep.* 7.27.11).

[137] An alternative translation of this line comes from Firth (1900): "Ever afterwards the house was free of the ghost which had been thus laid with due ceremony" (*Ep.* 7.27.11).

[138] In this case, *conditis manibus* is not an ablative absolute, but rather, *manibus* is ablative after the verb *caruit* ("to be free from") (Smuts, et al., 1980:100-102). This governance of *manibus* by *caruit* then further presents *manes* in a funerary context through the line's insinuation that the ghost could not be laid to rest unless the body had been properly buried (Reeves, 1958:105; Sherwin-White, 1969:141).

[and] the body's plagues," and that "they must pay for their old offenses" (*Aen*. 6.735-740).[139] In the same way that the surviving family of the deceased had to engage in purification rituals to rid themselves of the pollution of death (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:129), it seems that the souls of the deceased had to undergo a purification process themselves; not to shed the pollution of death, but rather that of life. Anchises states that, in death, "each of us must suffer his [or her] own demanding ghost (*manis*)" (*Aen*. 6.743).[140] Not only is *manes* used with reference to ghosts, but the meaning is extended to refer to the spirits who must undergo the necessary purification rites of the afterlife (Johnston, 2012:93). In this sense, it can be argued that *manes* can also be applied within the context of Roman post-funerary rituals.

The manner in which Ovid uses *manes* in Books II and V of the *Fasti* supports this argument for its employment in post-funerary ritual. In his explanation of the Parentalia, Ovid details how the ancestral spirits of the dead must be honoured with ritual offerings and gifts each year. He clarifies that such simple offerings as "tile[s] wreathed with votive garlands, a sprinkling of corn, a few grains of salt, bread soaked in wine, [or] some loose violets," are adequate since "the ghosts (*manes*) ask but little" (*Fast*. 2.535-539).[141] He goes on to describe the Feralia as the last day of the Parentalia, on which the surviving kin hold feasts at the graves of their deceased family members and pay their respects to their spirits.[142] Ovid highlights the conclusion of the festival by reminding his audience that the Feralia is the "the last day for propitiating the ghosts" (*Fast*. 2.570).[143] In both references to the due rites that must be paid to the deceased, Ovid identifies said spirits as *manes*.

This pattern is repeated in the fifth book of the *Fasti* when Ovid accounts for the traditions of the other festival for the dead: the Lemuria. He writes that on the ninth of May, the "olden rite, the nocturnal Lemuria," is celebrated and that offerings to the "silent ghosts" (*tacitis manibus*) are presented (*Fast*. 5.421-422).[144] The association between posthumous ritual and the term *manes* is again present in Ovid's use of *manibus*. The poet then gives a step-by-step set of

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[139] *quin et supremo cum lumine vita reliquit, non tamen omne malum miseris nec funditus omnes corporeae excedunt pestes, penitusque necesse est multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris. ergo exercentur poenis veterumque malorum supplicia expendunt* (*Aen*. 6.735-740).

[140] *quisque suos patimur manis* (*Aen*. 6.743).

[141] *parva petunt manes, pietas pro divite grata est munere: non avidos Styx habet ima deos. tegula porrectis satis est velata coronis et sparsae fruges parcaque mica salis inque mero mollita Ceres violaeque solutae* (*Fast*. 2.535-539).

[142] Ovid remarks that the Feralia is so named "because they carry to the dead their dues" (*quia iusta ferunt*) (*Fast*. 2.569).

[143] *ultima placandis manibus illa dies* (*Fast*. 2.570).

[144] *ritus erit veteris, nocturna Lemuria, sacri: inferias tacitis manibus illa dabunt* (*Fast*. 5.421-422).

instructions to his audience on how the festival must be concluded. He describes how the *pater familias* must perform a ritual at midnight on the last day of the Lemuria in which he walks barefoot through the house, throwing black beans[145] over his shoulder and saying nine times, "These I cast; with these beans I redeem me and mine" (*Fast*. 5.437-438).[146] After this, he must clash Temesan bronze and request that the shades take their leave by saying nine times, "Ghosts of my fathers, go forth!" (*Fast*. 5.441-443).[147] While the visiting spirits are referred to as *umbrae* as they supposedly follow the *pater familias*, picking up the beans (*Fast*. 5.439-440), they are identified as *manes paterni* when directly addressed and engaged in the closing rites of the Lemuria.[148] In this instance, the employment of *manes* in a customary phrase associated with the Lemuria further supports the argument for the use of the word within the context of Roman post-funerary rituals.

In the case of the word *simulacrum*, it seems that this was also used with its own particular set of connotations. This term is used by both Virgil and Pliny the Younger in instances where the act of seeing is involved. In the second book of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas charges back into the burning city of Troy in order to look for his wife, who fell behind in their flight. The hero tells of how he "madly rushed from house to house, [with] no end in sight, [when] abruptly, right before [his] eyes, [he] saw [Creusa's] stricken ghost (*simulacrum*)" (*Aen*. 2.771-773).[149] In Pliny's *Letter* 7.27, the protagonist Athenodorus prepares to wait for the spirit that haunts the house in which he is staying. Pliny details the precautions taken by the philosopher in anticipation of seeing the resident ghost, or *simulacrum*: "[he] concentrated his thoughts, eyes and hand on his writing, so that his mind would be occupied and not conjure up the phantom (*simulacra*) he had heard about" (*Ep*. 7.27.7).[150] It is important to observe that in these

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[145] The spirits of the dead were believed to have followed the *pater familias*, collecting the beans as they went. It was thought that the beans served as substitutes for the living souls of the household, and so, instead of taking the living to keep them company in death, the shades were placated with the beans (Frazer, 1996:424). According to Felton (1999:104), the Romans believed beans to be sacred and it was not uncommon for beans to be given as offerings to placate the dead in post-funerary rituals. Indeed, Pliny the Elder mentions in his *Natural History* that beans were used as offerings during the Parentalia as well (*Nat*. 18.30). The Elder Pliny also notes that the use of beans in this way may derive from Pythagoras' belief that the souls of the dead could be held inside beans (*Nat*. 18.30).

[146] "*haec ego mitto, his," inquit, "redimo meque meosque fabis*" (*Fast*. 5.437-438).

[147] "*manes exite paterni!*" (*Fast*. 5.443).

[148] A possible explanation for the use of *umbra* here (as opposed to the use of *manes*) may be that this act of collecting the beans was only assumed (*putatur*) to have taken place (*Fast*. 5.439). The uncertainty surrounding this part of the ritual may have discouraged Ovid from applying such a specific term as *manes*.

[149] *quaerenti et tectis urbis sine fine furenti infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbra Creusae visa mihi ante oculos* (*Aen*. 2.771-773).

[150] *ipse ad scribendum animum oculos manum intendit, ne vacua mens audita simulacra et inanes sibi metus fingeret* (*Ep*. 7.27.7).

examples, both writers refer to the ghost as a *simulacrum* when they speak of the act of seeing such a thing with their own eyes. Although Aeneas actually sees the ghost of Creusa, whereas Athenodorus tries not to see the phantom of which he has heard, the mention of eyes and the implication of seeing is present in both instances. In this regard, it can be shown that the use of *simulacrum* by Virgil and Pliny works in conjunction with sight, thus suggesting that this term denotes ghosts that must be looked upon. Indeed, Lewis and Short's (1955:1704) dictionary defines *simulacrum* as either "an image formed in the likeness of a thing," or, "an image, form, shade, [or] phantom." Since these definitions of *simulacrum* refer to an "image", the connotations of visibility in this word, as well as the necessity to look in order to perceive, support the specificity with which Virgil and Pliny apply this term.

While the similarities between Virgil's, Ovid's, and Pliny's use of terms – such as *imago*, *manes*, and *simulacrum* – have been discussed in great detail, the terms used to describe the dead in Plautus' *Mostellaria* have not yet been addressed. The reason for such postponement is that Plautus' employment of terms for spirits has no commonalities with the other selected writers in this thesis, save for one. Pliny the Younger is the only writer in my selection of texts to have any terminological link with Plautus, and even then, this connection is limited to a single word: *monstrum*. In both Plautus' *Mostellaria* and Pliny's *Letter* 7.27, the word *monstrum* appears just once. As Tranio, the wily servant of the *Mostellaria*, spins his tale of the haunting of his master's house, he attempts to reinforce the terror he has instilled in Theopropides by saying that "[he] can barely tell [his master] in a year what apparitions (*monstra*) take place [in the house]" (*Most.* 2.505).[151] In *Letter* 7.27, Pliny describes the circumstances under which the haunted Athenian house found itself abandoned. He explains that the tenants of the house were so fearful of the ghost that haunted it, that "the house was therefore deserted, condemned to stand empty and wholly abandoned to the spectre (*monstro*)" (*Ep.* 7.27.6).[152] In these instances, the entities are described by the term *monstrum*. In addition to this, the contexts in which *monstrum* appears are those of houses occupied by manifestations of the dead. Keeping in mind that Pliny's work was written over two centuries after Plautus', the use of *monstrum* by both is significant in terms of demonstrating the longevity and particular application of this term in reference to ghosts.

However, the other term with which Plautus describes the ghost in the *Mostellaria* differs from the more common range of words used by later writers like Virgil, Ovid and Pliny. Where the

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[151] *quae hic monstra fiunt anno vix possum eloqui* (*Most.* 2.505).

[152] *deserta inde et damnata solitudine domus totaque illi monstro relicta* (*Ep.* 7.27.6).

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vocabulary used to denote ghosts by the selected writers from the Augustan period and onwards (*anima*, *imago*, *manes*, *simulacrum*, *phantasmata*, and *effigies*, among others) all signify some sort of intangible manifestation of the dead, the word used by Plautus – *mortuus* – actually translates to "corpse, [or] dead man" (Felton, 1999:54; Whitaker, 2007), thus lending a physical quality to his descriptions. Aside from one mention of *monstrum* (*Most.* 2.505), the ghost in Tranio's story is always referred to as *mortuus*, and De Melo (2011) consistently translates this as "the dead man". This use of *mortuus* also occurs when Tranio tells Theopropides how "the dead man (*mortuom*) had come to [Philolaches] in his sleep," in order to reveal how he had died (*Most.* 2.490).[153] Theopropides continually interrupts Tranio's tale and so the servant repeats twice more that the "dead man" (*mortuom*) had spoken to Philolaches (*Most.* 2.492;496). While Tranio attempts to deceive Theopropides outside the house, Philolaches entertains his guests inside. At one point, one of the guests calls out to Tranio and in an effort to conceal the party inside, Tranio claims that the voice belongs to the *mortuom*, or "dead man," who is "complaining because [Theopropides] knocked on the door" (*Most.* 2.520-521).[154]

The reason for the use of this particular term on Plautus' part may be attributed to the *Mostellaria*'s having been composed well over a century before any of the other selected texts. Not only was this work created much earlier, but it is also the only example in my selection that dates from the Roman Republic. The works of Virgil, Ovid, and Pliny were all written in the Imperial Age. On these grounds, it is plausible that the alternative terminology for ghosts in this comedy reflects an earlier Latin usage. However, it is also reasonable to argue that the use of *mortuus* may have been the intention of Plautus in order to create humour by conveying the chaos and inconsistencies in Tranio's lie. Indeed, Tranio is the only character in the entire play to speak about the ghost, and the word *mortuus* only occurs in his speech.[155] In this regard, Plautus' use of *mortuus* can also be seen as serving a comedic purpose in exposing Tranio as a terrible liar through his use of inaccurate terminology – i.e.: using *mortuus*, or "dead man" instead of another word like *larva*. When Theopropides believes Tranio's tale despite his flawed language, Plautus further presents the master as a gullible fool.

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[153] *ait venisse illum in somnis ad se mortuom* (*Most.* 2.490).

[154] *ita me di amabunt, mortuom illum credidi expostulare quia percussisses fores* (*Most.* 2.520-521).

[155] In his terror at hearing sounds coming from inside the house, Theopropides mentions the general dead of the underworld as he exclaims, "The dead are taking me to the Underworld while I'm still alive!" (*vivom me accersunt Accheruntem mortui*) (*Most.* 2.509). Here, Theopropides' use of *mortui* may be a tool with which Plautus demonstrates Theopropides' gullibility as *mortui* derives from *mortuus* (Whitaker, 2007); the latter of which he has just heard Tranio repeatedly and inappropriately apply in his impromptu tale of haunting.

Although several commonalities among the selected texts have been demonstrated in this study of the Latin terminology for ghosts, there remains a number of terms where no discernible patterns of usage occur. The word *umbra* is an example of this. While the word is used by both Virgil and Ovid in the *Aeneid* and *Fasti*, it does not seem to be used in any particular situation or applied to one specific type of spirit. Rather, *umbra* occurs in a variety of circumstances throughout the selected texts. In the second book of the *Aeneid*, *umbra* is used once to refer to the ghost of Aeneas' wife ("Creusa's shade," or *umbra Creusae*) as she moves to console her husband and tell him of his future (*Aen*. 2.772-789). Ovid uses *umbra* repeatedly in his elaboration of the nature and origins of the Parentalia and the Lemuria. In Book II of the *Fasti*, Ovid explains that during the Parentalia, the temples are closed, for it is during this time that the spirits of the dead wander the streets, and "now doth the ghost (*umbra*) batten upon his dole" (*Fast.* 2.566).[156] As mentioned previously, *umbra* is also employed by Ovid in Book V when he describes how the shades, or *umbrae,* "[are] thought to gather the beans, and to follow unseen behind [the head of the household]" (*Fast.* 5.439-440).[157] Although the circumstances in which Virgil and Ovid use *umbra* are different (i.e.: Virgil uses it to refer to various ghosts while Ovid uses it within the context of festivals for the dead), it is notable that both Fagles (2010) and Frazer (1996) typically translate the word as "shade". This would lead to the conclusion that *umbra* seems to refer to spirits of the dead in a generalised manner. Although it does not contribute to pinpointing the precise connotations of *umbra*, it is worth noting that this word does not appear in either of the chosen texts of Plautus or Pliny the Younger.

There is also a number of singularly-occurring words for ghost in my selection of texts. Of course, the limited use of these words does not dictate that they are without significance in their own right. Pliny the Younger makes use of several other terms for manifestations of the dead. Such terms include *phantasma*, *idolon*, and *effigies* (*Ep.* 7.27.1;5;8). *Phantasma* appears to be a simple, general reference to a ghost: "I should very much like to know whether you think that ghosts (*phantasmata*) exist" (*Ep.* 7.27.1).[158] However, *idolon* appears to have a more contextualized application. Pliny makes use of the word when he recalls that the inhabitant of the Athenian house was the spectre (*idolon*) of "an old man, emaciated and filthy, with a long flowing beard and hair on end" (*Ep.* 7.27.4).[159] It is arguable that the significance of this term

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[156] *nunc posito pascitur umbra cibo* (*Fast*. 2.566).

[157] *umbra putatur colligere et nullo terga vidente sequi* (*Fast*. 5.439-440).

[158] *igitur perquam velim scire, esse phantasmata et habere propriam figuram numenque aliquod putes an inania et vana ex metu nostro imaginem accipere* (*Ep.* 7.27.1).

[159] *mox adparebat idolon, senex macie et squalor confectus, promissa barba horrenti capillo* (*Ep.* 7.27.5).

lies in its etymology and in the setting of the story. The term *idolon* comes from the Greek *εἰδώλον* and its use in this instance is poetically apt in the sense that this particular story takes place in the Grecian city of Athens (Felton, 1999:24). Moreover, the fact that *idolon* stems from a Greek term, and that the story is set in Athens rather than in Rome, suggests that both the term and the story may have been of Greek origin and eventually Romanized. Indeed, this is likely the case for Plautus' work too, as his drama is also set in Greece and is arguably an adaptation of a previous work by the Greek playwright, Philemon (De Melo, 2011:307). With regard to *effigies*, the point at which it is employed is noteworthy in that it clearly illustrates its definition as presented by Lewis and Short (1955:630): "a copy [or] imitation of an object." Pliny narrates how Athenodorus "looked round, saw and recognized the ghost (*effigiem*) described to him" (*Ep.* 7.27.8).[160] In this instance, the ghost as it seems to Athenodorus is a visual copy of its verbal portrayal (*Ep.* 7.27.8).

In this study of the terminology used to denote ghosts in the selection of texts, it can be demonstrated that although there was no one specific term in existence for "ghost", there was indeed an understanding of the concept of spirits of the dead, as well as a range of language that was used to describe them. The repeated application of certain terms like *imago*, *manes*, *simulacrum*, and *monstrum* suggests that there existed a sense of continuity in both the ideas about ghosts, and in the language used to describe them in the selected passages of Plautus, Virgil, Ovid, and Pliny the Younger. Here, the way in which these terms for ghost are given subtle differentiation according to the circumstances in which they are used calls attention to a flaw in the argument that Felton (1999:24) presents for their interchangeability. In the case of those words used with no apparent or particular connotations such as *umbra*, or those singularly-occurring words like *idolon* and *effigies*, it can be shown that they too were not used merely as synonyms to identify manifestations of the dead. Rather, the semantics of these words and the contexts in which they appear indicate that they were likely used in a specific manner. This comparative study of terminology illustrates that the ways in which my chosen writers describe the spirits of the dead are rich with nuance and that these terms were carefully selected.

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[160] *respicit, videt agnoscitque narratam sibi effigiem* (*Ep.* 7.27.8).

3.3.   Character Portrayals of the Dead

In order to explore fully any possible insights into Roman thought about death that may arise from a comparative analysis of works featuring ghosts, it is imperative to begin with a discussion of the ways in which the spirits of the dead are characterized in each text. These ghostly characters will be compared and analysed in terms of their portrayal, as well as in terms of the manners in which they interact with the living characters. The first part of this section will address spectral character portrayal with regard to the way in which each spirit approaches or presents him/herself to the living (i.e.: either as a dream-ghost or as a waking phantom). In the second part of this comparative analysis, the interactions between the dead and the living will be discussed. Special attention will be given to the manners in which the spirits make their presence known to the living (either through sight, sound, or touch) and the extent to which such appeals are effective in communicating the various purposes or desires of the ghosts. The results of this exploration of the character portrayals of the dead will then be analysed with regard to the insights they provide into the ancient Roman understanding of death and the afterlife.

3.3.1. The Ghosts and Their Approaches

Beginning with the chronologically earliest of my selected works, the *Mostellaria* of Plautus features just one ghostly character – as the title implies.[161] Given the name Diapontius, this spirit is presented as the angered manifestation of a dead merchant who invoked the laws of *fas omne*, but was murdered by his host for "the sake of gold" (*Most.* 2.503).[162] However, this ghost differs from the ones to follow in that he is not a spirit of the dead in his own right, but rather he is a product of the living character Tranio's imagination. It is important to keep this factor in mind when considering the ways in which this ghost is shown to approach the living.

In terms of Diapontius' method of approaching the living, his is unique compared to the other spirits featured here in the sense that he is presented as both a dream-ghost and a waking ghost. His example will therefore be used as the starting point for my comparisons and contrasts. The approaches of the other spirits in my selected texts are all either of the dreaming or waking variety, but never both. Recalling Felton's (1999:60) statement that the two approaches were

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[161] The name of the comedy derives from the diminutive form of *monstrum* or *mostrum* (De Melo, 2011:307). The suffix *–aria* is used to indicate that the comedy revolves around a certain concept – in this case, a small *monstrum*, or "ghost" (De Melo, 2011:307). In essence, the title, *Mostellaria*, simply translates to "about a little ghost".

[162] *auri causa* (*Most.* 2.503).

usually mutually exclusive, the presentation of Diapontius as employing both approaches marks his case as atypical. In this instance, the nature of Diapontius as an imagined spectre of Tranio's comes into play in the sense that it is likely that in his haste to prevent Theopropides from entering his house, Tranio's recollection of common ghost stories has become confused and indistinct (Felton, 1999:56). By having Tranio present Diapontius in such a contradictory manner, Plautus creates an atmosphere of confusion which works with the audience's existing knowledge of haunted house stories in order to heighten the comedic effect in these scenes.[163]

The ghost of Diapontius is first presented as a dream-ghost when Tranio initially describes him as having "come to [Philolaches] in his sleep" (*Most.* 2.490; Felton, 1999:56).[164] It is noteworthy here that prior to his telling of how the ghost had visited Philolaches in slumber, Tranio remarks that he had "accidentally forgotten to put out the lamp" (*Most.* 2.487).[165] At this point, Tranio has already portrayed Diapontius as a dream-ghost, but in mentioning his having left a lamp lit, the two types of spectral approaches become conflated. Recalling the notes in Chapter 2 on the necessity of lamps in order to see waking ghosts at night, it is not surprising that Theopropides, confused by the blurring of typical Roman ghost lore, continuously interrupts Tranio with questions in order to clarify that the ghost had in fact approached his son in his sleep – "It was in his sleep then?" and "In his sleep?" (*Most.* 2.491;493).[166]

In stating that he had forgotten to put out the lamp, Tranio carelessly sets the scene for the approach of a waking ghost. After Theopropides' questions, however, Tranio seems to realise his mistake and so, in an effort to steer his master into believing his story (and to maintain his portrayal of the spirit as a dream-ghost), Tranio sarcastically tells his master that the ghost

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[163] Felton (1999:57-58) argues that both Plautus and the audience would already have been familiar with the typical format of haunted house stories. Felton (1999:57) does mention that other scholars such as Wieand and Radermacher have described the haunted house tale within the *Mostellaria* as a sign of clumsiness and carelessness on Plautus' part. However, Felton (1999:58) argues instead that the unusual format of Plautus' haunted house story was specially designed to work in combination with the audience's familiarity with such tales in order to achieve the desired comedic effect. In this sense, the way in which Tranio scoffs at Theopropides and calls him stupid – "Sometimes you really are incredibly stupid, Theopropides" (*Most.* 2.495) – when he is confused by the inconsistencies in the ghost's approaches creates a sense of ironic humour. The advent of Tranio calling Theopropides stupid becomes a source of humour since the audience, who is already familiar with typical haunted house tales, knows that it is actually Tranio who is foolish in his conflation of the two types of ghostly approach. Thus, the success of the comedic effect in this scene is dependent on the audience having an existing knowledge of such stories.

[164] *ait venisse illum in somnis ad se mortuom* (*Most.* 2.490).

[165] *lucernam forte oblitus fueram exstinguere* (*Most.* 2.487).

[166] *nempe ergo in somnis?* (*Most.* 2.491);

 in somnis? (*Most.* 2.493).

could not have spoken to Philolaches "while he was awake, given that he'd been killed sixty years ago" (*Most.* 2.493-494).[167] Indeed, Tranio had already described this imaginary murder as a crime committed "long ago already, an old and ancient one" (*Most.* 2.476) prior to his initial presentation of Diapontius.[168] These references to the time of the murder therefore result in further loss of credibility to Tranio's tale in the sense that dream-ghosts were usually newly-departed, not six decades dead (Felton, 1999:56). By specifying that the spirit haunting his master's house had been murdered sixty years prior, Tranio negates his previous claim that the ghost was of the kind that came to the living in sleep.

It is at this point that Tranio's ghost takes on a more definitive portrayal as a waking ghost. Not only does the wily slave contradict Diapontius' being a dream-ghost by presenting him as a spirit who is not recently deceased, but he alters his portrayal further by attributing him with the qualities of a waking ghost. When one of the party-goers inside the house calls out, "Hey, Tranio!" (*Most.* 2.515),[169] Tranio attempts to conceal the party inside and explain the noise by claiming that the shout was the ghost retaliating in anger at Theopropides' earlier bout of knocking: "As truly as the gods will love me, I believed it was that dead man complaining because you'd knocked on the door" (*Most.* 2.520-521).[170] In this instance, Tranio carelessly attributes the ghost with the ability to be heard by those who are awake. Further solidifying his new presentation of Diapontius as a waking ghost is the fact that Tranio, as part of his act of deception, pretends to speak to the ghost, telling him that he would "do well not to address [him]," since "[he] [hadn't] done anything wrong and [he] [hadn't] knocked on the door" (*Most.* 2.515-516).[171] Although the audience knows that Tranio is addressing the party guest who had called him, it appears to Theopropides (to whom the character of Diapontius is being described) that Tranio is addressing the ghost. He performs this act again when he says, "Don't utter a word," and, "Away with you from here" (*Most.* 2.517-518).[172] Tranio's attempted concealment of the party noises not only results in his presenting the ghost as one who could be heard by the living while awake, but he further describes him as being able to hear and

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[167] *mirum quin vigilanti diceret qui abhinc sexaginta annos occisus foret* (*Most.* 2.493-494).

[168] *scelus, inquam, factum est iam diu, antiquom et vetus* (*Most.* 2.476).

[169] *heus, Tranio!* (*Most.* 2.515).

[170] *ita me di amabunt, mortuom illum credidi expostulare quia percussisses fores* (*Most.* 2.520-521).

[171] *non me appellabis si sapis. nil ego commerui neque istas percussi fores* (*Most.* 2.515-516).

[172] *cave verbum faxis* (*Most.* 2.517);

apage hinc te (*Most.* 2.518).

understand the verbal commands spoken by those same living characters. With this interaction, Act II ends with Diapontius being characterized as a waking ghost.

In his haste to trick Theopropides, Tranio's presentation of Diapontius comes across as a terribly flawed description of a ghost which appears to combine the typical characteristics of both dream-ghosts and waking ghosts (Felton, 1999:59-57). Initially described as a dream-ghost, Diapontius is ultimately portrayed as a waking spectre. Although this combination of ghostly approach is unusual in Roman literature about the dead, the plot of the comedy does account for such a discrepancy. Had Tranio had more time to compose his lie, he may have been able to separate the two types of approaches in his tale. However, his hastiness results in the melding of these concepts. Moreover, the unexpected noise that comes from the party-goers inside the house warrants an explanation that Tranio can only give by changing his portrayal of Diapontius from a dream-ghost to a waking spirit.

Although Diapontius' ghost differs from the others in my selected texts, due to his employment of two customarily mutually exclusive approaches, he does share a degree of similarity with the ghost of Remus (featured in Ovid's *Fasti*) in the sense that Remus is also portrayed as a dream-ghost. Aside from the ghost of Dido (Book III of the *Fasti*) and the phantom barbers (Pliny's *Letter* 7.27) who were discussed in the previous chapter, Remus and Diapontius are the only other spirits in my selection of texts to be characterized as having approached the living in their dreams. In the case of Remus, his spectre approaches his adoptive parents, Faustulus and Acca, when they fall asleep after carrying out the last of his funerary rites: "… with streaming hair, [they] sprinkled the burnt bones with their tears. Then at twilight's fall they sadly took the homeward way, and flung themselves on their hard couch, just as it was" (*Fast*. 5.453-456).[173] In the dream, the late Remus appears to be standing next to his parents' bed, much in the same way that Anna dreamt Dido's ghost to be standing before her when she appeared to warn of Lavinia's plot (*Fast*. 3.639-640; 5.457-458). Remus' spirit then speaks to his parents, expressing his wish for events to have unfolded differently and his desire to see his killer meet the same bloody end that was delivered to him: "I might have been the foremost of my people, if but the birds had assigned the throne to me. Now I am an empty wraith…" (*Fast*. 5.461-463).[174] Remus fulfils the role of a dream-ghost as a phantom with a communicative

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[173] *Faustulus infelix et passis Acca capillis spargebant lacrimis ossa perusta suis. inde domum redeunt sub prima crepuscula maesti, utque erat, in duro procubuere toro* (*Fast*. 5.453-456).

[174] *qui modo, si volcres habuissem regna iubentes in populo potui maximus esso meo, nunc sum elapsa rogi flammis et inanis imago* (*Fast*. 5.461-463).

purpose (Felton, 1999:56). Furthermore, he not only recounts the circumstances of his death and names his killer to be Celer, but his spirit also asks a favour of his kin, which is one of the most common reasons for the presence of a dream-ghost in Roman literature, according to Felton (1999:56). Since Remus was given his due funerary rites, his posthumous request to his parents is for his brother to give him an additional honour by which his memory could be preserved: "Pray [Romulus] by your tears, by your fosterage, that he would celebrate a day by signal honour done to me" (*Fast*. 5.473-474).[175] When Remus' ghost departs from the dream, sleep goes with him and his parents wake (*Fast*. 5.472). Here, Remus' spirit not only fulfils the typical qualities of a dream-ghost, but the fact that his approach to the living in slumber is consistently portrayed (unlike that of Diapontius' approach) further solidifies his characterization as such a spirit.

However, as mentioned before, the fact that Remus is presented as a true dream-ghost, where Diapontius' representation is shaky, does not mean that the two do not share any commonalities. Perhaps the most poignant similarity between Diapontius' approach and that of Remus' is the way in which both spectres appear to their respective dreamers in order to communicate their woes through speech. Tranio mentions twice that the "dead man had spoken to [Philolaches]," saying, "Look at what the dead man said to him in his sleep" (*Most*. 2.492;496).[176] Diapontius tells Philolaches of his murder and his inability to enter the underworld on account of his untimely death and his improper burial. Similarly, Remus is described by Ovid as "seem[ing] to stand at the bedside and to speak these words in a faint murmur" to his sleeping adoptive parents (*Fast*. 5.457-458).[177] Where Diapontius recounts his heedless murder, so too does Remus expound the thoughtless violence of his killer: "A citizen's rash hand undid him whom the she-wolf saved: O how far more merciful was she!" (*Fast*. 5.467-468).[178] The fact that both ghosts approach the living in slumber in order to communicate their angst in a verbal manner reinforces the premise that dream-ghosts typically approached the living in order to express a need or want (Felton, 1999:56).[179]

In addition to sharing a common ground based on their verbal communications in slumber, Diapontius and Remus can also be seen as comparable in the way each departs and concludes

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[175] *"hunc vos per lacrimas, per vestra alimenta rogate, ut celebrem nostro signet honore diem"* (*Fast*. 5.473-474).
[176] *ait illum hoc pacto sibi dixisse mortuom–* (*Most*. 2.492);
sed ecce quae illi in <somnis mortuos> (*Most*. 2.496).
[177] *umbra cruenta Remi visa est adsistere lecto atque haec exiguo murmure verba loqui* (*Fast*. 5.457-458).
[178] *"quem lupa servavit, manus hunc temeraria civis perdidit. o quanto mitior illa fuit!"* (*Fast*. 5.467-468).
[179] In Diapontius' case, he desires the house, and in Remus', appropriate honours are requested.

his conversation with the living. In these examples, the living recipients are all woken from their slumber when the ghost issues his demands and closes his speech. This is seen in the *Mostellaria* when Tranio explains to Theopropides that Philolaches "had dined out, [and] [they] all went to bed after he returned home from dinner. [The household] fell asleep… And suddenly [Philolaches] [let] out an enormous shout" (*Most.* 2.484-488).[180] Tranio claims that Philolaches then told him that he had been visited by the dead man (*Most.* 2.492). In this occurrence, Diapontius' departing warning that the "house is under a curse" and that the "dwelling place is defiled" results in Philolaches waking with a shout of terror at the idea that he was inside a house polluted by death (*Most.* 2.504).[181]

Likewise, Remus ends his speech with his request for a day of celebration to be dedicated to him, and "as the ghost gave this charge… the vision fled and carried slumber with it" (*Fast.* 5.475-477).[182] In this case, the use of the word *abduxit*[183] in describing the way in which Faustulus and Acca awoke suggests that they did not awaken naturally after Remus' visit, but rather that the ghost was able to cause his parents to wake by "leading sleep away" from them. It can therefore be argued that dream-ghosts not only have the ability to approach the living in sleep, but that they may also able to control the length of the dream. Indeed, in Book III of the *Fasti,* when Anna is visited in her sleep by the dishevelled ghost of her late sister, a similar ending of the dream is presented: Dido urges her sister to "fly, fly this dismal house… O falter not!" and "at the word a blast did slam the creaking door," which rouses Anna (*Fast.* 3.641-642).[184] Although it is difficult to argue that the spirit of Diapontius also has such control over Philolaches' dream,[185] it can still be argued that at least Ovid's dream-ghosts possess this ability.

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[180] *ut foris cenaverat tuos gnatus, postquam rediit a cena domum, abimus omnes cubitum; condormivimus: lucernam forte oblitus fueram exstinguere; atque ille exclamat derepente maximum* (*Most.* 2.484-488).

[181] *"scelestae [hae] sunt aedes, impia est habitatio"* (*Most.* 2.504).

[182] *mandantem amplecti cupiunt et bracchia tendunt: lubrica prensantes effugit umbra manus. ut secum fugiens somnos abduxit imago* (*Fast.* 5.475-477).

[183] From *abducere*, meaning "to lead away, carry off… [or] withdraw" (Whitaker, 2007).

[184] *"fuge, ne dubita, maestum fuge," dicere, "tectum!" sub verbum querulas impulit aura fores* (*Fast.* 3.641-642).

[185] This is due to his being a figment of another character's imagination and because the physical actions and effects that would have accompanied the performance of the play are not available to modern scholars in the comedy's surviving (written) condition. It is entirely possible that the actors performing in this comedy at the time of its creation may have had Diapontius exit the stage with a clangour that causes Philolaches to awaken, or even shake Philolaches awake as the ghost concludes his speech. But unfortunately, since there are no accounts of any such performances, it is impossible to prove such a theory.

Of course, one must remember that the *Mostellaria*'s ghost is ultimately presented as a waking ghost, and it is at this point that the similarities between Diapontius and Remus end.[186] Nevertheless, Diapontius' characterization as a waking spirit presents numerous points of commonalities and contrasts with the other waking ghosts in my selected texts. In the instances where Diapontius is presented as approaching the living while they are awake, he does embody some of the typical characteristics of this type of spectre, such as being restricted to a specific locale (i.e.: Theopropides' house). The ghost featured in Pliny's *Letter* 7.27 shares this element of limited mobility – for he too is bound within the confines of the house he haunts.

As illustrated in Chapter 2, this spirit is portrayed by Pliny as being that of an old man who so terrified any living inhabitants of the dwelling that "the house was therefore deserted," although it was still "advertised as being to let or for sale in case someone was found who knew nothing of its evil reputation" (*Ep*. 7.27.6).[187] The elderly man's spectre is presented as a waking ghost when Pliny tells Sura that "the wretched occupants [of the house] would spend fearful nights awake in terror" (*Ep*. 7.27.6).[188] Pliny goes on to remark that the tenants were not only harassed by the ghost during the night, but the memory of his image also haunted them during the day to the extent that the "lack of sleep led to illness and then death" (*Ep*. 7.27.6).[189] The description of the inhabitants as being awake all night in terror not only provides a clear foundation for the old man's characterization as a waking ghost, but the fact that the ghost prevented the living from sleeping even during the day lends further weight to the argument for his being exclusively a waking ghost. The old man's approach as a waking spirit is further solidified when the philosopher Athenodorus, unperturbed by the presence of a ghost in the house, makes a point of staying awake late into the night so that he might encounter the spirit as the previous tenants had: "When darkness fell [Athenodorus] gave orders that a couch was to be made up for him in the front part of the house, and asked for his notebooks, pen and a lamp… At first there was nothing but the general silence of the night; then came the clanking of iron and dragging of chains" (*Ep*. 7.27.7-8).[190]

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[186] While there are also some differences in terms of the ways in which Diapontius and Remus are shown to interact with the living, there are no vastly significant differences between the two in how they are portrayed as dream-ghosts. The variations between these spirits' interactions with the living will be discussed in section 3.3.2.

[187] *deserta inde et damnata solitudine domus...; proscribebatur tamen, seu quis emere sev quis conducere ignarus tanti mali vellet* (*Ep*. 7.27.6).

[188] *inde inhabitantibus tristes diraeque noctes per metum vigilabantur* (*Ep*. 7.27.6).

[189] *vigiliam morbus et crescent formidine mors sequebatur* (*Ep*. 7.27.6).

[190] *ubi coepit advesperascere, iubet sterni sibi in prima domus parte, poscit pugillares stilum lumen* (*Ep*. 7.27.7); *initio, quale ubique, silentium noctis; dein concuti ferrum, vincula moveri* (*Ep*. 7.27.8).

In the case of this ghost, the fact that he appears to the living inside the house is noteworthy since the mortal body of this spirit is buried within this same building:

> "When [the ghost] turned off into the courtyard of the house it suddenly vanished, leaving [Athenodorus] alone. He then picked some plants and leaves and marked the spot. The following day he approached the magistrates, and advised them to give orders for the place to be dug up. There they found bones, twisted round with chains…" (*Ep.* 7.27.10-11).[191]

 Similarly, Tranio has Diapontius identify Theopropides' house as both the place in which he "lives" or haunts, and the place in which his body lies. Diapontius tells Philolaches, "I live here," before going on to explain that he was murdered in the house and that the house is also the site of his unorthodox burial (*Most.* 2.498-504).[192] The advent of both of these ghosts' earthly bodies being situated within the houses they haunt therefore offers further support to the notion that waking ghosts held unyielding ties to the location in which they died or were buried. Indeed, Diapontius makes it apparent that the place in which he died and the place in which his bones rest are one in the same. Not only do the spirits of the old man and Diapontius share this common characteristic as waking ghosts, but their being bound specifically to houses also allows for these spirits to be classified as *larvae*.[193]

Nevertheless, this concept of waking spirits being tied to locations pertaining to their deaths is not limited to houses and the *larvae* that inhabit them. The ghost of Polydorus in Book III of Virgil's *Aeneid* demonstrates that Roman spirits could also be bound to other geographic locations. Polydorus' portrayal as a waking ghost is apparent in Aeneas' account of how he happened upon the spectre and his earthly body. After the siege of Troy, Aeneas tells of how he and the other surviving Trojans had set to building a fleet whereby they could leave their homeland and found a new one in Italy (*Aen.* 3.5-11). He recalls how he was preparing to make an offering to his mother, Venus, and to "the gods who bless new ventures," when he "tried to tear some green shoots from the brush to make a canopy for the altar with leafy boughs" (*Aen.*

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[191] *postquam deflexit in aream domus, repente dilapsa deserit comitem. desertus herbas et folia concerpta signum loco ponit. Postero die adit magistratus, monet ut illum locum effodi iubeant. inveniuntur ossa inserta catenis et implicita* (*Ep.* 7.27.10-11).

[192] *"hic habito"* (*Most.* 2.498).

[193] Although Apuleius (*Soc.* 15) describes *larvae* as being the restless ghosts who haunt houses, it is interesting to note that these two ghosts appear to have ownership of the houses. Plautus' Diapontius claims that the "dwelling place has been allotted to [him]," and that the living must now "move out from [there]" (*Most.* 2.498;503). In Pliny's story, he writes that "the house was… deserted, condemned to stand empty and wholly abandoned to the spectre" (*Ep.* 7.27.6). In these instances, the ghosts are not only presented as *larvae*, but it can also be argued that the concept of the spirits possessing the houses they haunt is an additional characteristic of such spectres.

3.19-25).[194] At this point, "a dreadful, ghastly sight, too strange for words, strikes [his] eyes" (*Aen*. 3.26).[195] What he sees is the gruesome and haphazard burial site of Polydorus' corpse. The fact that Aeneas mentions coming across the place in which Polydorus lies substantiates his being a waking ghost in the sense that dream-ghosts usually told the living where their bodies lay. Here, Aeneas discovers the cadaver first and only encounters the spirit thereafter.

The fact that Polydorus' spirit remains near his body further likens him to the ghost of the old man and Diapontius in the sense that he too is unable to leave the site of his death and enter the afterlife. Prior to laying eyes on Polydorus' body, Aeneas is met with the sight of "dark blood [which] oozes out and fouls the soil with filth" (*Aen*. 3.28-29).[196] It is only when Aeneas disturbs Polydorus' unfit burial that the spirit speaks out, telling Aeneas to "spare the body buried [there]," and to "spare [his] own pure hands" (*Aen*. 3.41-42).[197] Polydorus tells Aeneas that this shore is where his killers "impaled him, an iron planting of lances cover[ing] [his] body – now they sprout in stabbing spears!" (*Aen*. 3.45-46).[198] The mutilated and improperly buried state of Polydorus' body keeps his spirit from moving on and entering the underworld. As a result, his ghost is forced to remain in the living world.

It is also possible that the reason for his being bound to the vicinity in which his body lies is due to the lack of proper funerary rituals. As explained in Chapter 2, there is evidence that the Romans believed that the soul could not progress to the afterlife until the funerary processes were completed (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:137). In the interim, the soul could remain with a living relative, who would capture the soul with a kiss as it issued from the body along with the person's last breath (Toynbee, 1971:43; Retief and Cilliers, 2005:129;137). But since Polydorus was murdered by the Thracian king, there were no kin present to catch Polydorus' soul, and his spirit could not enter the underworld either on account of his not being properly buried. Therefore, it is possible that his spirit had no choice but to remain with his body. This same reasoning for Polydorus' connection to the place in which his body lies can also be applied to Diapontius and the ghost of the old man. In both of these cases, the spectres also appear to be victims of murder (thus disallowing the possibility of their souls being received

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[194] *sacra Dionaeae matri divisque ferebam auspicibus coeptorum operum, superoque nitentem caelicolum regi mactabam in litore taurum. forte fuit iuxta tumulus, quo cornea summo virgulta et densis hastilibus horrida myrtus. accessi viridemque ab humo convellere silvam conatus, ramis tegerem ut frondentibus aras* (*Aen*. 3.19-25).

[195] *horrendum et dictum video mirabile monstrum* (*Aen*. 3.26).

[196] *huic atro liquuntur sanguine guttae et terram tabo maculant* (*Aen*. 3.28-29).

[197] *iam parce sepulto, parce pias scelerare manus* (*Aen*. 3.41-42).

[198] *hic confixum ferrea texit telorum seges et iaculis increvit acutis* (*Aen*. 3.45-46).

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by kin) and inappropriate burials (which prevent them from entering Dis and result in their remaining in the living world as ghosts). It can be argued here that the concept of waking ghosts being restricted to certain locales pertaining to their deaths is not only linked to improper or incomplete funerary rituals, but that such instances are also indicative of violent or unexpected deaths that prevent such spirits from being caught by nearby kin as they leave their mortal bodies.

While the waking spectres of Diapontius, the old man, and Polydorus demonstrate belief that ghosts were confined to the place in which they had perished or where their corpses lay, the spirits of Virgil's Creusa and the angry ghosts from Book II of the *Fasti* present a somewhat different picture of phantasmal movements. However, before exploring the extent of the mobility attributed to these spirits, it must first be noted that they too approach the living as waking ghosts.

The spirit of Creusa is clearly portrayed as a waking ghost when Aeneas tells of how they had been separated in the flight from Troy and how he had returned to look for her (*Aen*. 2.735-749). Although Aeneas had gone in search of his living wife, what he found instead was "her stricken ghost" (*Aen*. 2.772).[199] The hero does not mention recovering her body but he does imply that the last time he saw her alive was before he had led his family out of the burning city; "I never set my eyes on her again" (*Aen*. 2.740).[200] This last line is said prior to his recollection of how he had encountered her ghost, and in this way, he differentiates between Creusa's form as he knew it in life, and as it appears to him as a manifestation in death. Indeed, Aeneas notes that Creusa's spectral form was larger than her living form had been (*Aen*. 2.772-773). In addition to noticing such differences in his wife between living and death, her deathly figure is further marked as a waking ghost when Aeneas says that her spirit slipped through his fingers, "quick as a dream in flight" (*Aen*. 2.793-794).[201] By comparing her departure to a dissipating dream, Aeneas indicates that her apparition was not a dream itself, but rather a reality that was merely dreamlike in that respect.

With regard to the angered spirits from Book II of the *Fasti*, their characterization as waking ghosts is also apparent. The spirits discussed here are those that were meant to be honoured during the Parentalia festival but were neglected on one occasion during a period of war: "But once upon a time, waging long wars with martial arms, they did neglect the All Souls' Days.

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[199] *infelix simulacrum* (*Aen*. 2.772).

[200] *nec post oculis est reddita nostris* (*Aen*. 2.740).

[201] *ter frustra comprensa manus effugit imago, par levibus ventis volucrique simillima somno* (*Aen*. 2.793-794).

The negligence was not unpunished" (*Fast*. 2.547-549).[202] Ovid explains that during this time, "the ancestral souls did issue from the tombs and… howl about the city streets and wide fields," in an effort to express their resentment over being so dishonoured (*Fast*. 2.551-554).[203] The anger of these spirits was demonstrated from the first day that the festival ought to have taken place until such time as their rites were eventually carried out (*Fast*. 2.549-556). The fact that these enraged spirits subjected Rome to their wrath for several days indicates that they were certainly not of the dream-ghost persuasion, but were true waking ghosts. Although they are not specifically described as having approached any particular member of the living, Ovid begins his narration of this case by saying, "'tis said," and goes on to use the phrase, "they say," on two more occasions (*Fast*. 2.549;551;554).[204] This suggests that the story came to him through oral tradition from those who had experienced or knew of someone who had experienced this spectral unrest. Here, these angered spirits are depicted not only as waking ghosts, but as waking ghosts who so tormented the negligent living that their outrage would stand as a warning for generations to come.

Turning now to the ways in which the aforementioned angry spirits and the ghost of Creusa differ from the other waking ghosts in terms of their range of mobility, it can be argued that these spectres are not restricted to such localised spaces as is the case with the ghosts of Diapontius, the old man, and Polydorus. Rather, it seems that Creusa and the dishonoured ghosts of the Parentalia have a much wider range of motion that extends to large areas and streets within their respective cities. In the example of Creusa, Aeneas meets her spirit when he calls for her in the streets and "madly rushe[s] from house to house" (*Aen*. 2.768-771).[205] However, Virgil does not make the place in which Creusa died explicit. As mentioned above, the last time Creusa is portrayed as being alive is when Aeneas recalls how his "wife trail[ed] on behind," as they hurried "along the pitch-dark paths" (*Aen*. 2.725).[206] It is only after Aeneas "[leaves] behind familiar paths, at a run down blind dead ends" that he realises his wife is no longer following him (*Aen*. 2.736-740).[207] From this, it can be deduced that Creusa could have

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[202] *at quondam, dum longa gerunt pugnacibus armis bella, Parentales deseruere dies. non impune fuit* (*Fast*. 2.547-549).

[203] *vix equidem credo: bustis exisse feruntur et tacitae questi tempore noctis avi, perque vias urbis latosque ululasse per agros deformes animas, volgus inane, ferunt* (*Fast*. 2.551-554).

[204] *nam dicitur* (*Fast*. 2.549); *feruntur* (*Fast*. 2.551); *ferunt* (*Fast*. 2.554).

[205] *ausus quin etiam voces iactare per umbram implevi clamore vias, maestusque Creusam nequiquam ingeminans iterumque iterumque vocavi. quaerenti et tectis urbis sine fine furenti* (*Aen*. 2.768-771).

[206] *pone subit coniunx. ferimur per opaca locorum* (*Aen*. 2.725)

[207] *namque avia cursu dum sequor et nota excedo regione viarum, heu misero coniunx fatone erepta Creusa substitit, erravitne via seu lapsa resedit, incertum* (*Aen*. 2.736-740).

fallen behind and been killed anywhere between the darkened paths and the unfamiliar ones. More than this, the word *locorum*, which Fagles (2010:100) translates as "paths" can also be translated as "places, neighbourhoods, regions, [or] quarters" (Whitaker, 2007).[208] If the latter translation is used, the scope of places in which Creusa could have died becomes much broader. It is perhaps because of this multitude of possible sites for her death that Creusa's ghost is not portrayed as being restricted to one specific area. In this regard, her sudden appearance as Aeneas dashes among the houses sets Creusa apart from the other waking spirits who are confined to a specific building or site.

Like Creusa, the spirits who were once neglected during the Parentalia are also presented as having a much wider area in which they are able to roam. Indeed, these ghosts are not only described as having been able to move about outside of the city, but they are also presented as leaving their tombs in order to traverse the streets and fields of Rome (*Fast*. 2.551-554). The activity of these ghosts beyond the city walls is indicated by "the funeral fires that burned without the city," while the mentions of "moan[s] in the hours of stilly night," and the "shadowy throng" demonstrates their movements within the city (*Fast*. 2.549-550;553-554).[209] Although these ghosts do share a degree of similarity with Creusa in terms of in their more expansive range of mobility, the circumstances under which the angered spirits roam the living world are different.

In the examples of Creusa, Polydorus, Diapontius, and the old man, a lack of proper burial and/or funerary rituals stand as the reasoning for these spirits' restlessness. However, the angered ghosts' presence in the living world is owed to the neglect of post-funerary rites – all of these spirits have already received the appropriate funerary rites and interment, as indicated by their "[issuing] from the tombs" (*Fast.* 2.551).[210] It can therefore be argued that since these ghosts are not *insepultum* and consequently prevented from entering Dis, they are not bound to the places in which their remains lie or to the places in which they died. Rather, it can be seen that these spirits had merely returned to the living world temporarily in order to receive their annual offerings. When the offerings were not made, the ghosts only remained in the living world in order to torment their surviving kin until such time as they were duly honoured. Thus, the circumstantial differences between the Parentalia ghosts and the other waking spirits in this

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[208] From *locum* (Whitaker, 2007).

[209] *nam dicitur omine ab isto Roma suburbanis incaluisse rogis* (*Fast*. 2.549-550);

perque vias urbis latosque ululasse per agros deformes animas, volgus inane, ferunt (*Fast*. 2.553-554).

[210] *bustis exisse* (*Fast*. 2.551).

discussion can be shown to highlight the ways in which appropriate funerary rites and proper inhumation can affect the extent to which the spirits of the dead can move about the living world.

This examination of the ways in which the spirits in my selected texts are portrayed as dream-ghosts and waking spectres not only demonstrates the two possible means of spectral approach, but the defining characteristics of each type of spirit also reveals the extent to which ghosts in the same category can vary. Dream-ghosts such as Diapontius and Remus can be shown as similar in their shared need to communicate with the living and in the way that both spirits are described as having caused their living recipients to wake. However, Diapontius' being a conjuration of Tranio's mind results in his presentation as a waking ghost as well. Among the waking ghosts, Diapontius, Polydorus, and the spectre of the old man are portrayed similarly in terms of how they are bound to the specific locations in which their mortal bodies lie. In contrast, Creusa and the enraged Parentalia spirits are not subjected to such restrictions of movement. Instead, an exploration of the context in which Creusa and the angry ghosts appear reveals that their wider range of movement may be attributed to circumstantial differences. In this way, the comparisons and contrasts made here demonstrate the complexity of the means by which ghosts were believed to have been able to approach the living in the Roman world.

3.3.2. The Dead and Their Interactions with the Living

In addition to their approaching the living either through dreams or during waking hours, the manifestations of the dead in my selection of texts can also be examined in terms of the ways in which they interact with their living receivers. Most commonly, these spirits can be shown to present themselves and interact with the living by appealing to the latter's sense of hearing, sight, and in some cases, touch. In this section, the *Mostellaria*'s ghost will be used again as the starting point on account of his being the chronologically earliest spirit, and therefore the most logical example with which to begin the discussion.

In Plautus' *Mostellaria*, Diapontius' interactions and attempts to communicate with the living are exclusively described through his various appeals to the receivers' sense of hearing. As discussed in the previous section, Diapontius is attributed with a voice that is capable of producing loud verbal utterances. This is indicated when Tranio tells Theopropides that the shout of "Hey, Tranio!" (*Most.* 2.515) had been an outburst from the ghost who is enraged by Theopropides' knocking on the door of the house. Indeed, when Tranio responds by pretending to tell the ghost that it was his master who was the source of the earlier knocking ("It was he

(Theopropides) who knocked!"), he further solidifies the implication that it had been Diapontius who had called out to him (*Most.* 2.508).[211] Diapontius' ability to interact with the living through sound is also presented when, after hearing Tranio relay the ghost's imagined speech, Theopropides exclaims in fear that "the door has creaked," thus implying that it was the ghost who moved the door (*Most.* 2.507).[212] In this case, Theopropides' statement not only demonstrates that Diapontius is successful in using sound to communicate with the living, but the fact that the sound comes from a door moving further indicates that the ghost is able to manipulate his surroundings in order to produce a noise by which he might draw the attention of the living. This auditory evidence given by Tranio (i.e.: the shouting, and the creaking of the door) presents Diapontius as a manifestation of the dead who is able to produce sound both verbally and externally[213] in order to interact with the living.

Since Diapontius is a fabrication of Tranio's, the portrayal of the ghost's dealings with the living is entirely dependent on the servant's descriptions of him. Although Tranio initially presents Diapontius as a dream-ghost who is only capable of speech, the noises from the party inside the house force Tranio to attribute Diapontius with the ability to appeal to the livings' sense of hearing through speech and the manipulation of objects. However, Diapontius' being a figment of the slave's imagination means that there are no instances in which he can be described as appealing to the livings' senses of sight and touch. In this regard, the lack of visual and tactile descriptions of Diapontius are logical. Nevertheless, Diapontius is not the only spectral character who is portrayed as interacting with the living predominantly through sound. The ghost of Polydorus in Book III of the *Aeneid* is also depicted as a spirit who employs sound as his primary means of communicating with the living.

When Aeneas first comes across Polydorus' corpse, he is alerted to the presence of his ghost by "a wrenching groan rising up from the deep mound, [and] a cry heaving into the air" (*Aen.* 3.39-40).[214] Following these sounds of anguish, the ghost speaks to Aeneas, telling him not to touch the "wretched flesh" of his corpse for fear he might soil his hands with the pollution of death (*Aen.* 2.41).[215] The spectre then continues to speak and identifies himself: "I am no stranger to you. I was born in Troy, and the blood you see is oozing from no tree… I am

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[211] *hicin percussit!* (*Most.* 2.508).

[212] *concrepuit foris* (*Most.* 2.507).

[213] Through his manipulation of external objects such as the door.

[214] *gemitus lacrimabilis imo auditor tumulo, et vox reddita fertur ad auris* (*Aen.* 3.39-40).

[215] *"quid miserum, Aenea, laceras?"* (*Aen.* 2.41).

Polydorus" (*Aen*. 3.42-45).[216] He then indicates that his unrest is due to the state in which his killers left his body: impaled by lances and improperly buried (*Aen*. 3.42-46). The combination of Polydorus' sonorous laments and his verbal identification demonstrates the manner in which this spirit interacts with the living character, Aeneas. Although he does not manipulate objects in his surroundings to create noise as Diapontius does, Polydorus' appeal to Aeneas through loud peals of sound (such as moans and cries) likens him to the *Mostellaria*'s ghost, who is also shown as being able to shout, or call out – "Hey, Tranio!" (*Most*. 2.515). While Polydorus does share these similarities with Diapontius in the way that he interacts with the living, his appeal to the livings' sense of hearing is different in that he not only employs it to communicate with Aeneas, but he can also be shown as manifesting himself through sound. Since there are no obvious visual or tactile descriptions of this spirit (and his interactions with Aeneas are chiefly verbal), Virgil's portrayal of him appears to be as a disembodied voice.[217]

Nevertheless, it must be mentioned that it is possible that Polydorus' ghost is visible to the living, especially since Aeneas reacts to his presence in the same way that he did when confronted by spirit of his wife:[218] "My hackles bristled, voice choked in my throat" (*Aen*. 2.774; 3.48).[219] However, without a written depiction of the physical appearance of Polydorus' ghost, his character description can only be derived from the ways in which he interacts through sound. The absence here of a visual description of Polydorus' ghost is not due to the confines of a lie as is the case with Diapontius. It must be noted, however, that Virgil does present visual imagery of Polydorus' corpse. It is arguable that Virgil's depiction of Polydorus' dead body as "wretched flesh," out of which "dark blood oozes… and fouls the soil," where iron lances "sprout [from it] in stabbing spears" (*Aen*. 3.28-29; 3.45-46)[220] is intended to be superimposed on his spectral form, since it was believed that one's shade reflected one's appearance at the point of death (Cumont, 1922:164-165). In this regard, it can be argued that Virgil's visual depiction of Polydorus' body may serve as a proxy for the description of his ghost, thus

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[216] *non me tibi Troia externum tulit aut cruor hic de stipte manat. heu crudelis terras, fuge litus avarum: nam Polydorus ego* (*Aen*. 3.42-45).

[217] Indeed, although uncommon, the concept of a spirit of the dead manifesting itself as a disembodied voice was not unheard of in the ancient Roman world. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, such an entity would have been considered a portent Felton (1999:xii).

[218] Creusa is described as interacting with Aeneas through visual means. Her methods of interaction will be discussed later in this section.

[219] *obstipui, steteruntque comae et vox faucibus haesit* (*Aen*. 2.774);

obstipui steteruntque comae et vox faucibus haesit (*Aen*. 3.48).

[220] *huic atro liquuntur sanguine guttae et terram tabo maculant* (*Aen*. 3.28-29);

hic confixum ferrea texit telorum seges et iaculis increvit acutis (*Aen*. 3.45-46).

allowing for the ghost to appeal to Aeneas' sense of sight in this manner. In light of this potential appeal to the living's visual senses, it can therefore be seen that Polydorus, although predominantly presented as interacting and manifesting himself through sound, may also possess the ability to communicate his trauma through the grotesque imagery of his mutilated form.

Thus, in the cases of Diapontius and Polydorus, their primary appeals to the livings' senses are done by means of sound-based interactions; namely through a combination of loud outbursts of noise, a manipulation of surrounding objects, and verbal communication. However, the other spirits in my selected texts who can also be presented in terms of their application of sound are not attributed with the ability to interact verbally. Instead, the angered Parentalia ghosts and the spectre of the old man in Pliny's *Letter* 7.27 are shown to use sound in order to communicate their anguish exclusively by means of ululations and noise-producing objects.

The sonorous interactions of Ovid's neglected spirits are demonstrated clearly when the poet notes how they did "make their moan in the hours of stilly night… [and] howl about the city streets and wide fields" (*Fast*. 2.552-553).[221] Ovid's use of *ululasse* in reference to their wailing is particularly effective in this instance as the onomatopoeic value of the word echoes the sound of howling (*Fast*. 2.553). This then heightens the reality of their portrayal as ghosts who are able to draw the attention of the living through sound. In addition to this, the fact that these spirits made such loud noises during the "hours of stilly night" further highlights the effectiveness of the way in which these ghosts employed sound; their moans and cries would have been amplified in contrast to the silence of the night (*Fast*. 2.552). It can be argued that these angered spirits not only interact with the living by expressing their displeasure through sound, but that they are also able to increase the effectiveness of such appeals to the sense of hearing by creating noise at such advantageous moments as the middle of the night.

Although he is also shown to manifest visually, the spirit of the manacled old man in the second story of Pliny's *Letter* 7.27 can be shown as appealing to the living people's sense of sound in a similar manner to the angry Parentalia ghosts. He too creates noise late at night when all is quiet: "At the dead of night the clanking of iron and, if you listened carefully, the rattle of chains could be heard, some way off at first, and then close at hand" (*Ep*. 7.27.5).[222] This announcement of the ghost's presence through sound is repeated when Athenodorus decides to

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[221] *et tacitae questi tempore noctis avi, perque vias urbis latosque ululasse per agros* (*Fast*. 2.552-553).

[222] *per silentium noctis sonus ferri, et si attenderes acrius, strepitus vinculorum longius primo, deinde e proximo reddebatur* (*Ep*. 7.27.5).

wait for the ghost: "At first there was nothing but the general silence of night; then came the clanking of iron and dragging of chains" (*Ep*. 7.27.8).[223] In this way, Pliny portrays the ghost as interacting with the living by using the iron and chains in which he is bound to create noise which alerts the inhabitants to his presence. Although the fetters that this phantom rattles are spectral themselves (since they are merely part of his image in death), they are still considered external objects in the sense that the ghost has to manipulate them in order to produce sound. As mentioned before, this spirit does not use sound in the form of verbal communication. It must also be noted here that he does not emit any other kind of sound (such as a moan, or a howl) either. The shaking and dragging of chains are the only means by which the old man appeals to the tenants' sense of hearing.

Pliny's use of nouns such as *sonus*,[224] and *strepitus*,[225] and verbal forms like *concuti*[226] and *insonabat*[227] further demonstrate this spirit's attempts to communicate the sorry nature of his corpse to the living (*Ep*. 7.27.5;8;9). The ghost's use of sound as a means of interacting with the living also allows for Athenodorus to take note of the way in which he moves: "The noise grew louder, came nearer, was heard in the doorway, and then inside the room" (*Ep*. 7.27.8).[228] The fact that the chains move along with the ghost highlight his inability to extricate himself from his bindings. Indeed, his being physically restrained by the manacles is clearly demonstrated when Pliny describes how the spirit "moved slowly, as if weighed down by the chains" (*Ep*. 7.27.10).[229] This illustration of how the old man's movements are marked by the sound of his chains rattling is interesting in that the same devices he uses in order to communicate with the living are also the source of his anguish as a spirit of the dead. His attempts to use his chains to interact with Athenodorus are made apparent when the phantom "[stands] rattling [his] chains over [Athenodorus'] head," after initially beckoning to the philosopher and being told "to wait a little" (*Ep*. 7.27.9).[230] The old man's manipulation of his chains to produce a noise by which Athenodorus' attention is drawn can therefore be compared to Diapontius' causing a door to creak as he instils a greater sense of fear in Theopropides

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[223] *initio, quale ubique, silentium noctis; dein concuti ferrum, vincula moveri* (*Ep*. 7.27.8).

[224] "Noise, sound" (Whitaker, 2007).

[225] "Noise, racket, sound, din, crash" (Whitaker, 2007).

[226] "To shake violently, brandish, [or] strike a sound" (Whitaker, 2007).

[227] "To make a loud noise, sound, resound" (Whitaker, 2007).

[228] *tum crebescere fragor, adventare et iam ut in limine, iam ut intra limen audiri* (*Ep*. 7.27.8).

[229] *ibat illa lento gradu quasi gravis vinculis* (*Ep*. 7.27.10).

[230] *hic contra ut paulum exspectaret manu significat rursusque ceris et stilo incumbit. illa scribentis capiti catenis insonabat* (*Ep*. 7.27.9).

(*Most.* 2.507). Pliny's spirit's timeous communications through sound in the silence of the night also links him to the angry ghosts from Book II of the *Fasti*. Although the old man does not moan or howl as the Parentalia spirits do, the late Polydorus issues wails and cries, and on this ground, the angered spirits can be shown as having this in common with the ghost of Polydorus. It must be noted here that while the ghosts of Creusa and Remus can also be shown as communicating with the living through verbal means, their appeals to the sense of hearing are not their primary means of interaction.

In Creusa's case, much emphasis is placed on her visual communications with Aeneas. Her first interaction with her husband as a spirit of the dead is demonstrated when Aeneas narrates how he had been running among the abandoned houses of Troy in search of her when, "abruptly, right before [his] eyes, [he] saw her stricken ghost" (*Aen.* 2.772-773).[231] In this instance, Virgil makes use of the word *infelix* to describe the nature of Creusa's ghost (*Aen.* 2.772). Translated as "stricken" by Fagles (2010:101), the notion of her being in a wounded or incapacitated condition is implied. In addition to this, the ill-fated queen, Dido, is frequently described as *infelix Dido* (both in life and in death) throughout the *Aeneid*,[232] and so the use of this word to describe Creusa further infers a similarly tragic and bloody end.[233] Indeed, Virgil presents Dido's phantom as bearing a "wound still fresh" (*Aen.* 6.450)[234] and Ovid portrays her spectral image as having "unkempt hair dabbled in blood" (*Fast.* 3.640).[235] By applying a term to Creusa that is also associated with Dido, Virgil effectively likens Creusa's visible manifestation to that of the tragic Phoenician queen's. It can be argued that Creusa's ghost still bears the bloody evidence of her death. By manifesting in a visible form, Creusa is able to appeal to Aeneas' sense of sight and thus communicate her fate to him in this manner.

In addition to this, the spirit of Creusa is also portrayed in terms of size: "Larger than life, the life [Aeneas had] known so well" (*Aen.* 2.772-773).[236] According to Ganiban (2008:109), the

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[231] *quaerenti et tectis urbis sine fine furenti infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbra Creusae visa mihi ante oculos* (*Aen*. 2.771-773).

[232] In fact, she is described as *infelix* as early as Book I when she first accepts Aeneas as her guest. In this instance, Virgil marks her as "tragic" in reference to her fate: "… tragic Dido, doomed to a plague about to strike…" (*praecipue infelix, pesti devota futurae, expleri mentem nequit ardescitque tuendo Phoenissa, et pariter puero donisque movetur*) (*Aen*. 1.712-714).

[233] When Dido falls upon Aeneas' sword in Book IV, the bloodiness of her death is clearly described: "All at once, in the midst of her last words, her women see her doubled over the sword, the blood foaming over the blade, her hands splattered red" (*dixerat, atque illam media inter talia ferro conlapsam aspiciunt comites, ensemque cruore spumantem sparsasque manus*) (*Aen.* 4.663-665).

[234] *inter quas Phoenissa recens a vulnere Dido errabat silva in magna* (*Aen*. 6.450-451).

[235] *ante torum visa est adstare sororis squalenti Dido sanguinulenta coma* (*Fast*. 3.639-640).

[236] *atque ipsius umbra Creusa visa mihi ante oculos et nota maior imago* (*Aen*. 2.772-773).

Roman dead were often thought to be of superhuman size. In this regard, the greatness of Creusa's spectral form stands as a further means of visual communication through which her death is made clear to Aeneas. However, this is not the only possible reason behind Creusa's large manifestation. Creusa goes on to tell Aeneas that "a long exile is [his] fate [and that] the vast plains of the sea are [his] to plow until [he] [reaches] Hesperian land… There great joy and a kingdom are [his] to claim, and a queen to make [his] wife" (*Aen*. 2.780-784).[237] The fact that her form is described as inhumanly large in combination with her prophetic words about Aeneas' future therefore presents Creusa as a warning apparition (Felton, 1999:31). In light of this, it can be argued that Creusa's larger than life form communicates to Aeneas (through his sense of sight) her recent death as well as her prophetic purpose.

Although the phantom of the old man in Pliny's *Letter* 7.27 does not serve any predictive purpose as Creusa's does, the way in which he manifests himself visually so as to communicate the unfortunate manner of his death is similar. Where Creusa's form is described as "stricken" or *infelix* (*Aen*. 2.772), the appearance of the ghost in Pliny's story is also portrayed as pitiful: "The spectre of an old man, emaciated and filthy, with a long flowing beard and hair on end, wearing fetters on his legs and shaking the chains on his wrists" (*Ep*. 7.27.5).[238] In the case of this spirit, it can be shown that his appeals to the living's senses are both auditory and visual. The way in which the ghost of the old man interacts with the living through a visible manifestation is demonstrated when, upon seeing the spectre with his own eyes, Athenodorus "recognise[s] the ghost [that was] described to him" before he agreed to rent the house (*Ep*. 7.27.8).[239] The fact that the spirit's appearance was described to Athenodorus indicates that there existed within the local community a well-established knowledge of the ghost's visual characteristics. This familiarity with the old man's image not only suggests that he had attempted to interact with the living through a visual manifestation on several occasions previously, but the fact that Athenodorus is able to recognise him from what he had been told further shows the great extent to which the ghost's previous appeals to the living's sense of sight had been both successful and notable.

Worth mentioning here is that the old man's spirit leads Athenodorus to the place in which his body lay, and when it is unearthed, the corpse's physicality is described: "There they found

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[237] *longa tibi exsilia et vastum maris aequor arandum, et terram Hesperiam venies, ubi Lydius arva inter opima virum leni fluit agmine Thybris: illic res laetae regnumque et regia coniunx parta tibi* (*Aen*. 2. 780-784).

[238] *mox adparebat idolon, senex macie et squalor confectus, promissa barba horrenti capillo, cruribus compedes, manibus catenas gerebat quatiebatque* (*Ep*. 7.27.5).

[239] *respicit, videt agnoscitque narratam sibi effigiem* (*Ep*. 7.27.8).

bones, twisted round with chains, which were left bare and corroded by the fetters when time and the action of soil had rotted away the body" (*Ep.* 7.27.11).[240] It can be demonstrated here that the depiction of the old man's bones is echoed by the visual manifestation of his spirit. The withered form of the ghost is reflected in the way that the flesh of his body had decomposed and the iron had corroded his bones, while the ever-present shackles the ghost bears are shown to reflect the physical fetters that are wrapped around his corpse. This correspondence between the state of the body and the ghost's visual manifestation can be used to support the argument for the Romans' belief that one's spirit mirrored one's image at the point of death (Cumont, 1922:164-165). Where it can be argued that Virgil's description of Polydorus' corpse serves as a proxy for the visual portrayal of his ghost, the visual form of the ghost of the old man in Pliny's letter undoubtedly reflects the state of his corpse. Here, the old man's gory spectral image serves as a visual indication of the dismal state of his body.

The ghost of Remus in Ovid's *Fasti* can also be shown to reflect the bloody nature of his death through his visual manifestation. When Remus appears to his parents in their slumber, he is described as "the gory ghost of Remus" (*Fast.* 5.457).[241] In this instance, the word *cruenta* ("gory") can also be translated as "bloody, bleeding, blood-red, [or] discharging blood" (Whitaker, 2007; Morwood, 2008:65). This first depiction of Remus' ghostly form is similar then to that of Creusa's (*infelix simulacrum*), thus marking him as gruesome and bloodied, and also possibly still bearing the wound that killed him. Since Faustulus and Acca were aware of how Remus had died, the visibility of his lethal wound does not serve to communicate the manner of his death to his parents. Rather, this grisly display can be argued as being purely a representation of Remus' spirit as it looked at the moment of his death.

In fact, Ovid's narration of Remus' death in Book IV of the *Fasti* presents a complementary illustration: "Celer struck the rash man (Remus) with a shovel. Covered with blood, Remus sank on the stony ground" (*Fast.* 4.843-844).[242] Here, Remus' bloody manifestation appeals to his parents' sense of sight in order to communicate his unfortunate state in death. This notion is reinforced when he says to his parents, "Look on me, who shared the half, the full half of your tender care, behold what I am come to, and what I was of late!" (*Fast.* 5.459-460).[243] It must be noted here that Remus then reemphasizes his gory appearance through the verbal

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[240] *inveniuntur ossa inserta catenis et implicita, quae corpus aevo terraque putrefactum nuda et exesa reliquerat vinculis* (*Ep.* 7.27.11).

[241] *umbra cruenta Remi* (*Fast.* 5.457).

[242] *rutro Celer occupat ausum; ille permit duram sanguinulentus humum* (*Fast.* 4.843-844).

[243] *"en ego dimidium vestri parsque altera voti, cernite, sim qualis, qui modo qualis eram!"* (*Fast.* 5.459-460).

expression of his hope that his killer will suffer the same unpleasant posthumous form that he does: "Ferocious Celer, mayest thou yield up thy cruel soul through wounds, and pass like me all bloody beneath the earth!" (*Fast.* 5.469-470). [244] Remus' spirit therefore not only interacts with his parents through his visual manifestation, but he also makes use of speech in order to draw further attention to his unfortunate lot.

Heretofore, the ghosts who have been presented as interacting with the living through their sense of sight have been individual spirits focused on communicating information specific to their circumstances (such as Creusa relaying her death and prophesying her husband's future, or the old man alerting Athenodorus to his miserable resting place). The neglected Parentalia spirits, however, differ from the previous spectres in the sense that their manifestations and appeals to the livings' ability to see are presented through the ghosts as a cumulative whole. These spirits are collectively described as "hideous ghosts," and "a shadowy throng" (*Fast.* 2.554).[245] The individual appearance of each ghost is not mentioned, and so the manner in which each soul died is not reflected here. Instead, the spirits are presented as a group united by their common anger over the neglect of their post-funerary rites. Because the ghosts share the same reason for haunting the living world, their depiction as a crowd (*volgus*) is fitting. Moreover, the use of *deformes* in conjunction with *animas* can be shown as connoting "misshapen [or] ugly" (Whitaker, 2007) visual manifestations. It can be argued then that this portrayal of the spirits as unseemly serves as a means by which the ghosts are able to frighten the living into propitiating them while simultaneously ensuring that the consequences of such negligence are not forgotten. Indeed, the vast multitude of such "hideous ghosts" only serves to increase the effectiveness of such a terrifying sight (*Fast.* 2.554). It can be seen that the portrayal of these angered spirits as a group not only presents them as sharing a common purpose, but the fact that they are so numerous and described as grotesque in their visual manifestation further enhances the success of their communications with the living through vision.

Nonetheless, the visual and auditory appeals exercised by these unhappy spirits are not the only means by which they can be shown as interacting with the living; there is also a possibility of their being able to appeal to the living's sense of touch. It is important to remember here that in terms of tangibility, the Romans believed the soul to be weightless like the wind or a breath

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[244] *saeve Celer, crudelem animam per volnera reddas, utque ego, sub terras sanguinulentus eas* (*Fast.* 5.469-470).

[245] *deformes animas, volgus inane* (*Fast.* 2.554).

(Cumont, 1922:164-166). In the *Fasti*, the way in which Ovid describes the visual manifestation of the spectres discussed above – "hideous ghosts, a shadowy throng" (*Fast*. 2.554) – can also be interpreted as a representation of their intangibility. *Deformes* can also be interpreted in conjunction with the description of the crowd of spirits as *inane*. Although Frazer (1996:97) translates *deformes* as "hideous," and *inane* as "shadowy," these words can also be translated as "lacking definite shape," and "empty, void, [or] hollow," respectively (Whitaker, 2007; Morwood, 2008:71;121). Here then, that which can be used as a visual description of the malcontent ghosts can also be used to demonstrate their insubstantial form. While Ovid does not describe an instance in which these spirits slip out of the livings' grasp like wind, the implication here is that if the living were to have attempted to touch these spirits, their being hollow and shapeless would have resulted in the living merely feeling the ghosts rush away like a breeze. Nevertheless, these spirits can still be shown as interacting with the tactile senses of the living in the sense that they, like the ghostly barbers in Pliny's *Letter* 7.27, do leave behind tangible evidence of their having been present. In this case, the charred remains of the "funeral fires that burned without the city," serve as testament to the aftermath of the Parentalia spirits' wrath (*Fast*. 549-550).[246] It can therefore be argued that such physical debris left by the ghosts not only appeals to the livings' tactile senses, but also stands as yet another (material) reminder of the repercussions of neglecting the dead's due rites.

In addition to this instance of tactile interaction, the spirits of Creusa and Remus can also be examined in terms of their tangibility – or lack thereof. In the case of Creusa, her appeal to the livings' sense of touch draws on the concept of the soul as light and insubstantial, only felt as a rush of air. Creusa's tactile interaction with Aeneas is seen when she concludes her prophetic speech, and Aeneas recounts how he despairingly reached out in attempt to embrace her ghost: "Dissolving into the empty air she left me now. Three times I tried to fling my arms around her neck, three times I embraced – nothing… her phantom sifting through my fingers, light as wind, quick as a dream in flight" (*Aen*. 2.790-794).[247] Aeneas' statement that he grasped "nothing" supports the argument regarding the intangibility of spirits. Yet when he compares Creusa's fleeing ghost to the lightness of wind, he indicates that he did indeed feel her spirit slip through his fingers, if only as a soft breeze. In light of this, it can be argued that Creusa's phantom does interact with Aeneas through a very subtle appeal to his sense of touch. The fact

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[246] *nam dicitur omine ab isto Roma suburbanis incaluisse rogis* (*Fast*. 2.549-550).

[247] *haec ubi dicta dedit, lacrimantem et multa volentem dicere deseruit, tenuisque recessit in auras. ter frustra comprensa manus effugit imago, par levibus ventis volucrique simillima somno* (*Ae*n. 2.790-794).

that this brief moment of touch occurs just as Creusa's spirit is about to depart suggests that her description as a passing breath of wind is reminiscent of the soul exiting the body along with the final exhale. In this respect, it can be argued that Creusa's breath-like parting is representative of the final moment of death.

While differing from the angered ghosts of the *Fasti* in the way that she appeals to the living's sense of touch, the spirit of Creusa can be likened to the ghost of Remus in the sense that he too slips from the embrace of his surviving loved ones when he withdraws from the living world. Faustulus and Acca are described as having "yearned to embrace him and stretched forth their arms; [but] the slippery shade escaped the clasping hands" (*Fast*. 5.475-476).[248] The word *lubrica* is of interest here as it can not only be translated as "slippery", but it can also be interpreted as "sinuous [or] deceitful" (Whitaker, 2007; Morwood, 2008:148). The connotation of deceit or trickery in this description of the ghost further emphasizes the intangibility of his manifestation in the sense that Remus' spirit appears corporeal, and yet it is insubstantial and cannot be grasped. In this way, Remus' intangibility is demonstrated. However, this presentation of his insubstantial form is where his similarities with Creusa cease. Where Creusa's spirit is compared to wind as she evades Aeneas' grasp, Remus' ghost is not portrayed as manifesting as any form of air movement which can be felt by the living. While it is conceivable that his parents did feel his spirit rush away (especially since his departure is so similar to that of Creusa's), Ovid does not include such details, and so Remus' interaction with the living through touch on this level can only be described as within the realm of possibility.

Through this discussion of the ways in which the spirits in my selected texts interact with the living, it can be determined that these manifestations of the dead not only possess the ability to appeal to their percipients' senses of hearing, sight, and touch, but that they are also able to do so in such a way that their needs or desires are effectively communicated. In the cases of ghosts like Creusa and the dissatisfied Parentalia ghosts, all three of the discussed senses are engaged. Other examples, such as Diapontius and Polydorus, demonstrate spectral interactions through one predominant method. From these explorations, it can be shown that the spirits of the dead in the Roman world were able to use such auditory tools as speech, moaning or crying, or the manipulation of surrounding objects to capture the attention of the living. Additionally, the visual manifestations of some spirits depict such terribly gruesome sights to the living that the ways in which death occurred is undeniably apparent. Moreover, it can also be argued that a

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[248] *mandantem amplecti cupiunt et bracchia tendunt: lubrica presantes effugit umbra manus* (*Fast*. 5. 475-476).

selection of these spectres also make subtle appeals to their receivers' tactile sense. Thus, it can be concluded that each of the spirits examined here is successful in conveying their communicative purposes through their appeals to the senses of the living.

3.4. Theme and Motif

The comparative discussion of the ghosts featured in my selection of works can also be considered in terms of the similarities and differences that are found in these texts' presentation of various themes and motifs. Each work features a vast range of themes and motifs, including the central theme of Aeneas' *pietas*[249] in the *Aeneid*, and the comedic knocking[250] motif in the *Mostellaria*, to name but a few. However, the theme and motif that will explored here are those which most prominently pertain to death in the Roman world. Here, theme is defined as an overarching idea that encompasses a work of literature or art, while a motif is considered to be a recurring pattern, idea, or event, that reinforces the theme.[251] In this section, the unfortunate manners in which death occurs, as well as the resulting spectres, will be explored in terms of the overarching theme of "Tragic Death". The supporting motif of "Laying the Ghost to Rest" complements the Tragic Death theme; this will also be considered in terms of the parallels and contrasts seen in the ways in which the various ghosts are laid to rest, or propitiated.

3.4.1. Tragic Death

In the selection of texts pertaining to the restless spirits of the dead examined here, the manner in which such spirits' mortal lives ended is more often than not described as being unfortunate; in some instances, death is brought about through violence or murder, whereas in others, a form of betrayal results in a person's demise. The prevalence of such ill-fated deaths in the selected texts therefore indicates the theme of Death. In this section, such instances of death can be refined as "tragic" on the grounds that they would have been considered unfortunate and undesirable by the ancient Romans.[252] Following this definition, the resulting theme of Tragic Death is presented. This theme can be found in each of the works selected for discussion. The prevalence of this theme in my selection of works is not surprising since those who died tragic deaths in the ancient Roman world were most liable to return as restless spirits. Examples of

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[249] Virgil repeatedly refers to Aeneas as *pius Aeneas*. This theme runs throughout the epic and is best explained as the defining characteristic of the Roman hero (Harris and Platzner, 2004:880-881). Aeneas is shown to be *pius* through his selfless actions which are performed for the greater good of his family and gods (Ganiban, 2009:12).

[250] In Roman adaptations of Greek comedies (known as *comoedia palliata*), the motif of repetitive knocking was a common feature designed to create a comedic effect (Felton, 1999:59).

[251] For example, the Disney renditions of classic fairytales like *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) have the overarching theme of Love, and this theme is then reinforced by the recurring motif of Prince Charming performing True Love's Kiss.

[252] In addition to being murdered, killed with violence, or betrayed through a deadly violation of *fas omne*, an untimely death is also considered to be tragic in this section due to the dismal consequences such an end held for the immortal soul. These consequences are made apparent in the forthcoming discussion of Diapontius' death.

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the tragic forms of death to be explored here are those in which the deceased has been a victim of murder, a violent end, a heinous betrayal, or an untimely demise.

The two most obvious instances of murder in my selection of texts are the cases of Diapontius and Polydorus. The parameters for murder in this section can be defined as the unlawful killing of another person. Diapontius' circumstances clearly indicate that his death was a criminal act. He not only marks his death as murder but he further calls his killer a criminal: "My host murdered me here and he secretly put me underground in this house without due rites, for the sake of gold, the criminal" (*Most.* 2.501-503).[253] This description of Diapontius' killer as *scelestus* solidifies an earlier discussion between Tranio and Theopropides of the supposed crime that was committed in the house. This earlier account of Diapontius' death occurs when Tranio tells Theopropides that "an atrocious murder has been committed" (*Most.* 2.475).[254] Tranio reiterates this accusation several times thereafter in order to persuade his master of the horrors that had occurred within the house: "I'm telling you, a crime was committed, long ago already, an old and ancient one… A host overpowered his guest and murdered him; the one, I think, who sold you this house" (*Most.* 2.476;479-480).[255] Tranio's use of words such as *scelus* ("crime") and *necavit* ("murdered") is echoed in Diapontius' speech. Here, Tranio not only attempts to create a degree of consistency in his tale, but he further cements the idea that Diapontius died as a result of the criminal act of murder.

However, Tranio also describes this crime using the term *caedis* in reference to the killing (*Most*. 2.475). While this word does denote "murder" in De Melo's (2010:365) translation,[256] it can also be translated as "slaughter, massacre, [or] blood/gore" (Whitaker, 2007; Morwood, 2008:34). Thus, Tranio's use of this word also provides connotations of a violent and bloody murder. Moreover, the repeated verb *necavit*[257] (*Most.* 2.479;481;501), further indicates that the manner in which Diapontius was killed was violent in the sense that the noun form of this word (*nex*) can be understood as meaning "violent death" (Morwood, 2008:165). In the case of Diapontius, he is not only an undeniable victim of murder, but he is also shown to have been

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[253] *hospes me hic necavit isque me defodit insepultum clam [ibidem] in hisce aedibus, scelestus, auri causa* (*Most.* 2.501-503).

[254] *capitalis caedis facta est* (*Most.* 2.475).

[255] *scelus, inquam, factum est iam diu, antiquom et vetus* (*Most.* 2.476;479-480);

hospes necavit hospitem captum manu; iste, ut ego opinor, qui has tibi aedis vendidit (*Most.* 2.480).

[256] "An atrocious murder has been committed" (*Most.* 2.475).

[257] "He murdered…" (*Most.* 2.479;481;501).

killed in a violent manner.[258] In these ways, it can be seen that Diapontius' death is a clear indication of the theme of Tragic Death in the *Mostellaria* on more than one level. Furthermore, when the ghost tells Philolaches that he cannot enter the underworld "because [he] lost [his] life before [his] time" (*Most.* 2. 499-500),[259] the additional element of an untimely death is presented along with murder and violence in this demonstration of the Tragic Death theme.

The ways in which Diapontius embodies the theme of Tragic Death through his murderous and violent end are echoed in the case of Polydorus. In addition to the oozing blood and protruding spears that mark Polydorus' body, his fate is described further when Aeneas recalls how Polydorus came to such a terrible end. After Polydorus had gone to the King of Thrace in order to safeguard the treasures of Troy, Aeneas narrates how the king had already sided with Agamemnon and so "hack[ed] Polydorus down and commandeer[ed] the gold" (*Aen.* 3.53-56).[260] In this instance, Polydorus' death can be seen as unlawful on the grounds that he was killed for the sake of gold, just as Diapontius was. Where Diapontius names his killer s*celestus* for such an act, it can be argued that the Thracian king's killing of Polydorus was just as criminal. Indeed, Aeneas remarks that by joining Agamemnon and killing Polydorus, the king, who was supposed to be an ally of Troy, effectively "breaks all human laws" (*Aen.* 3.53-55).[261] The Thracian king is guilty of violating the obligations of both kinship (as Priam's ally) and of hospitality (as Polydorus' host). This breaking of such a sacred law further serves to emphasize the criminal way in which Polydorus was killed.

As for the violent manner in which Polydorus was murdered, there is no question about the viciousness with which he was stabbed to death by spears: "an iron planting of lances covered [his] body" (*Aen.* 3.45-46).[262] It can therefore be seen that the death of Polydorus is not only similar to that of Diapontius' in the way that both victims were murdered for their gold, but the violent nature of their deaths further unites these spirits under the theme of Tragic Death. The tragic natures of Diapontius' and Polydorus' deaths are further highlighted by the fact that, once properly buried, they will still be prevented from reaching the ultimate destination of Dis: the Elysian Fields. Instead, these ill-fated souls will merely cross the River Acheron and come

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[258] While violence is often associated with murder, it is not a necessarily a defining characteristic of the act. There are manners in which a person can be murdered non-violently, including such methods as poisoning, or being deprived of essential needs such as food or water by a captor.

[259] *nam me Accheruntem recipere Orcus noluit, quia praemature vita careo* (*Most.* 2.499-500).

[260] *Polydorum obtruncat, et auro vi potitur* (*Aen.* 3.55-56).

[261] *ille, ut opes fractae Teucrum et Fortuna recessit, res Agamemnonias victriciaque arma secutus fas omne abrumpit* (*Aen.* 3.53-55).

[262] *hic confixum ferrea texit telorum seges et iaculis increvit acutis* (*Aen.* 3.45-46).

to rest in the Fields of Mourning. Indeed, as mentioned previously, Aeneas' journey through the underworld in Book VI of the *Aeneid* reveals that Polydorus' brother Deiphobus, who met a similarly brutal end by betrayal, is doomed to spend eternity in the outer Fields of Mourning with the bloodied heroes of war – despite the fact that Aeneas had performed the appropriate funerary rites (*Aen.* 6.494-509). In light of this, the unfortunate manners in which Diapontius' and Polydorus' lives ended are not only tragic in themselves as undesirable deaths, but the fact that such deaths also dictate sorrowful circumstances in the hereafter further emphasizes the woeful theme presented by fates of these spirits.

Tragic Death as a theme is not only present in the cases of Diapontius and Polydorus, however. The details of Creusa's ghost indicate that the manner of her death was tragic as well. As mentioned in section 3.3.2, the visual appearance of Creusa' spirit is telling. Although she does not reveal to Aeneas how she came to be a manifestation of the dead, her description as "stricken" (Fagles, 2010:101) indicates (through its connotations of being in an unpleasant condition or a victim of ill-fortune) that her death was likely to have been bloody and violent. In Creusa's case, it cannot be said for certain whether or not her death was murder. However, it is plausible that she was murdered by one of the invading Greeks. Indeed, when Aeneas returns to his house (in case his wife had gone back there in the confusion of the seige) he finds that "the Greeks [had] flooded in, seized the entire place" (*Aen.* 2.756-757).[263] The visible presence of "ruthless Ulysses guarding all [the] loot," and the other "Greeks, piling high the plunder [and] children and trembling mothers rounded up in a long, endless line" (*Aen.* 2.761-767)[264] further increases the probability of Creusa's having been caught by the Greeks and murdered.[265]

Nevertheless, it is also possible that Creusa died in the fires that burned the city, or was crushed by a collapsing building. The mortal danger through which the Trojans fled is clearly illustrated through Aeneas' depiction of the blazing city: "Devouring fire whipped by the winds goes churning into the rooftops, flames surging over them, scorching blasts raging up the sky" (*Aen.*

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[263] *inde domum, si forte pedem, si forte tulisset, me refero: inruerant Danai et tectum omne tenebant* (*Aen.* 2.756-757).

[264] *et iam porticibus vacuis Iunonis asylo custodes lecti Phoenix et dirus Ulixes praedam adservabant. huc undique Troïa gaza incensis erepta adytis, mensaeque deorum crateresque auro solidi, captivaque vestis congeritur. pueri et pavidae longo ordine matres stant circum* (*Aen.* 2.761-767).

[265] It must be mentioned here that it is not possible for Creusa to be among the other women and children because her ghost tells Aeneas that she will not "go as a slave to some Greek matron" (*Aen.* 2.785-787) as the others will be forced to do.

2.758-759).[266] Here, a degree of uncertainty surrounds the precise manner of Creusa's death. However, this does not mean that her death does not support the theme of Tragic Death. While it cannot be determined whether she was murdered or perished in the flames of Troy, her death can still be marked as potentially violent. More than this, her death can also be seen as untimely (since she was not elderly) and therefore all the more unfortunate. In this regard, her youthful departure from life also contributes to the fulfilment of the overarching Tragic Death theme.

Creusa's spirit goes on to tell Aeneas that "the gods forbid [him] to take [her] with [him]" (*Aen*. 2.777-779).[267] She repeats this sentiment again before she disappears, saying, "The Great Mother of Gods detains me on these shores" (*Aen*. 2.788).[268] Through these words, it can also be argued that Creusa's death is an act of divine will. Since Aeneas is ultimately destined to wed the Italian Lavinia (*Aen*. 2.783-784), fate necessitates Creusa's demise. While death as a result of divine intervention is not among the typical factors of a tragic death (as it is defined at the beginning of this section), the fact that Creusa describes herself as being "detained" (*detinet*) on the shores of Troy suggests that she is forcibly kept from following her husband in life. Therefore, this separation by death not only falls under the theme of Tragic Death, but it also recalls a similarly poignant tragedy of spousal separation through an untimely demise: *Orpheus and Eurydice*.[269] Although Orpheus ventures into the underworld in order to retrieve his wife where Aeneas does not, Eurydice and Creusa are united by their similar entrapment and separation from their husbands by death. Through this comparison, the theme of tragedy in death can be seen clearly in the case of Creusa.

Like Creusa, the death of the old man whose spirit features in Pliny's *Letter* 7.27 also carries a degree of uncertainty regarding its nature; the old man's spirit does not speak, and so the exact details of his demise are not known. However, from the way in which his remains are described, it is arguable that this elderly man was murdered. While Pliny does not specify that this was the way of the old man's death, the fact that his bones were discovered to be "twisted round

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[266] *ilicet ignis edax summa ad fastigia vento volvitur; exsuperant flammae, furit aestus ad auras* (*Aen*. 2.758-759).

[267] *non haec sine numine divum eveniunt; nec te comitem hinc asportare Creusam fas, aut ille sinit superi regnator Olympi* (*Aen*. 2.777-779).

[268] *sed me magna deum genetrix his detinet oris* (*Aen*. 2.788).

[269] According to Ovid's telling of the myth in his *Metamorphoses*, Orpheus and Eurydice were barely married when the bride, walking through grass, received a lethal bite from a snake (*Met*. 10.9-10). In his grief, Orpheus enters the underworld and persuades Orcus and Proserpina through song to return his wife to life. So moved by his lament, "the ruler's wife could not bear to refuse his prayer nor could he who rules the depths, and they called Eurydice" (*Met*. 10.46-48). Orpheus is told that he may regain his wife on the condition that he leads her from the underworld without looking back at her. Alas, on the very threshold of Dis, Orpheus "[turns] his eyes back lovingly, and at once [Eurydice] [slips] back" (*Met*. 10.57) and succumbs to a second death that separates husband and wife until Orpheus joins her as a shade himself.

with chains, which were left bare and corroded by the fetters when time and the action of the soil had rotted away the body" (*Ep*.7.27.11)[270] not only indicates that his burial was done without any of the due rites – since the chains would have been removed otherwise – but the concealment of his bones beneath the courtyard of a house further suggests that his death was not a natural occurrence (Anderson, 2000:113). Had the old man died of natural causes, there would have been nothing preventing his burial in a public gravesite. Therefore, the unusual and secretive location of his remains indicates that his death was a result of some criminal act; in this case, the crime of murder. Indeed, only the ghost himself knows where his bones lie and when he shows Athenodorus the location, the philosopher "approache[s] the magistrates," who, through their allowance of continued advertisement of the house's rental can be shown as having been unaware of the presence of a corpse in the house (*Ep*. 7.27.11).[271] In this case, the theme of a Tragic Death is presented through the likely possibility of the old man's death being an act of murder. However, the man's death cannot be said to have been violent, as is the case with the aforementioned ghosts. Since the description of the old man's body reveals that his flesh had "rotted away" (*Ep*. 7.27.11)[272] and that only the bones remained, there is no indication of whether his death was bloody and violent, or by contrast, sober and passive.[273] Nevertheless, a relatively non-violent murder still retains a degree of tragedy, and the fact that the old man's body was treated so disrespectfully post-mortem highlights the theme of Tragic Death that is present in Pliny's letter.

Remus in Book V of the *Fasti* differs from the other ghosts discussed here in the sense that his death can be seen as an execution of a royal order rather than murder. With regard to the spirits previously compared, their deaths have been presented as obvious, or very likely, cases of murder. But, in Remus' situation, his killer is described as merely having followed the orders of Romulus, who had just been deemed the rightful king and founder of Rome (*Fast*. 4.838-840). The nature of Remus' death is described by Ovid in Book IV of the *Fasti* as the result of the conflict between himself and his twin brother regarding the right to rule Rome as founder and king. According to Ovid's telling of the myth, the brothers took auspices and asked the gods to send a sign in order to determine which of the two should be the primary founder (and

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[270] *inveniuntur ossa inserta catenis et implicita, quae corpus aevo terraque putrefactum nuda et exesa reliquerat vinculis* (*Ep*. 7.27.11).

[271] *postero die adit magistratus, monet ut illum locum effodi iubeant* (*Ep*. 7.27.11).

[272] *putrefactum* (*Ep*. 7.27.11).

[273] As mentioned before, such relatively passive manners of death can include such means as poison, water deprivation, or (considering this ghost's depiction as both gaunt and shackled) being slowly starved to death by a captor.

subsequently have the city named for him): "There needs be no contest. Great faith is put in birds; let's try the birds" (*Fast*. 4.811-814).[274] Remus was greeted first with the sign of six birds; Romulus saw twelve birds thereafter; "Romulus was accorded the government of the city" (*Fast*. 4.815-818).[275] Remus' death occurs in the ensuing conflict.[276] In Ovid's account (*Fast*. 4.843-844), Remus was killed by the builder Celer, whom Romulus had set to guarding the newly-built walls around his city. Romulus had commanded Celer to "let no man cross the walls nor the trench," adding that any who dared to do so must be "put… to death" (*Fast*. 4.838-840).[277] However, Remus, mocking Romulus' walls, "leaped across them [and] instantly Celer struck the rash man with a shovel" (*Fast*. 4.843).[278] The lacking criminal element of Remus' demise shows that his death was not an act of murder but the result of obedience to a royal command.

Nevertheless, the fact that Celer kills him with a shovel expresses the theme of a Tragic Death in the sense that Remus is subjected to a gruesome and violent end: "Covered in blood, Remus sank on the stony ground" (*Fast*. 4.844).[279] The evidence of Remus' brutal death is illustrated again in Book V when his ghostly image is described as "gory" (*cruenta*) (*Fast*. 5.457), and when he fervently hopes that Celer meets a similarly violent end so that he too may "pass like [him] all bloody beneath the earth" (*Fast*. 5. 470).[280] His wish that Celer will "yield up [his] cruel soul through wounds," also conjures imagery of open and bloody gashes made by the shovel piercing his body (*Fast*. 5.469).[281] The combination of the description of his death with the portrayal of his bloodied ghost emphasizes the extent of the violence to which Remus was

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[274] *"nil opus est," dixit, "certamine," Romulus, "ullo: magna fides avium est, experiamur aves"* (*Fast*. 4.813-814).

[275] *pacto statur, et arbitrium Romulus urbis habet* (*Fast*. 4.817-818).

[276] There is more than one account of how Remus died. According to Livy in his *History of Rome*, some narrations mention that "a battle of words and angry taunts leading to bloodshed" resulted in Remus' being killed during the conflict (1.7). He notes that other versions of the tale mark Romulus as his brother's executioner when he kills Remus for tauntingly jumping over his walls (Livy, 1.7). Livy adds that the latter story includes Romulus saying, "So perish whoever else shall leap over my walls!" (1.7). However, Livy notes that Dionysius of Halicarnassus (1.87) and Ovid (*Fast*. 4.843) both identify the builder, Celer, as Remus' killer (1.7). Since Ovid's *Fasti* is the source from which my discussion of Remus' ghost is derived, his version of Remus' death will be applied in my thesis. Although there are many versions of his death, the fact that Remus is consistently described as having been killed is the most important point of focus here.

[277] *hoc Celer urget opus, quem Romulus ipse vocarat, "sint," que, "Celer, curae," dixerat, "ista tuae, neve quis aut muros aut factam vomere fossam transeat: audentem talia dede neci"* (*Fast*. 4.837-840).

[278] *nec mora, transiluit. rutro Celer occupat ausum* (*Fast*. 4.843).

[279] *ille permit duram sanguinulentus humum* (*Fast*. 4.844).

[280] *"utque ego, sub terras sanguinulentus eas"* (*Fast*. 5.470).

[281] *"saeve Celer, crudelem animam per volnera reddas"* (*Fast*. 5.469).

subjected. In this respect, the recurring references to Remus' bloody death clearly signify the underlying theme of Tragic Death in the *Fasti*.

Of course, a demise by murder or violence (or both) is not the only indication of the theme of Tragic Death in my selection of texts. The examples of Polydorus and Diapontius also demonstrate death as a result of betrayal of the obligations of hospitality and kinship, or *fas omne* (Perkell, 2010:27). As shown through the shade of Deiphobus in Book VI of the *Aeneid*,[282] such a heinous betrayal as the violation of the obligations of kinship (and dying as a consequence) can result in the prevention of the spirit reaching Elysium: "All that's owed Deiphobus and his shadow you (Aeneas) have paid in full. My own fate and the deadly crimes of that Spartan whore have plunged me in this hell" (*Aen*. 6.509-530).[283] The fate of Polydorus echoes this element of kinship betrayal, as well as demonstrating a degree of violated hospitality.

As an ally of the Trojan King Priam's, the King of Thrace was entrusted not only with "a great weight of gold," but also with the life of Priam's youngest son, Polydorus, who was "dispatched… in secret… when Priam lost his faith in Trojan arms and saw his city gripped by siege" (*Aen*. 3.49-52).[284] By sending Polydorus to the Thracian king, a trust alliance was established between the two kings. Notable is that there also exists a number of other narrations regarding the guest-friendship hospitality that was owed Polydorus by the Thracian king.[285] In these accounts, the Thracian king is identified as King Polymestor. In mythology, Polymestor's wife is Ilione, who is the eldest daughter of Priam and the sister of Polydorus. Thus, in Virgil's version of the Polydorus story, it can be argued that the Thracian king who killed him was not

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[282] As mentioned in my second chapter, Deiphobus married the Spartan Helen after his brother Paris was killed. Helen then seduced her new husband and led her first husband, the Greek Menelaus, into their chamber in order to slay Deiphobus. Deiphobus' spirit resides in the Fields of Mourning due to his violent death, as well as his betrayal by his wife (*Aen*. 6.509-530).

[283] *"omnia Deiphobo solvisti et funeris umbris. sed me fata mea at scelus exitiale Lacaenae his mersere malis"* (*Aen*. 6.510-512).

[284] *hunc Polydorum auri quondam cum pondere magno infelix Priamus furtim mandarat alendum Threicio regi, cum iam diffideret armis Dardaniae cingique urbem obsidione videret* (*Aen*. 3.49-52).

[285] Such tales include those told by Euripides and Pacuvius, as mentioned before. In Euripides' *Hecuba*, Polydorus is killed by his host, Polymestor, for the sake of the Trojan treasures he possessed (*Hec*. 1-34). This instance of Polydorus' death is much like that described in the *Aeneid*, except that in Euripides' telling, Polydorus' body is tossed into the sea and his spirit appears to his mother to request burial, instead of bemoaning his fate to Aeneas alongside his corpse, as he does in Virgil's epic. In Pacuvius' tragedy *Iliona*, Polydorus is entrusted to the care of his sister Ilione, who is the wife of the Thracian King Polymestor. But when Troy falls, Polymestor allies himself with the Greeks and deigns to end Priam's bloodline by killing Polydorus. However, in this story, Polydorus lives due to Ilione's switching him with her own son, Deiphilus, as infants. Ignorant of this, Polymestor kills his own son and it is Deiphilus' ghost who appears to beg for an adequate burial. Other versions of Polydorus' tale can be found in Hyginus' *Fabulae* (109; 240) and in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (13.432).

only Polymestor, but he was also his brother-in-law. Considering this information, the Thracian king can be seen as violating the obligations of *fas omne* on the grounds of hospitality as well as kinship.

Indeed, the outrageousness of Polymestor's crimes against Polydorus is demonstrated in the way that Aeneas mentions his deceit twice when he recounts Polydorus' fate. Aeneas first describes Polymestor's treachery when he explains how he had "join[ed] forces with Agamemnon, siding with his victorious arms, and [broke] down all human laws" (*Aen*. 3.54-55).[286] The fact that Virgil not only begins line 55 with *fas omne abrumpit* ("[he] breaks all human laws"), but follows it with *Polydorum obtruncat* ("[he] hacks Polydorus down") further highlights the act of breaking the laws of hospitality and kinship while simultaneously linking this violation with the death of Polydorus. Aeneas' subsequent description of Thrace as a "wicked land where the bonds of hospitality are so stained," emphasizes further the vileness of the act committed by its king (*Aen*. 3.60-61).[287] With his death being so inextricably linked to the Thracian king's desecration of *fas omne*, it can be shown that Polydorus' death is all the more tragic as a result of such betrayal. In this way, the all-encompassing theme of Tragic Death is reiterated in the case of Polydorus.

In terms of the representation of the Tragic Death theme through instances of broken *fas omne*, the description given by Tranio of Diapontius is remarkably similar to that of Polydorus. Although Tranio's made-up spirit is not said to have died due to violated kinship obligations, his being murdered by his host is a clear indication of broken laws of guest-friendship hospitality. Diapontius' status as a foreigner and a guest is made clear when he introduces himself to Philolaches saying, "I am a guest from overseas, Diapontius" (*Most.* 2.497).[288] The fact that his name means "man from overseas" essentially results in Diapontius being announced as a foreign visitor twice in the same line. Here, Diapontius' role in the guest-friendship agreement between himself and his host is evident. When he explains that he "was deceived in violation of the obligations of hospitality", the disrespect for *fas omne* is all the more jarring (*Most.* 2.500-501).[289] Having set up his character as a visitor, Tranio prompts Theopropides and the audience to consider the values of trust and respect that are expected between a host and his guest according to *fas omne*. When this paradigm is uprooted by the

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[286] *res Agamemnonias victriciaque arma secutus fas omne abrumpit* (*Aen*. 3.54-55).

[287] *omnibus idem animus, scelerata excedere terra, linqui pollutum hospitium et dare classibus Austros* (*Aen*. 3.60-61).

[288] *"ego transmarinus hospes sum Diapontius"* (*Most.* 2.497).

[289] *"per fidem deceptus sum"* (*Most.* 2.500-501).

revelation that the "host murdered [his guest] [there] and he secretly put [him] underground in [the] house without due rites, for the sake of gold", Tranio creates an atmosphere of shock and horror (*Most.* 2.501-503).[290] This effect then reinforces the theme of tragedy in death. Moreover, Diapontius is not only likened to Polydorus through this shocking violation of hospitality obligations (and his consequential death), but the fact that both murderous parties committed their crimes in the quest for gold highlights yet another point of commonality between these two unfortunate souls.[291]

Through this discussion of the ways in which the spirits in my selected texts reflect the overarching theme of Tragic Death, it can be seen that the instances of murder, violent death, and violated *fas omne* are the foremost indicators. The ghosts of Diapontius and Polydorus reflect this theme with great clarity in the sense that their deaths are not only the result of murder and broken obligations of kinship and hospitality, but their demises are also bloody and violent. Of course, it must be noted that not all of the spirits who were killed with violence were victims of murder. The ghost of Remus is a good example of a tragic demise chiefly characterized by violence, whereas the cases of the old man and Creusa are slightly less certain with regard to the nature of their deaths. Nevertheless, it is arguable that both the old man and Creusa were murdered and there is some suggestion that Creusa may have perished in a violent manner.[292] Noteworthy is the addition to the theme of Tragic Death that is brought by the interpretation of Creusa's death as divine will or fate.[293]

3.4.2. Laying the Ghost to Rest

Considering that many of the ghosts discussed in this thesis have been victims of tragic deaths and improper burials, it is unsurprising that a number of these spirits are presented as needing to be laid to rest. Within the context of this comparative analysis, the recurring motif of "Laying the Ghost to Rest" can be explained as the fulfilment of proper funerary rites and rituals that were formerly lacking. The necessity of the laying can be shown to arise when manifestations

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[290] *"hospes me hic necavit isque me defodit insepultum clam [ibidem] in hisce aedibus, scelestae, auri causa"* (*Most.* 2.501-503)

[291] Indeed, the commonalities between Diapontius and Polydorus are so poignant that Felton (1999:52-53) argues that Plautus' ghost may have been inspired by the ghost of Polydorus in Euripides' *Hecuba*. Indeed, the motifs of the guest being killed for his money, an improper disposal of the guest's remains, and the appearance of the guest as a ghost bemoaning his fate and ill burial are present in both texts. Felton (1999:52) suggests here that Tranio is merely recalling the tale of Polydorus and parodying it in his own ghost story.

[292] I.e.: At the hands of the Greeks, or in the fires and destruction of Troy.

[293] Due to the fact that the deaths of the furious Parentalia ghosts are not described, these spirits have therefore not been discussed in terms of the theme of Tragic Death.

of the dead appear to the living in order to communicate some form of distress regarding the way in which their remains have been handled. Some spirits in this discussion approach the living with complaints about being improperly buried (i.e. being *insepultum*). In other cases, the ghosts communicate displeasure regarding the conduct of their post-funerary honours. Here, the motif of Laying the Ghost to Rest will be shown as supporting the overarching theme of Tragic Death in the way that it repeatedly brings this theme to the fore.

Of note here is that the idea of "laying the ghost to rest" can also be explored as an example of a tale type or motif within the study of folktales and folklore. Using the Aarne and Thompson Index's catalogue of folktales,[294] Anderson (2000:112) explains that tales in which a protagonist appeases a restless spirit (who typically haunts a house) by means of proper burial can be considered within the parameters of *AT* Type 326A (also referred to as "Laying the Ghost"). Anderson (2000:112-113) argues that the story of the ghost who haunts the Athenian house in *Pliny's Letter* 7.27 is a prime example of this tale type. While the advent of laying the ghosts to rest is a prominent motif in such ancient tales of haunted houses as Pliny's *Letter* 7.27 and Lucian's *Philopseudes* (30-31), the comparative analysis presented in this section will demonstrate the alternative ways in which this motif exists in my selection of texts, regardless of whether the dead appear in haunted houses or not.

In light of this, perhaps the most appropriate example with which to begin this discussion is that of the spirit of the elderly man in Pliny's *Letter* 7.27. Not only does this tale reflect the theme of Tragic Death through the possibility of the old man's murder, but the combined presence of his restless spirit and his inappropriately buried corpse further conveys the need for the protagonist to lay the ghost. The motif of Laying the Ghost to Rest can be shown here in support of the Tragic Death theme in the sense that the conceivably unpleasant manner of the elderly man's death necessitated a secretive and haphazard concealment of his body, thus resulting in his soul manifesting as a ghost. The fact that the old man is *insepultum* therefore justifies the presence of his ghost. The spectre of the old man demonstrates his need for burial

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[294] The Aarne and Thompson Index is a systematic catalogue of various types of folktale (Aarne and Thompson, 1993:373). Each type is prefaced with the letters "AT" and the type number. Types are determined by specific sets of occurrences which constitute the body of a tale (Aarne and Thompson, 1993:373). Where these sets of events recur in a number of tales, these tales can be grouped together to form a type. For example, AT 425 includes the motifs of "The Husband as a Monster" and "Disenchantment of the Monster" (Aarne and Thompson, 1993:375). Since both of these motifs appear as events in the tales of Apuleius' *Cupid and Psyche* and De Beaumont's *Beauty and the Beast*, these folktales are classified as AT 452A and AT 452C, respectively (Aarne and Thompson, 1993:376). Unlike other methods of folktale classification, this indexing system is most benefical in the sense that it includes tales from different time periods as well as from an extensive range of geopgraphic locations and cultures. In this way, the Aarne and Thompson Index provides a more nuanced and inclusive categorization of folktales.

with great clarity when Pliny narrates how the ghost "stood and beckoned, as if summoning [Athenodorus]," before leading him to the place in the courtyard beneath which his body was hidden (*Ep*. 7.27.9).[295] In this instance, the spirit actively leads Athenodorus to his remains in order to show him the dismal state of his burial. Moreover, the way in which the ghost "[rattles] its chains over [Athenodorus'] head as he wrote," can be seen as more than a means of drawing the philosopher's attention through sound (*Ep*. 7.279).[296] This brandishing of his restraints can also be seen as the spirit's non-verbal indication of the condition of his corpse and his consequential inability to move on from the living world. This argument is supported by the description of the manacles on the old man's corpse, which is mirrored in the visual manifestation of his spirit: "There they found bones, twisted round with chains" (*Ep*. 7.27.11).[297]

However, the binding of the corpse is not the only reason for this spirit's unrest and his need to be laid to rest. The consequences of his being restrained in death further add to this ghost's misery in the sense that the iron bindings caused a degree of severe posthumous mutilation: "[the bones] were left bare and corroded by the fetters when time and the action of the soil had rotted away the body" (*Ep*. 7.27.11).[298] Here, the old man's bones were slowly deformed by the rusting of the metal that encircled his body. Recalling how posthumous mutilation or desecration of the body was often used as a means of punishment (*poena post mortem*) designed to deform the eternal image of the soul (Varner, 2001:57), the angst and restlessness of the old man's spirit is not unexpected. Whether this man was intentionally punished post-mortem or merely disfigured by the effects of time and the elements on iron, the fact remains that the corpse was desecrated, and can therefore be argued to be an additional factor in Athenodorus' motivation to lay the ghost.

Upon seeing the unsanctified state of the ghost's earthly remains, Athenodorus arranges for "the bones [to be] collected and given a public burial" (*Ep*. 7.27.11).[299] The success of laying the ghost to rest is presented when Pliny remarks that "after the shades had been duly laid to rest the house saw them no more" (*Ep*. 7.2711).[300] In this example, it is the inadequate burial and bound state of the old man's body that prompts Athenodorus to carry out the appropriate

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[295] *stabat innuebatque digito similis vocanti* (*Ep*. 7.27.9).

[296] *illa scribentis capiti catenis insonabat* (*Ep*. 7.27.9)

[297] *inveniuntur ossa inserta catenis et implicita* (*Ep*. 7.27.11).

[298] [*ossa*] *quae corpus aevo terraque putrefactum nuda et exesa reliquerat vinculis* (*Ep*. 7.27.11).

[299] *collecta publice sepeliuntur* (*Ep*. 7.27.11).

[300] *domus postea rite conditis manibus caruit* (*Ep*. 7.27.11).

funerary rites. Considering that the elderly man's unceremonious burial was likely the result of a hasty attempt to conceal a murder, the consequential restless spirit not only demonstrates the effects of a tragic death on the afterlife of the soul, but it also shows the important role that proper funerary rites play in allowing such tragic spirits to rest in peace. In Pliny's letter then, the Laying of the Ghost motif both supports the theme of Tragic Death, and presents itself as a solution to the unrest demonstrated by spirits who were victims of such unfortunate deaths.

The ghost of Polydorus and his eventual laying similarly allows for this motif to be shown as complementary to the theme of Tragic Death. As explained in section 3.4.1, the circumstances of Polydorus' death are also tragic in the sense that he was not only murdered, but he was killed violently and in violation of the obligations of kinship and hospitality. Polydorus' ghost is presented with three significant reasons for his unrest. In addition to this, Polydorus' body is left along the shores of Thrace, partially covered with spears that have grown into bristling shoots and branches of myrtle (Perkell, 2010:23-25): "[Aeneas] chance[s] on a rise of ground topped off by thickets bristling dogwood and myrtle spears… [and] as [he] tear[s] the first stalk from its roots… dark blood oozes out and fouls the soil with filth" (*Aen*. 3.22-23;27-29).[301] Here, the *insepultum* state of Polydorus' body is likened to a gruesome, blood-filled tree. This image is repeated when the disembodied voice of Polydorus cries to Aeneas that the "iron planting of lances… sprout in stabbing spears" (*Aen*. 3.45-46).[302] By describing the cluster of spears embedded in his body as a "planting" or *seges*, and referring to their protruding action as "sprouting" (*increvit*), Polydorus compares the state of his body to vegetation. In doing so, such imagery arguably implies that his body was covered by spears with as much ceremony as a seed is covered with earth when planting a crop – i.e.: none. In this regard, Polydorus' body is effectively planted rather than buried in the earth. The comparison with such a mundane action as the sowing of a crop further emphasizes the lack of reverence and ritual with which Polydorus was put in the ground.

Although the spirit of Polydorus does not ask for proper funerary rites outright, Aeneas and the other Trojans acknowledge the poor condition of Polydorus' remains and endeavour to "give [Polydorus] a fresh new burial" (*Aen*. 3.62).[303] The inadequacy of his previous and unceremonious planting in the ground is compensated for by the Trojans "piling masses of

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[301] *forte fuit iuxta tumulus, quo cornea summo virgulta et densis hastilibus horrida myrtus* (*Aen*. 3.22-23);
nam quae prima solo ruptis radicibus arbos vellitur, huic atro liquuntur sanguine guttae et terram tabo maculant (*Aen*. 3.27-29).

[302] *"hic confixum ferrea texit telorum seges et iaculis increvit acutis"* (*Aen*. 3.45-46).

[303] *ergo instauramus Polydoro funus* (*Aen*. 3.62).

earth on his first mound" (*Aen*. 3.62-63).[304] At this point, Polydorus is not only properly interred, but the appropriate funerary rites are also performed: "Raising to all the shades below an altar dark with the wreaths of grief and dead-black cypress ringed by Trojan women, hair unbound in mourning. [They] offer up bowls, foaming with warm milk, and [their] cups of hallowed blood" (*Aen*. 3.63-67).[305] Upon the completion of this ritual, they "lay his soul in the grave as [their] voices raise his name, the resounding last farewell" (*Aen*. 3.67-68).[306]

Here, the motif of Laying the Ghost to Rest is evident, not only through Aeneas' clear statement that he and the other Trojans laid Polydorus' soul to rest, but also through the detailed description of actions common to Roman funerals. The mention of "wreaths of grief and dead-black cypress" (Aen. 3.64) is reminiscent of the typical manner described by Retief and Cilliers (2005:138) of signalling that a household had experienced a death: placing cypress branches at the entrances of a house. Moreover, the offering of drink such as milk is consistent with the traditional libations given to the dead during the concluding funeral feast held at the gravesite (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:141).

It is interesting to note that the group of Trojans call out Polydorus' name as they perform the last of his rites. In this instance, the calling of the deceased's name echoes the process of *conclamatio*, which was usually performed in the days leading up to the funeral of the deceased. However, the fact that the Trojans call out his name at the end of his funeral is atypical. It can be argued that the divergence from tradition here can be attributed to the fact that Polydorus' death was an act of murder and therefore could not be processed by his kin in the usual manner. With regard to this adaptation of *conclamatio*, it can be argued that while the process of laying the ghost to rest often mirrors typical Roman funerary rituals, the act of placating a restless spirit does not necessitate the performance of the last rites in the same application as an ordinary funeral. With respect to this, it can be seen that the Laying the Ghost to Rest motif in Book III of the *Aeneid* not only occurs following the tragedy of Polydorus' death (thus supporting the theme of Tragic Death), but it also illustrates the ways in which typical Roman funerary processes could possibly have been adapted in the case of a restless spirit.

Nevertheless, not all of the ghosts in my selection of texts whose bodies are *insepultum* are laid to rest. While the spirit of Diapontius shares similarities with the spectre of the old man in

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[304] *et ingens aggeritur tumulo tellus* (*Aen*. 3.62-63).

[305] *stant manibus arae, caeruleis maestae vittis atraque cupresso, et circum Iliades crinem de more solutae; inferimus tepido spumantia cymbia lacte sanguinis et sacri pateras* (*Aen*. 3.63-67).

[306] *animamque sepulcro condimus et magna supremum voce ciemus* (*Aen*. 3.67-68).

terms of the way he haunts the house in which his corpse lies, no attempt is made by the living characters in the *Mostellaria* to lay the ghost. Noting that Diapontius is an imagined phantom of Tranio's, it is unsurprising that the slave makes no attempt to appease the spirit. Indeed, any move to do so on his part would foil his entire plan to keep Theopropides out of the house (Felton, 1999:57). However, Theopropides is not aware that Diapontius' ghost does not exist and it is notable that he does not appear to have any inclination to placate the spirit. Here, Diapontius' claim that his body was "put underground in [the] house" (*Most.* 2.501-502)[307] is comparable to the spectre of the old man leading Athenodorus to the place in which his bones were buried beneath the courtyard. More so, the way in which Diapontius describes his death as a murder and declares, "This house is under a curse, this dwelling place is defiled" (*Most.* 2.504)[308] is very much like the way Polydorus recounts the manner of his demise and warns Aeneas to "spare [his] own pure hands," and "escape from [that] savage land… flee [those] grasping shores" (*Aen.* 3.41-42;44).[309]

But for all the commonalities Diapontius has with the old man and Polydorus, he is still not laid to rest as they are. In this particular case then, it is arguable that the act of laying the ghost to rest is also dependant on the reactions of the living to the dead. In the *Mostellaria*, Theopropides is so superstitious and fearful of the pollution associated with the *mortuus* that he dares not enter the house in order to retrieve and appropriately bury the corpse. Theopropides' fear is seen clearly in his agitation following Tranio's presentation of Diapontius' speech: "Hush, hush! … The door has creaked" (*Most.* 2.506;507).[310] His terror when Tranio blames him for disturbing the ghost by knocking on the door is apparent when he exclaims, "I don't have a drop of blood! The dead are taking me to the Underworld while I'm still alive!" (*Most.* 2.508-509).[311] In fact, Felton (1999:61) characterizes Theopropides as a highly superstitious person who will not associate himself with the dead in any manner, be it walking past tombs or merely performing funerary rites for the deceased. In light of this information, Theopropides' absent attempt to lay the ghost to rest is explained.

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[307] *"hospes me hic necavit isque me defodit insepultum clam [ibidem] in hisce aedibus"* (*Most.* 2.501-502).

[308] *"scelestae [hae] sunt aedes, impia est habitatio"* (*Most.* 2.504).

[309] *"iam parce sepulto, parce pias scelerare manus"* (*Aen.* 3.41-42);
"heu fuge crudelis terras, fuge litus avarum" (*Aen.* 3.44).

[310] *st, st!* (*Most.* 2.506);
concrepuit foris (*Most.* 2.507).

[311] *guttam haud habeo sanguinis, vivom me accersunt Accheruntem mortui* (*Most.* 2.508-509).

The case of Creusa is somewhat different to that of Diapontius in the sense that the lack of last rites in this instance is dependent on circumstance rather than on the reactions of the living. Virgil clearly portrays Aeneas' pious fulfilment of the obligations to the dead in terms of the funerary rituals he performs for Polydorus and Deiphobus. Arguably, his *pietas* would have inclined him to lay the ghost of his wife to rest as well, if circumstance had allowed it. But in this example, consideration must be given to the fact that the city of Troy (wherein Creusa's body lies) has just been sacked at this point in the narrative. The eminent peril of simply being inside the city as a Trojan is illustrated when Aeneas determines to return to Troy in search of Creusa: "And back I go to Troy… My mind steeled to relive the whole disaster, retrace my route through the whole city now and put my life in danger one more time" (*Aen*. 2.749-751).[312] The presence of the Greeks throughout the city – "the Greeks have flooded in, seized the entire place" (*Aen*. 2.757)[313] – further increases the probability of Aeneas' being captured if he lingered in the city to perform the last rites for Creusa.

Still, it can be argued that at least some part of the appropriate funerary rites were carried out when Aeneas repeatedly calls Creusa's name: "Why, I even dared fling my voice through the dark, my shouts filled the streets as time and again, overcome with grief I called out 'Creusa!' Nothing, no reply, and again 'Creusa!'" (*Aen*. 2.768-770).[314] Although Aeneas is calling her name with the hope of locating her, this repetitive shout is also reminiscent of the typical way in which *conclamatio* took place in Roman funeral culture (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:137). Remembering that this rite was performed in the days leading up to the funeral in order to ensure that the person was in fact dead (Retief and Cilliers, 2005:137), Aeneas' cries and the lack of response from the living Creusa are a clear demonstration of the purpose of this ritual. Recalling Ausonius' preface to his *Parentalia*, in which he remarks that "to call on the soul by name counts for the full ceremony" (*Item Praefatio Versibus Adnotata*, 10),[315] it is arguable that this act of calling Creusa's name, whether intended as *conclamatio* or not, is sufficient in laying her ghost to rest.[316] In this way then, the motif of Laying the Ghost to Rest can still be

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[312] *ipse urbem repeto et cingor fulgentibus armis. stat casus renovare omnis omnemque reverti per Troiam et rursus caput obiectare periclis* (*Aen*. 2.749-751).

[313] *inruerant Danai et tectum omne tenebant* (*Aen*. 2.757).

[314] *ausus quin etiam voces iactare per umbram implevi clamore vias, maestusque Creusam nequiquam ingeminans iterumque iterumque vocavi* (*Aen*. 2.768-770).

[315] *voce ciere animas funeris instar habet* (*Item Praefatio Versibus Adnotata*, 10).

[316] Indeed, Creusa's ghost is not seen again in the *Aeneid*, neither in dreams nor in waking.

seen in support of the theme of Tragic Death, if only in the form of an unintentional performance of *conclamatio*.

In the examples of Diapontius and Creusa, the motif of Laying the Ghost to Rest is shown to play little, if any, part in the narratives. However, this is not the case with the angry Parentalia ghosts and the spirit of Remus. In these situations, the Laying the Ghost to Rest motif is present, but in an alternative version from that which is presented in the instances of the old man and Polydorus. It can be seen that Remus and the angry Parentalia spirits in Ovid's *Fasti* are not laid to rest through funerary rituals, but rather that they are appeased through post-funerary processes. In both cases, the ghosts have already been given the appropriate burials and last rites and therefore cannot be classified as *insepultum*. Instead, the presence of these spectres is due to shortcomings in the way of honouring the dead after the completion of the funeral processes.

The unhappy phantoms that arise following the neglect of their honorary worship during the Parentalia festival are particularly good examples of this alternative form of Laying the Ghost to Rest. The verb *placare*[317] is used on several occasions with reference to the post-funerary rites that are owed to the departed souls. Ovid makes use of this term in his instructions to the reader:

> "Appease the souls of your fathers and bring small gifts to the extinguished pyres… Not that I forbid larger offerings, but even these suffice to appease the shades: add prayers and the appropriate words at the hearths set up for this purpose" (*Fast*. 2.533-534;541-542).[318]

Placare is used again when Ovid notes that the Feralia "is the last day for propitiating the ghosts" (*Fast*. 2.570).[319] Ovid presents the appeasement of the ancestral spirits as the basis of the Parentalia rites. While he remarks that such honours were usually paid to the ghosts during the Parentalia (*Fast*. 2.547-548), the instance in which the festival was not conducted can be argued here as an adapted form of Laying the Ghost to Rest in contrast to the ordinary, annual motions of the festival: "Afterwards the honours which had been omitted were again paid to the tombs, and so a limit was put to prodigies and funerals" (*Fast*. 2.555-556).[320]

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[317] Meaning "to placate, appease, or propitiate" (Frazer, 1996:99; Morwood, 2008:191).

[318] *animas placate paternas parvaque in extinctas munera ferte pyras* (*Fast*. 2.533-534); *nec maiora veto, sed et his placabilis umbra est adde preces positis et sua verba focis* (*Fast*. 2.541-542).

[319] *ultima placandis manibus illa dies* (*Fast*. 2.570).

[320] *post ea praeteriti tumulis redduntur honores, prodigiisque venit funeribusque modus* (*Fast*. 2.555-556).

It can be said that the motif of Laying the Ghost to Rest appears here as an act of propitiation to ghosts who had already received their rightful burial rituals. There is indeed a stark contrast in the behaviour of the spirits during the neglected Parentalia, and in the years in which the festival was properly conducted. While the ghosts are described as wrathful in the way that "they did issue from the tombs and make their moan in the hours of stilly night" when their post-funerary rites were disrespected (*Fast*. 2.551-552),[321] these same spirits are presented as passive and tranquil when the Parentalia is celebrated as it ought to be: "Now do the unsubstantial souls and buried dead wander about, now doth the ghost batten upon his dole" (*Fast*. 2.565-566).[322] Through this comparison, it can be seen that it is the frightful and enraged behaviour of the neglected ghosts that necessitated the performance of post-funerary rites as a variation of Laying the Ghost to Rest. Although the motif of Laying the Ghost to Rest is not shown in support of the theme of Tragic Death here, the presence of this motif in relation to the broader theme of Death validates the inclusion of this example.

The association of Remus' ghost with the Lemuria festival similarly demonstrates a variant form of Laying the Ghost to Rest. In this example, however, the appeasement of Remus does not take place following the neglect of annual rites (as is the case with the angry Parentalia spirits) but rather, it is presented here as the point of origin from which the Lemuria rites developed. Recalling that the appropriate funerary rites were performed for Remus, it must be noted here that the presence of Remus' spectre is not due to his being *insepultum* like the old man, Polydorus, and Diapontius. Instead, his ghost returns to the living world in order to convey to his parents his misery over his untimely and violent death (*Fast*. 5.463-464). The fact that the tragic nature of his death appears to be the primary concern of Remus indicates that his unrest is a result of such misfortune. When he follows his lament over his death by asking his parents to beseech Romulus on his behalf for a day of honour to be held in his name (*Fast*. 5.473-474), it can be argued that Remus' spirit expresses his discontent as a persuasive means of eliciting further propitiation and honours.

The laying of Remus' ghost is seen when Faustulus and Acca "reported to the king his brother's words [and] Romulus complied, and gave the name of Remuria to the day on which due worship is paid to buried ancestors" (*Fast*. 5.477-480).[323] Romulus' solution to Remus' unrest

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[321] *bustis exisse feruntur et tacitae questi tempore noctis avi* (*Fast*. 2.552-553).

[322] *nunc animae tenues et corpora functa sepulcris errant, nunc posito pascitur umbra cibo* (*Fast*. 2.565-566).

[323] *ut secum fugiens somnos abduxit imago, ad regem voces fratris uterque ferunt. Romulus obsequitur, lucemque Remuria dicit illam, qua positis iusta feruntur avis* (*Fast*. 5.477-480).

is therefore both an immediate and a recurring form of propitiation. It is also arguable that naming this day of worship after Remus is Romulus' method of laying his brother's ghost to rest, while the subsequent annual commemoration of this day serves as a further post-funerary ritual to the buried dead (including Remus). It can be seen that the post-funerary rituals of the Lemuria essentially developed from the honours paid by Romulus to his brother's spirit. Where Ovid describes how "people brought gifts to the ashes of the dead, as their due, and the grandson paid his respects to the tomb of his buried grandsire" (*Fast*. 5.425-426),[324] Romulus' appeasement of his brother's ghost foreshadows this the sense that Remus, as one of the co-founders of the city, would have been considered an ancestral spirit of Rome. Thus, the Lemuria's tradition of paying honours to the ghosts of the ancestors reflects Romulus' original honouring of his brother's departed soul. Furthermore, Romulus' bestowing of honours upon Remus can also be seen as a variation of the Laying the Ghost to Rest motif in the sense that it is performed as a means of placating a spirit who requests post-funerary honours. The connection between this example of Laying the Ghost to Rest and the theme of Tragic Death is demonstrated by the fact that such post-humous propitiation ultimately occurs as a result of Remus' misery over his undesirable death.

In this comparative discussion of the ways in which the recurring motif of Laying the Ghost to Rest can be seen in my selected texts, it can be concluded that while this motif is clearly evident in the cases of the old man and Polydorus, it is presented as having been adapted into a form of post-funerary ritual for the angry Parentalia spirits and Remus. The *insepultum* states of the old man's and Polydorus' bodies attest to the need for their spirits to be laid to rest. However, the fact that Diapontius and Creusa are similarly improperly buried, yet their ghosts are not placated in the same way as the old man's and Polydorus' demonstrates that the act of laying the ghost to rest is also dependent on such factors as the reactions of the living and the circumstances in which death occurs. More than this, the spirits who did receive proper burial (i.e.: the angry ghosts and Remus) but nevertheless remain restless in the living world are shown to do so due to a lack in post-funerary honours. In these instances, the motif of Laying the Ghost to Rest is presented as being adapted into a form of post-funerary propitiation. Furthermore, this motif is shown to be in support of the overarching theme of Tragic Death in the way that it repeatedly occurs as a solution to the anguish of those spirits who experienced an unfortunate death.

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[324] *iam tamen extincto cineri sua dona ferebant, compositique nepos busta piabat avi* (*Fast*. 5.425-426).

4. Chapter 4: Conclusion

4.1. Summary and Reflection

In my thesis, I asked the question, "What insights into the ancient Romans' understanding of death and the dead can be brought to light through a comparison of the ghosts that feature in selections from texts by Plautus, Virgil, Ovid, and Pliny?" Using Plautus' *Mostellaria*, Books II and III of Virgil's *Aeneid*, Books II and V of Ovid's *Fasti*, and *Letter* 7.27 in Pliny's *Epistles*, I conducted a comparative discussion of the various spirits of the dead who featured in these works. As a result of this discussion, a number of insightful glimpses into Roman thought about death and the dead were made. By using a combination of the aforementioned primary sources, a selection of secondary literature about Roman ghosts and beliefs about death, and (in a supplementary manner) several other primary texts, I believe that I have been able to provide a clearer picture of death in the Roman world. Having established the existing knowledge about Roman death in Chapter 2, the findings in my comparative discussions in Chapter 3 were contextualized, and the insights made all the more apparent.

Beginning with my approach to the terminology for "ghost" as it is used by a selection of Latin authors, several insights into the language used in reference to the dead in the Roman world were brought to light. In this section, I argued that the previous generalization of Latin terms denoting ghosts, as well as Felton's (1999:24) argument for the interchangeability of the terms, are somewhat flawed on the grounds that these words can be shown to have various degrees of nuanced differences. The differences between such terms as *anima*, *imago*, *umbra*, and *simulacrum* (among others) are shown to be dependent on a number of factors, including the identification of a spirit by name, the place in which a soul resides after death, and the etymology and setting of the ghost story itself. It became clear that there not only existed a range of language pertaining to death and the dead in ancient Rome, but that the circumstances and contexts in which these words appear had a degree of influence over the specific vocabulary that could be applied. This further indicates that the Roman understanding of death and the dead was highly complex in terms of the linguistics used to comprehend such concepts.

The second part of my main argument focused on the similarities and differences in the ways that each ghostly character in my selected texts was portrayed. This character portrayal was considered in two parts; the first being the means by which the ghosts approached the living, either in dreams or while awake, while the second explored the spirits' characterization according to the ways in which they interacted with the living and appealed to their senses. In

comparing and contrasting those ghosts who appeared to the living in dreams with those who approached during waking hours, it was not only shown that the Romans distinguished between the two different ways in which a spirit of the dead could approach the living, but this comparison further revealed a range of characteristics specific to each type of ghost. In the case of dream-ghosts, it can be shown that these spirits hold a purely communicative purpose in the sense that their appearance in a dream typically signifies a need to tell surviving kin of their fate, or to ask for appropriate funerary rites. More than this, the examples of Diapontius and Remus also suggest that dream-ghosts were capable of causing the living to wake upon their departure from their dreams. As for waking ghosts, the tethering of such spirits as Polydorus, Diapontius, and the old man to the places in which they died or were buried indicates the idea that waking spirits had a limited range of mobility. Of course, the examples of the angry Parentalia ghosts and Creusa do present some ambiguity in this regard, but it is argued that the different spatial ranges of these two spirits are circumstantial. In light of these findings, it can be shown that the Romans not only had an understanding of different spectral types with defining characteristics, but that the circumstances of death also played a role in their approaches.

The comparative discussion of the ways in which the dead could interact with the living by appealing to their senses of sight, sound, and touch also revealed that the behavioural characteristics of the dead in the Roman world were very much influenced by the nature of the death. Ghosts that primarily manifested themselves visually (such as Remus, Creusa, and the old man) were able to communicate the circumstances of their death, and in turn the reason for their presence as spectres, through the gruesome presentation of their fatal wounds. In cases such as that of the old man in Pliny's letter, the added imagery of chains and manacles further demonstrates the cause of the phantom's unrest. In fact, it can be argued that the gory appearance of some spirits (such as the deformed Parentalia ghosts) was so terrifying that it prompted action on the part of the living. In terms of those spirits who manipulated sound in order to draw the attention of the living (e.g.: Polydorus, Diapontius, the angry Parentalia ghosts, and the old man), it has been shown that they were able to do so through speech, shrieks and howls and ululations, and through the manipulation of surrounding objects such as doors and chains. Although rare and subtle, there are also a number of ghosts who have been shown to interact with the living by appealing to their sense of touch. Here, some spirits like Creusa interact with the living when they flee from their embrace as a breath of wind. Although one cannot catch the wind, it can be felt, and on these grounds, it can be argued that this is an

example of a tactile manifestation of the dead. In addition to this, the likes of the phantom barbers in Pliny's letter also appeal to the sense of touch by means of the physical, tactile evidence that is left behind after their visitations to the living (i.e.: the shorn locks of the freedmen's hair). Of interest is the fact that these interactions are not mutually exclusive and the ghosts in my selected texts are able to make use of one or more of these sensory appeals. It appears that the dead in the Roman world were understood to interact with the living in a number of different ways.

Lastly, I conducted a discussion of the extent to which the overarching theme of Tragic Death and the supporting motif of Laying the Ghost to Rest are present in my chosen texts. Through this exploration, greater insight into the Roman understanding of an undesirable death and the resulting restless spirits is brought forward. The theme of Tragic Death was analysed in terms of the nature of death that befell each of the ghosts in these works. Unpleasant ends such as death by violence, murder, betrayal of obligations such as *fas omne*, and meeting an untimely demise have been considered. What was revealed is that there is a strong correlation between the circumstances of death and the fate of the souls who experienced such ends. Those who met untimely or violent ends, were murdered, or were betrayed were frequently on the receiving end of ghost-layings. By this, I refer to spirits such as the old man and Polydorus who met tragic ends, and consequentially remained in the living world as restless spirits, having been unable to receive the proper funerary rites due to the secretive and brutal nature of their deaths. In instances like these, the motif of Laying the Ghost to Rest is present when these spirits actively approach the living in order to be given their necessary rites. In addition to the ghosts who require proper burial, it has also been shown that the motif of Laying the Ghost to Rest can also be adapted into a form of post-funerary propitiation to the restless dead who require posthumous honours. The connection between the circumstances of death and the corresponding needs of the dead is not only evident here, but it can also be said that the Roman conception of death further incorporated knowledge on the appeasement and propitiation of the restless dead.

To close, this comparative discussion of Latin literature featuring manifestations of the dead supports my initial hypothesis that such a study would reveal insights into the ancient Roman understanding of death and the dead. Going forward, I have hope that these findings will make a valuable contribution, not only to research on the subject of death in the Roman world, but

also to the larger field of Ancient Studies. While my thesis concludes here, I believe that my research will also pave the way to further avenues of study on this topic.[325]

But for now, I think the ghosts can rest in peace.

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[325] Perhaps a more technical approach considering the relationship between metrical structure and descriptions of ghosts in Latin verse!

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