The Evolving Door: Paraklausithyron in Ovid

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Introduction
The Paraklausithyron and Ovid

It is midnight when the lover rises from the table. His friends, with whom he has wined for several hours, join him in his departure, and their drunkenness drives them from the party to the street outside. They wander through the alleyways, searching for the doors of their beloveds. The lover arrives at the door he desires and bids his friends a successful night. He hears his beloved moving behind the closed door. He calls to her, but she refuses to admit him. He sings of his love, telling stories of great gods and heroes. She still refuses. He pleads. She refuses. He begs. She refuses. He grows silent. He begins to weep. He places his garland on his beloved’s doorpost, calls to her a last time, and drifts away into the darkness.1

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The paraklausithyron – literally “at the closed door” – tells the story of the excluded lover (exclusus amator).2 As depicted in the recreated scene above, a complete literary representation of the paraklausithyron encompasses a certain degree of drunkenness, a revel through the streets, a sung vigil at the closed door, and a garland worn by the lover.3 Very rarely, however, are all of these aspects present. Instead, the literary representations of the locked-out lover most often mix particular elements of the paraklausithyron to create different variations that interact with the motif’s wider contexts.

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1 This is my own creative reconstruction of a standard paraklausithyron.
2 For more on the exclusus amator, see Copley (1956).
3 For more on the definition and conventions of the paraklausithyron, see Copley’s seminal work (1942). See also, Cairns (1972), Canter (1920), and Yardley (1978).
The paraklausithyron, the Greek term παρακλαυσίθυρον occurring only in Plutarch,\(^4\) refers most narrowly, as Copley (1942) and MacKay (1956) argue, to the song of the *exclusus amator*.\(^5\) These scholars, however, broaden the definition to include the wider physical and mental environment and the actions of the lover as he is singing.\(^6\) That is, though the formal definition may only include the lover’s lament, popular interpretations of the paraklausithyron encompass the contextual elements that surround the motif. As such, the paraklausithyron – as it is studied and analyzed within this thesis – will include the drinking party (*symposion*) before the lover’s revel, a revel through the streets (*komos*), a vigil at the door of the beloved, the lover’s song, and the variations of these elements that characterize the motif.\(^7\)

The paraklausithyron finds its roots in the Greek cultural and literary traditions of the *symposion*, a time of drinking together, and the *komos*, the revelry through the streets afterward (Chapter 1). It predominantly appears in the Greek elegies of Theognis,\(^8\) though the motif appears scattered in the Greek lyric and pastoral corpora.\(^9\) The paraklausithyron moved westward from Greece to Rome through Hellenistic influences,\(^10\) and it is in the works of the Roman poets Catullus, Propertius, and Tibullus that we see the development of the motif within Roman love elegy (Chapter 2). These three poets use the paraklausithyron in ways that help transform the motif into a convention uniquely Roman by the time it reaches Ovid.

\(^4\) Plu. *Amat.* 8.753b: τίς οὖν ὁ κωλύων ἔστι κομὰζειν ἐπὶ θόραζ, ἀδείν τὸ παρακλαυσίθυρον, ἄναδεῖν τὰ εἰκόνια, παγκρατίζειν πρὸς τοὺς ἀντεραστάς; see Copley (1942) 97. According to Canter (1920) 358, Plutarch defines the paraklausithyron as a “sundry act that shows dedication to passion.”


\(^6\) A majority of the scholarship on the paraklausithyron encompasses the ‘whole’ paraklausithyron: the drunken carousal, the song, the vigil at the door, and the rejected lover’s departure from the door. See Cairns (1972), Canter (1920), Copley (1942), Yardley (1978).

\(^7\) For a catalog of the variations on the paraklausithyron, see Johnson (2004) 118 n.18-19.

\(^8\) Thgn. *Elegies* 1.829, 1.886, 1.940, 1.1207, and 1.1351. See Chapter 1.

\(^9\) Theoc. *Id.* 3. Copley (1942) 96 makes this assertion without citing exempla. For a list of instances of the paraklausithyron in Greek literature, see Preston (1916) 26.

\(^10\) Canter (1920) 361.
Ovid uses the motif throughout his elegiac corpus, especially in the *Amores, Heroides, Ars Amatoria, Remedia Amoris, Tristia*, and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. In fact, the motif is more prevalent and programmatic in Ovid than in his predecessors. Thus, when Canter (1920) limits his analysis of the paraklausithyron within Ovid’s corpus exclusively to the *Amores*, this is too restrictive.11 Ovid employs the motif in his *Amores* and *Heroides* much like the poets before him: as a means of characterization (Chapter 3). He also uses the motif in his *Ars Amatoria* and *Amores*, in a way similar to Theognis 1.1351, as a didactic tool used to teach lovers how to procure and avoid love (Chapter 4). After Ovid’s exile to Tomis on the Black Sea in 8 CE, however, he deviates from the standard variations of the paraklausithyron and transforms it into a very literal locking-out in his *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* (Chapter 5). No longer is the lover locked out of the beloved’s home; Ovid is now locked out of his beloved Rome. Thus, in Ovid’s hands, the motif is turned from its employment as fictional, poetic narrative and is instead used as a way to reconstruct Ovid’s exile.

In the following chapters, I will survey the paraklausithyron as a poetic theme within the works of Theognis, Catullus, Propertius, and Tibullus in order to understand the plight of the locked-out lover as represented in Ovid’s works, and I will analyze how Ovid uses the motif within his own elegiac works: as a means of characterization, as a didactic tool, and as a way of representing his own exile. This includes, but is by no means limited to, examining the origins of the paraklausithyron within its Greek cultural and literary contexts (paying special attention to Theognis), how Ovid adheres to the standard deployment of the theme as set down by his Latin predecessors but then deviates from this standardization, and the effect of these deviations on his elegiac and exilic poetry.

11 Canter (1920) 365: “after Ovid’s *Amores*, Latin literature yields no example of the lover’s song nor even a mention of one in many cases where we should expect such mention.”
Chapter One
The Origins of the Paraklausithyron: From Societal Tradition to Literary Convention

The Ovidian paraklausithyron finds its origins in the ancient Greek traditions of the symposion and komos. As these cultural phenomena of drinking parties and revelry became common within Greek society, the traditions slowly transformed into literary conventions that were employed by Greek authors like Plato and Xenophon. Symposion and komos deserve and have received scholarly attention in their own right, but this chapter will focus on the role of these phenomena as factors of the environment from which the paraklausithyron arose and on the importance of the literary paraklausithyron as it exists in the works of Theognis.

Because the literary paraklausithyron developed out of a wider cultural reality, an understanding of its expression depends upon an understanding of its social environment: the Greek symposion. The practice of the symposion remains an intriguing area of study because of its complexities in role and meaning within its larger cultural context. What can be seen clearly, however, is that Greek drinking is not confined to the symposion itself.

In Homer, drunkenness during a Bronze Age feast is seen as a way of celebrating battle victories and arrivals home. In fact, many in the archaic period may have seen these types of feasts first and foremost as highly regulated drinking sessions. As guests gather, libations and sacrifices are offered, followed by the consumption of meats and wines. The meal winds down,

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12 For more on the symposion and komos, see Bowie (1993), Murray (1990; 2012), and Slater (1991).
13 “Theognis” from here forward will refer to the Theognidea, whether truly authored by a single poet or not. In fact, the importance of the poetry is often overlooked in favor of debating the Theognis-question. For more on the Theognis-question, see Allen (1905), Highbarger (1927), and Pratt (1995).
14 Canter (1920) 361. Primary sources for the literary symposion include Plato, Symposium, and Xenophon, Symposium.
15 Examples of convivial drinking within the Homeric texts include Il. 2.402-440, 9.485-491, 14.1-8; Od. 8.456-457, 16.435-447. For more on the role of wine and wine drinking in Homer, see Papakonstantinou (2009).
16 See Od. 8.456; Papakonstantinou (2009) 11.
but drinking continues as the singing and dancing begin.\textsuperscript{17} Though these drunken feasts are highly celebratory in nature, they are not associated with erotic pleasure. That is, these parties are not directly related to revelry or to love-making. An amatory affair may result, but it can only be recognized as a product of chance. This is not the type of drinking environment from which the paraklausithyron arises, but this feasting and its context establishes that ritual is at the heart of Greek dining culture from the earliest periods.

In the 750s BCE, under the influence of Greek trade with the Near East, complex drinking and feasting rituals associated with pleasure arose.\textsuperscript{18} A time of \textit{symposion} – literally ‘drinking together’ – before a banquet was separated from the meal itself and became the main focus of attention for Greek celebrants. The male guests wore garlands, and the parties began and culminated in prayers to the gods and the pouring of libations: an important ritualistic moment.\textsuperscript{19}

The \textit{symposion}, as a social phenomenon, is most often studied within its literary contexts, but Murray’s (1990) anthology studies the physical spaces in which these drinking parties took place. These dining rooms, and their sizes and layouts, expand our understanding of the \textit{symposion} in that they provide a physical context for the drinking party. That is, what can happen at a \textit{symposion}, including the number of guests, the opulence of the party, and the activities that follow the feasting and drinking, relies on the space in which it is held. Most Greek dining rooms during the Archaic, Hellenistic, and Classical periods held seven to eleven couches and were best used for civic and ritual dining experiences,\textsuperscript{20} but sympotic dining rooms were much larger because, more often than not, these spaces allowed for multiple nine-couch

\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Od.} 1.150-152: “Now after the suitors had put away the desire for food and drink, their hearts turned to other things, to song and to dance; for these things are the crown of a feast,” (translation: Papakonstantinou, 2009: 11).
\textsuperscript{18} Murray (2012).
\textsuperscript{19} Murray (2012).
\textsuperscript{20} Bergquist (1990) 37.
subgroups within the same room, to be separated by a three-couch width distance.\textsuperscript{21} That is, though several guests would be present in the same room during the same larger \textit{symposion}, they would be separated enough that one group’s sympotic celebration and conversation would not interrupt that of another. This analysis of sympotic space allows us to understand that, by the Classical period in Greece, these \textit{symposia} were not small, intimate gatherings among friends. Instead, they were larger drinking parties in which groups could form to create their own individual sympotic conversations and connections.

After the \textit{symposion}, a \textit{komos} – a drunken, mass revelry through the streets – followed the festivities.\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Komoi} most often led to the door of a neighborhood brothel, though there are some cases in which the door of a specific beloved is sought.\textsuperscript{23} The lover’s lament at the door is the climax of the \textit{komos}, and he places his garland on the door as he sings. When the song is over and the beloved has still not accepted his advances, the drunken lover picks himself up from the threshold and stumbles home.

As with any societal practice, custom infiltrates literature, and soon convention arises. The literary convention of \textit{symposion} is the main focus of two seminal Greek works: Plato’s \textit{Symposium} and Xenophon’s of the same name. In Plato’s dialogue, characters expound upon the definition of love. The narrative opens, however, with Apollodorus agreeing to tell an unknown friend the famed story of the party given years before that celebrated the success of Agathon’s first tragedy (Pl. \textit{Smp}. 172a-174a). Though there is a meal shared among the guests, Socrates does not arrive at the party until the dinner is nearly over (Pl. \textit{Smp}. 174a). It is not so much that

\textsuperscript{21} Bergquist (1990) 46.

\textsuperscript{22} Instances of the \textit{komos} within the Greek literary tradition include Thgn. 1.1351, 1.1201, 1.886, 1.1065, 1.829, 1.940, 1.1046; Theoc. \textit{Idyl}. 3; E. Fr. 453.8 and 71.8, Cyc. 492, 445, 497, 508, 537, 39, 534, 451, ALC. 476, 815, 831, 918, 804, 343, \textit{Hipp}. 55, \textit{Supp}. 390, Tr. 1184, \textit{IT} 1197, \textit{Hel}. 1469, \textit{Ph}. 790b, \textit{Ba}. 1167; Soph. \textit{Fr}. 361; Hdt. 1.22.1; Ar. \textit{Th}. 988 and 104, Pl. 1040; Hes. \textit{Sc}. 281; X. \textit{HG} 4.3.22.2, 5.2.7.10, 6.4.18.6, \textit{Smp}. 2.1.2, An. 3.4.10.1, 6.5.6.5, 6.5.7.2, 7.1.13.3, 7.4.11.3, Cyr.7.5.25.3, 7.5.15.2, 5.4.4.2.

\textsuperscript{23} Copley (1942) 97. It can be assumed that, within the Greek tradition, a paraklausithyron, in which the lover laments at the door of his beloved, will not take place unless a drunken revelry has occurred beforehand.
Socrates is too lost in thought to come inside but that the meal is not integral to the success of symposion itself, and, therefore, it can be missed. After dinner, the guests decide not to partake in the drinking too heavily as they are all still hungover from the night before, and they send away the female entertainers and decide instead to discuss love. The guests are not drinking heavily, but it can be assumed that they are still drinking while they recite their speeches. The nature of Plato’s dialogue points to the importance of love in oratory and of oratory in love, and it is this relationship between love and persuasion that becomes so apparent in the speeches given by the locked-out lover to his beloved during his own paraklausithyron.

Toward the end of the Symposium, after Socrates’ own discourse, a drunk Alcibiades, wearing a thick garland of ivy, violets, and ribbons and with his reveling companions, bursts through the door (Pl. Smp. 212d). After quickly drinking four pints of wine, Alcibiades begins to deliver a eulogy to Socrates. Though the guests at the symposion are initially shocked by Alcibiades’ sudden appearance, his drunken state and garlanded-head do not surprise the others since such decorated revelry was expected from those participating in the drinking party. Plato’s Symposium later ends in the same way any true symposion might: a large group of revelers, drunk and garlanded, breaks in, and disorder ensues (Pl. Smp. 222c-223d). This commotion – a komos in itself – leads into the streets and, perhaps (we could imagine), even ends in a paraklausithyron of its own.

Like Plato’s dialogue, Xenophon’s Symposium begins outside of the symposion itself, but the drinking party is given by Kallias in celebration of another friend’s success: Autolykos has been victorious in the young men’s pankration at the recent Panathenaic Games. The garlanded guests at Kallias’ symposion also partake in a meal before heavy drinking, but all are silent at the dinner until an entertainer, most likely meant for the later part of the evening, arrives and sparks

24 At Pl. Smp. 185c, Aristophanes is unable to speak after Pausanias due to his wine-induced hiccups.
conversation (Xen. Sym. 1.11). Here we see that the meal is the least important event of the night; instead, the drinking party to follow has been deemed more essential to the success of the evening because it is at this point that entertainment and conversation take place. Though the guests in Plato’s Symposium quickly dismiss their entertainers, Xenophon spends two chapters describing the entertainment enjoyed by Kallias’ guests (Xen. Sym. 3.1-4.64). It is not that conversation is not important to Xenophon – he spends the rest of his dialogue expounding upon the nature of true goodness and of love – but that entertainment and the pleasure derived from entertainment is also integral to the success of a symposion. In the end of Xenophon’s Symposium, Autolykos leaves the drinking party to walk through the streets, perhaps to pursue his own beloved in his own paraklausithyron, and the guests are so moved by the words of love spoken that the unmarried vow to marry and the married return to their wives (Xen. Sym. 9.1-7). Like Plato’s Symposium, the guests in this work may, in fact, turn into revelers as they enter into the streets and attempt to gain access through the doors of their own beloveds.

Though the drunkenness and revelry exemplified in symposia and komoi – both historical and literary – are factors in understanding the environment from which the paraklausithyron springs, it is important to note that the literary treatment of the paraklausithyron does not necessarily include references to the drinking and revelry beforehand. Instead, more often than not, an audience must assume the narrator’s garlanded drunkenness and revelry, providing for themselves the context from which the lament at the locked door arises.

It is in the elegies of the 6th century BCE Greek poet Theognis that we see the literary nature of the paraklausithyron in detail, and it is perhaps because of his programmatic use of such themes that Theognis is the first author after Homer, Hesiod, and the Homeric Hymns to
have an independent literary tradition. Theognis boasts an impressive 1,300 extant verses, and his first mention of revelry comes in line 829 as he describes “those who wear crimson garlands on their blond hair at feasts.” These garlands, though present in the symposion-focused works of Plato and Xenophon, are not always present in the later paraklausithyra of the Roman poets (see Chapter 2), and this is the only extant example of the garland within Theognis’ works. That said, a reader of this ancient text can understand that the presence of garlands in Plato’s Symposium, Xenophon’s Symposium, and the Theognidea points to the prevalence of the accessory in a lover’s sympotic revelries and the paraklausithyra that follow.

Later in Theognis’ elegies, his narrator prays that peace and prosperity attend his city, so that he may hold revelry with others (Thgn. 886). The paraklausithyron, then, is dependent upon peace, and it is logical that the sequence of the sympotic activities require both peace and prosperity, both on state-wide and personal levels. One cannot be locked out of his beloved’s home if he has not first reveled through the streets to some extent. That revelry cannot take place without drunkenness, and one cannot be drunk if he cannot afford the wine to make him so. It is a personal peace and prosperity, allowing for the consumption of wine and ensuing revelry, that affords one an opportunity to lament at his beloved’s door. With this, it also must be noted that the narrator anticipates revelry and the subsequent paraklausithyron. It is not a mistaken result of a begrudged night of drinking but a highly desired and planned for outcome.

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25 That is, Theognis’ use of the paraklausithyron in elegy points to his unique position as a poet at this time: he is not an epicist. He is our first extant elegist and, thus, oftentimes seen as the progenitor of Greek and Roman elegy: Allen (1905) 386. Though Allen may seem an outdated source, his is a seminal work to which all studying Theognis and the Theognis-question must refer.

26 For more on the manuscript transmission through the fall of Rome to the rise of the printing press, see Dover (1972) 1-6. For the seminal work on manuscript transmission, see Reynolds and Wilson (1991).

27 Gerber (1999) 293. The challenges presented by Theognis’ manuscript tradition are unresolved and are likely to remain so. By “first,” I do not mean to comment upon the linear ordering of the poet’s corpus, but I am offering a convenient means of reference for my reader.

28 Despite the garland perhaps not being literally present, an audience can assume to a certain degree that the garland, and the drunkenness it represents, is, in fact, present during each paraklausithyron.

Theognis continues and apologizes for his inability to sing due to his participation in a *komos* the night before (Thgn. 940). Though his apology is directed at his present audience and not a beloved, and though the apology does not mention any possible romantic rendezvous, he directly confesses the power with which he reveled and lamented the night before. His failure to sing is a result of the previous night’s ardent lament, and though we do not know the song he sang at his beloved’s door, we can safely assume that he sang with both passion and desperation.

In lines 1207 and 1351, respectively, Theognis welcomes and then warns against the *komos*. Line 1207 reads, “We neither reject you from our revel nor do we invite you. You are welcome when present and a friend when absent.” The verse asserts that revelry is an expression of unconditional friendship. One stays a friend whether they participate in a revelry or not, and jealousy and rivalry are kept out of the sympotic celebration. There is, however, a possible secondary interpretation of line 1207. The first half of this line depends upon the double nature of the paraklausithyron. The revel is neither an event to be excluded from nor an event to be invited to because it is neither good nor bad. That is, the narrator’s addressee is not missing out because there is no guarantee that the revelry and the subsequent lament at the door of the beloved will be successful. The lover may not, in fact, get past the door. This uncertainty of personal outcome extends to the second half of the line: it is not that Theognis’ narrator is particularly indifferent to his companions or even cold, but, instead, he understands the end goal of his revelry as the paraklausithyron, which, in all known ancient literary cases, is a singular affair.

Line 1351 marks a change in the narrator’s tone: “Do not go carousing, boy, but take an old man's advice. It is not fitting for a young man to carouse.” He has turned from a lover to an advisor who is either older or assuming the role of an older Greek man. In either case, we can see
a heightened apprehension associated with the revelry and subsequent paraklausithyron – an apprehension that is based upon the possibility of an unsuccessful paraklausithyron. It is as if the older, more experienced narrator is no longer hoping to go on revelries and get behind the door of his beloved. Instead, he knows now that he will most likely not end his night with a successful paraklausithyron, and he is taking this opportunity to save the time of a younger lover about to embark on his own revelry and lament.30

It is in Theognis’ poetry, and in the sympotic dialogues of Plato and Xenophon, that we can see how symposion and revelry have moved from actual practice and turned into a literary motif: the revelers become characters, and symposion, komos, and paraklausithyron become plot. The societal traditions of symposion and komos allowed a context of drinking and revelry without which the paraklausithyron could not exist, since it was an extension of that very environment, and it is this transition from tradition to convention that is key in understanding how the Roman poets and Ovid himself employed the literary technique. That is, it displays an adaptation of Greek literary style and is not necessarily an appropriation of Greek drinking culture. It is not that the Roman poets, including Ovid, were adopting a Greek way of life; they were not participating in symposia and revelries in the same sense that Plato, Xenophon, and Theognis were writing about these practices and not necessarily partaking in them. Instead, the Roman poets are adopting a literary convention already embedded within Greek literature through the works of Plato, Xenophon, and Theognis, and they are using the established convention of revelry and lament and its assumptions of garlanded drunkenness to place their own poetry within an established literary tradition.

30 It is interesting to note, that in nearly all extant cases of the Roman paraklausithyra, the locked-out lover is not yet let in before the scene ends.
Chapter Two
The Paraklausithyron in Pre-Ovidian Rome

Greek literary traditions, including the use of an assumed drunken revelry and the paraklausithyron, spread from Greece to Rome through Hellenization.\textsuperscript{31} As such, in the process of the Roman iambic-elegiac poets (Catullus,\textsuperscript{32} Propertius, and Tibullus) adopting the Greek literary motifs of drunken revelry and the resulting lament employed by Plato, Xenophon, and Theognis, they establish certain normalized tendencies for the paraklausithyron – including multiple addressees, \textit{diffamationes} (concerning illicit love affairs), fixations on the door itself, shifts of blame, and open endings – and, thus, they set up the Latin iambic-elegiac milieu present at the beginning of Ovid’s career.

Though the paraklausithyron and its Latin variations are present in varying degrees throughout the Catullan, Propertian, and Tibullan corpora,\textsuperscript{33} in this chapter I will use a “primary feature” paraklausithyron from each poet (Catullus 67, Propertius 1.16, and Tibullus 2.6) to illustrate the normalized tendencies of the Latin iambic-elegiac poets.\textsuperscript{34} Each poem will act as a single exemplum indicative of the uses of the motif by the individual poets, and this given parameter will allow for a more detailed analysis of the paraklausithyron and its typical variations as employed separately by Catullus, Propertius, and Tibullus.

The audiences and addressees of Catullus 67, Propertius 1.16, and Tibullus 2.6 fluctuate throughout each individual poem. Catullus 67 begins as the narrator arrives at the threshold, begging the door to explain why it has deserted the ancient loyalties of its owner (\textit{dic agedum}
\textsuperscript{31} Canter (1920) 361.
\textsuperscript{32} Some people debate Catullus’ identity as an iambic-elegist, but for the purposes of this paper, he is considered a poetic influence for Ovid. On the generic definition of Catullus’ poetry, see Newman (1990).
\textsuperscript{33} Instances of the paraklausithyron include Catul. 32, 61, and 63; Prop. 1.3, 1.10, 1.12, 1.13, 1.18, 2.5, 2.6, 2.9, 2.14, 2.16, 2.17, 2.20, 2.23, 2.25, and 2.29. Tib. 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.8, and 2.6.
\textsuperscript{34} A ‘primary feature’ paraklausithyron is an instance in which the motif plays a fundamental and significant role within the poem.
nobis, quare mutate feraris / in dominum veterem deseruisse fidem, Catul. 67.7-8). The narrator cries:

O dulci iucunda viro, iucunda parenti,
salve, teque bona Iuppiter auctet ope,
ianua…
Catul. 67.1-3

Oh pleasing to a sweet husband, pleasing to a father,
hello, and may Jupiter increase you with his good power,
door.

Here the narrator is addressing the door (clearly defined by the vocative ianua), but when the door begins to defend itself in the ninth line of the poem, the conversation turns and the narrator – to whom the door is speaking – is the new addressee. The door, speaking for itself, insists that the infidelities of the home’s mistress are not its fault, though they are said to be (non (ita Caecilio placeam, cui tradita nunc sum) / culpa mea est, quamquam dicitur esse mea, Catul. 67.9-10), and, after some prodding by the narrator (nos volumus: nobis dicere ne dubita, Catul. 67.18), it tells of the mistress’s indiscretions. Though the door is defensive at first, its eagerness to entertain the narrator with stories of infidelity and its assumption of omniscience point to its enjoyment of its own learned role. The door does not disdain the illicit love affairs it has witnessed and even allowed, but it revels in their scandalous nature.

Strikingly similar to Catullus 67, Propertius 1.16 also presents a conversation between a door and a locked-out lover. Propertius’ lover, after introducing himself as a man for whom disgraceful garlands are not lacking (non desunt turpes… corolla, Prop. 1.16.7), entreats the door to explain why it is always closed and mute to him (quid mihi tam duris clausa taces foribus?, Prop. 1.16.18), and the rest of the lover’s spoken monologue remains addressed to the door. It is not until the last four lines of the poem, when his monologue is complete, that the door turns to address the audience. He cries:

haec ille et si quae miseris novistis amantes,
et matutinis obstrepit alitibus.
sic ego nunc dominae viiti et semper amantis
fletibus alterna differor invidia.

Prop.16.45-48

He makes these [laments] and whatever else you miserable lovers invent,
and he drowns out the morning birds.
Thus now to the fault of my mistress and the perpetual laments of the lover
I am condemned by varying hatred.

Here the door has taken over as narrator, and though it blames its mistress and the cries of the lover for its reputation as a hated figure in erotic elegy, it does not seem angered by its status. Instead, it is as if the door has given into its fate as a despised threshold. This inevitability, then, pervades the paraklausithyron itself. The door will always remain hated because the lover will always cry at the step of his beloved.

Unlike Catullus 67 and Propertius 1.16, Tibullus 2.6 does not address the door. Instead, Tibullus’ lover addresses an undisclosed audience (lines 1-4, 21-27, and 30-52), Love (lines 5-20), his own beloved (lines 28-30), and, finally, the lena Phryne (lines 53-54). The lover begins his song by asking what will happen to tender love now that Macer has gone off to camp (tenero quid fiet Amori?, Tib. 2.6.1), and he quickly turns to address the boy Cupid in line 5. He wishes that Amor, if it were possible, would break his own arrows and torches so that he would no longer have to suffer the torments of a militant love (lines 15-16). In line 20, the narrator turns his attention back to the undisclosed addressee from before, claiming that hope nourishes the farmer (Tib. 2.6.21) and consoles the slave (Tib. 2.6.25). In lines 28 and 29, the lover turns to address his beloved:

ei mihi, ne vincas, dura puella, deam.
parce, per immature tuae precor ossa sororis

Tib. 2.6.28-29

Woe to me! Hard girl, do not defeat the goddess.
Spare [me], I pray by the too-young-to-die bones of your sister.
The narrator returns to the undisclosed audience in lines 30 through 52 before cursing the *lena* in the final two lines. This use of multiple addressees within the same poem creates varied and competing perspectives, which, in turn, enriches the dramatic value of the paraklausithyron and allows for potentially unresolved endings.

The Latin elegiac paraklausithyron is often combined with a poetic *diffamatio* of the illicit love affair. This is found in Catullus 67. Though Catullus’ narrator is standing on the threshold, he is not participating in a full paraklausithyron as defined in Chapter 1. Instead, the narrator is locked out from knowing why the door has betrayed his master (Catul. 67.7-8) and is solely interested in learning what the door knows. The gossipy nature of this encounter immediately lends itself to the *diffamatio* that follows. The door tells nearly all of its mistress’s indiscretions, only “closing the door” and locking out the lover in the final four lines of the poem:

praeterea addebat quondam, quem dicere nolo
nomine, ne tollat rubra supercilia.
longus homost, magnas cui lites intulit olim
falsum mendaci ventre puerperium.
Catul. 67.45-48

Further, she added one whom I do not wish to say by name, lest he raise his blushing eyebrows. He is a tall man, whom a great lawsuit once inflicted with a false accusation of childbirth.

The mistress’s illicit secrets are being told, perhaps not even for the first time, and both Postumius and Cornelius are also called out for their sexual misdeeds. As the reputations of the mistress and her lovers are tarnished by the door’s admissions, we grow to trust the door more as an omniscient narrator.

Both Catullus 67 and Propertius 1.16 also illustrate how the Latin elegiac paraklausithyron commonly fixes attention on the door itself, as both poems address the threshold of the beloveds. Though probably not unique to these Latin poets, the obsession with
the door as audience is a variation not emphasized in the extant works of the Greek authors analyzed in Chapter 1. The door is the ultimate judge of those who may enter and when they may do so. Catullus’s narrator insists, “Door, it is your fault,” (ianua, culpa tua est, Catul. 67.14). Not only is the door to blame for the mistress’s infidelities, it is also seen as the omniscient narrator, a key figure in Latin elegy. The door knows all, and the narrator begs it to tell him more. Propertius’ lover, on the other hand, does not blame the door for admitting lovers into the homes of their beloveds but begs the door to let him in yet another time. He entreats:

Ianua, vel domina pentius crudelior ipsa,
quid mihi tam duris clausa taces foribus?
Prop. 1.16.17-18

Door, even crueler than my mistress herself deep within,
why are your hard doors closed for me?

As in Catullus 67, the door is the ultimate arbiter of who may enter and is worthy of all the groveling a locked-out lover can muster.

Tibullus’ treatment of the door in 2.6 differs from that of Catullus and Propertius. Instead of directly addressing the door, Tibullus’ narrator questions Cupid, asking, “How often have I sworn never to return to the threshold?” (iuravi quotiens rediturum ad limina numquam?, Tib. 2.6.13). Though the narrator in this poem is not focusing his attention on the door as Catullus’ or Propertius’ narrators do, the fact that the door is mentioned shows its importance to the narrator. The threshold acts as a hallmark for the paraklausithyron so much that Tibullus’ narrator references the door in his plea.

A fourth normalized variation of the Latin elegiac paraklausithyron is the shifting of blame from lover to beloved to outside force and back again. Deflecting blame allows the poets to illustrate their lovers’ entire submission to their own beloveds, which, in turn, enhances the servitium amoris, a theme that dominates the Latin elegiac genre. The shifting of blame exists in
Catullus 67 as a mechanic for the *diffamatio* in that it allows for the transmission of gossip from one speaker to the next. Catullus’ narrator asks the door why he has deserted the old loyalties of his ownership (lines 7-8), and the door immediately defends itself by claiming that it is not his fault since the woman whom it was assigned to keep in the house came already defiled (lines 19-20). The door has deflected the blame onto the adulterous mistress, and the narrator does not argue with this shift. Instead, he asks for more details (line 18).

In keeping with the shifting of blame, the Latin elegiac paraklausithyron tends toward open, unresolved endings. We see this most clearly in Catullus 67 and Propertius 1.16. After revealing details about its mistress’s infidelities, Catullus’ door finally decides to keep quiet. It tells the narrator:

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praeterea addebat quondam, quem dicere nolo
nomine, ne tollat rubra supercilia.
longus homost, magnas cui lites intulit olim
falsum mendaci ventre puerperium.
Catul. 67.45-48
```

Further, she added one whom I do not wish to say by name, lest he raise his blushing eyebrows. He is a tall man, whom a great lawsuit once inflicted with a false accusation of childbirth.

When the door refuses to give the name of the adulterer to the narrator, it is figuratively shutting itself on the narrator and locking him, and the audience, out of what he desperately seeks: the gossip. Just as the narrator is locked out, so are we. We are cut off, left to guess the name of the tall, blushing man.

Though we are not locked out from the ending of Propertius 1.16, the open, unresolved ending does not allow us to know if the locked-out lover is let back into his beloved’s home. In this, Propertius’ narrator has given us the opportunity to know how it feels to be locked-out. We
are left wanting more, wondering how we can persuade the narrator to allow us back to his beloved’s doorstep to learn what ultimately happened.\textsuperscript{35}

Without the Catullan or Propertian narrator granting access behind the door, we know nothing for sure. By contrast, Ovid’s use of the paraklausithyron as a didactic tool will explore further the role of the narrator by allowing the audience to know what is behind the door and, in doing so, emphasizing his authority as the \textit{praeceptor amoris}.

The variations of the paraklausithyron within the corpora of Catullus, Propertius, and Tibullus point to the motif’s versatility and are evidence of its flexibility in how it is deployed. These Roman iambic-elegiac poets, however, use different features of the paraklausithyron with enough consistency that they begin to set expectations of variation for the motif. That is, variation becomes part of the paraklausithyron and part of the expectations audiences have when presented with the motif. With this, these normalized tendencies set the stage for Ovid’s own poetry. The poems of Catullus and the Latin erotic elegies of Propertius and Tibullus allow for Ovid an avenue in which he can experiment within the standardized variations. Ovid uses the paraklausithyron and its Latin elegiac variations, much like his predecessors, as ways to expand the motif and incorporate it into his own elegy. The multiple audiences, \textit{diffamationes} (concerning illicit love affairs), fixations on the door itself, shifts of blame, and open endings, all of which are present in Ovid’s elegies and which will be explored in subsequent chapters, provide for him a precedent to use the paraklausithyron as an elegiac device (Chapter 3) and a didactic tool (Chapter 4) when writing his erotic elegy. More significantly, however, Ovid uses these normalized tendencies in his exilic poetry to present himself as the locked-out lover at Rome’s door (Chapter 5).

\textsuperscript{35} This locking-out of the audience lends itself directly to Ovid’s \textit{Am.} 1.5, in which the narrator locks the audience out from the lovemaking at the end of the poem.
Chapter Three
Ovid’s Paraklausithyron as Characterization

Ianitor—indignum!—dura religate catena,
difficilem moto cardine pande forem!
quod precor, exiguum est—aditu fac ianua parvo
obliquum capiat semiadaperta latus.
Am. 1.6.1-4

Doorkeeper, bound – undeserved – with a hard chain,
set the hinge in motion and open the stubborn door.
That for which I pray is small: crack the door a small gap
and let it, half-opened, admit me sideways.

Ovid’s use of the paraklausithyron within his elegiac poetry, specifically in his Amores, Heroides, Ars Amatoria, and Remedia Amoris, follows, in some respects, the motif as developed in his Greek and Roman predecessors. Though he employs the motif, much like Theognis, as a didactic tool in the Ars and Remedia (Chapter 4), in this chapter I will explore how Ovid uses the paraklausithyron in his Amores and Heroides to characterize the mindsets of the lover on the threshold and the beloved behind the door.

We first encounter Ovid’s use of the paraklausithyron as a means of characterization in his Amores at poem 1.6. In a manner similar to Catullus and Propertius, Ovid’s narrator forgoes addressing the beloved and instead begs the doorkeeper and, by extension, the door he guards for entrance into his beloved’s bedroom. In the first four lines of the poem, the narrator attempts to appeal to and convince the doorkeeper that he sympathizes with his servitude by referring to his binded-ness as “undeserved” (indignum, Am. 1.6.1). He then, to empathize, explains how love has diminished them both:

longus Amor tales corpus tenuavit in usus
aptaque subducto pondere membra dedit
Am. 1.6.5-6

Long Love thinned out [my] body.
and, by reducing my weight, gave me limbs fit for such practices.

These two lines provide for readers the mindset of the lover, half-defeated, as he makes his way to the door yet again. Worn out and emaciated by Love, he is ready to take his plea further, now beseeching the slave guarding the threshold, and he is using any means of persuasion he can find to get through the locked door.

When he finds that empathy alone will not work, the narrator broadens his appeal, this time combining empathy with demands:

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certe ego, cum posita stares ad verbera veste,
ad dominam pro te verba tremente tuli.
ergo quae valuit pro te quoque gratia quondam,
heu facinus! pro me nunc valet illa parum?
reddo vicem meritis! grato licet esse quod optas.
tempora noctis eunt; excute poste seram.
excute: sic, inquam, longa relevere catena,
nec tibi perpetuo serva bibatur aqua.
Am. 1.6.19-26
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Certainly when you were standing for a beating with your clothes set aside,
I brought trembling words to your mistress for you.
So does that good will, which once had influence for you –
ah, the outrage! – now have no influence for me?
Repay me in kind: here is your chance to show your gratitude.
The hours of the night are passing; remove the bolt from the doorpost.
Remove it: thus you may one day be released from your long-endured chain,
and not drink of the water of slavery forever.

Though the narrator is still trying to convince the doorkeeper to let him in, he has left his empathetic tone and is attempting another tactic. He reminds the slave of the favors he has done for him and demands reciprocation. Through this argument, more a threat than any sort of empathy, the lover’s desperation for satisfaction is beginning to show.

Ovid’s narrator continues to beg the slave to open the door, asking what he would do to an enemy when he shuts out a friend like he has now (Am. 1.6.31). He swears that he is not an enemy and that he comes alone, save for cruel Amor (Am. 1.6.34):
I could not ever dismiss [Love], if I wanted to.
I would even be parted from my own limbs before that.
So Love is with me and a little wine around my temples
and a garland crooked on my well-oiled locks.

Ovid’s narrator, in a confession via paraklausithyron (drunk, wearing a garland, and at a closed door), recognizes Love’s power and his own impotence. He is powerless in the face of Love to the extent that even if he wanted to leave the threshold, he could not. His mindset is no longer that of desperation but of acceptance: he will continue to remain at the threshold, begging, regardless of the pain that Love has caused and is still causing him. He is, in effect, every bit as much a slave at the door as the doorkeeper.

The narrator’s attitude toward the doorkeeper and the locked door fluctuates between desperation and acceptance for the next thirty lines until he finally becomes angry. He curses the doorkeeper, begins to threaten the door, and tells him that he belongs in prison (Am. 1.6.64):

non te formosae decuit servare puellae
limina, sollicito carcere dignus eras.
iamque pruinuosus molitur Lucifer axes,
inque suum miserios excitat ales opus.
at tu, non laetis detracta corona capillis,
dura super tota limina nocte iace;
tu dominae, cum te proiectam mane videbit,
temporis absumpti tam male testis eris.
qualiscumque vale sentique abeuntis honorem,
lente nec admisso turpis amante, vale.
vos quoque, crudeles rigido cum limine postes
duaque conservae ligna, valete, fores.

You are not fit to guard a beautiful girl’s doorstep, you deserve the prison’s torture.
And now the Morning Star moves his frosty wheels,
and the cock arouses wretched people for their work.
But you, garland, torn down from my miserable hair,
lie upon the hard threshold for the whole night. 
To my mistress – when, in the morning, she sees you thrown down –
you will be evidence of the time I so miserably wasted.
Farewell whatever kind of man [you are] and feel the honor of my leaving.
Unbending man and disgraceful for not admitting a lover, farewell.
You also, cruel doorposts with rigid threshold
and doors of unfeeling timber, fellow slaves, goodbye.

When the narrator realizes that he has no chance of seeing his beloved tonight, he becomes angry with the doorkeeper. His mindset has changed throughout the poem, going back and forth from dejection to acceptance, but anger is his final emotion, and it is this anger that sticks with him and drives him from the home of his beloved. 36 The rejection is absolute – a comprehension that Ovid’s narrator asserts through shared experiences: the lover, the doorkeeper, and the door are all fellow slaves to love. 37 The difference between the three slaves, however, is that, through anger, Ovid’s narrator is able to walk away.

Ovid shifts his method of characterization in Amores 1.8 so that he no longer addresses the slave who guards the door, but he, instead, overhears the procuress (lena) Dipsas giving directions behind the door. In the poem, the narrator overhears Dipsas’ instructions to her lady and, we assume, his own beloved as he hides behind the door, and again at the end of the poem, he loses his temper. Throughout Dipsas’ discourse, Ovid creates a unity between narrator and audience. We, along with the narrator, are experiencing Dipsas’ lesson as her instructions unfold, and so, by the end of her speech, we are also prepared to react in concert with the narrator. We feel his fury when Dipsas finishes her directions:

Vox erat in cursu, cum mea prodidit umbra,
at nostrae vix se continuere manus,
quin albam raramque comam lacrimosaque vino
lumina rugosas distraherentque genas.

36 In a parallel argument, Horace’s narrator hopes to escape love through anger: “If only open indignation would boil up in my heart, and scatter these unwelcome outpourings of grief, that in no way ease the pain of my sufferings…” (quodsi meis inaestuet praecordiis / libera bilis, ut haec ingrata ventis / dividat fomenta volnus nil malum levantia, Hor. Epod. 11.115-118)
37 The theme of the servitium amoris is explored most fully in the works of Copley (1947) and Lyne (1979).
Her voice was running on, when my shadow betrayed me,
since my hands could scarcely contain themselves,
ready to tear at her sparse white locks,
and eyes, full of drunken tears, and wrinkled cheeks.
May the gods give to her old age without home or wealth,
and endless winters and perpetual thirst!

The narrator so shakes with anger that, though he wants to assault Dipsas, he cannot because he does not have the strength. Instead, he ends the poem with a curse, damning her to an old age of poverty, endless winters, and constant thirst – fates, perhaps, worse than death. By setting up his audience to be empathetic, or at least sympathetic, Ovid’s narrator has seemingly invited us to determine where or with whom the betrayal in the poem lies. We, as an audience, think we are supposed to decide if the blame lies with the eavesdropping lover or with the procuress Dipsas. But although the narrator’s own anger is confined to six lines at the end, he uses the entire panel of Dipsas and her trickeries as an introduction to his anger and as a means of justifying that rage. By the time he loses his temper and tags the curse with Dipsas’ name, we are prepared to side with him to the extent that we forgive the fact that he is eavesdropping.

Again, we find that Ovid’s narrator uses the paraklausithyron as a device for characterization in *Amores* 2.2, a poem in which the lover attempts to convince his beloved, through hidden notes, to let him through the door. In this poem, however, he provides for us a small insight into the mindset of the beloved as well. When the lover first asks to meet the beloved, she denies his invitation by saying that it is not allowed (*non licet*, *Am*. 2.2.6) and blames the doorkeeper Bagoas for letting it through (*quod nimium dominae cura molesta tua est*, *Am*. 2.2.7).
Am. 2.2.8). Though Ovid’s narrator spends the rest of the poem attempting to convince the doorkeeper to loosen his watch on the girl, these first eight lines highlight the nervousness of the beloved and the forbidden nature of the exchange. We are not told the consequences of the beloved’s husband discovering the affair, but we know from the secret notes passed through the door that the repercussions would not be good.

Finally in the Heroides, Helen’s letter to Paris gives us a fuller perspective of the female beloved behind the closed door. Unlike in Amores 2.2, where the narrator only shares with the audience his beloved’s anxieties, the fictionalized Helen in Heroides 17 narrates the letter, telling him that no doors will be held against him (Her. 17.8), and she assures Paris of her love for him as her captor. This pledge, in providing for the audience Helen’s feelings about her abduction, alters the adultery at the root of the Trojan War and points to the success of Paris’ paraklausithyron. Paris, as a lover, has gotten behind Helen’s door and has stolen her away from Menelaus for himself. She, in promising that he will never be locked-out from her, is furthering the motif by creating the potential for another paraklausithyron for any other future locked-out suitors. She has gone so far as to promise that no adulterer, as Paris is now her husband, has her approval to get behind her locked door (Her. 17.19). It is interesting to note here that though this letter from Helen to Paris characterizes the mindset of the beloved behind the locked door, it is still a poem written by a masculine author (Ovid) imagining what the beloved inside would say to her lover.

Ovid’s use of the paraklausithyron as a mode of characterization in his Amores and Heroides shows the poet’s ability to mold the motif from a plot device, as in his predecessors, to a tool used to further explore the mindsets of the participants of a motif so canonized at this point. His variations here in the beginning of his elegiac works set the stage for his physical
paraklausithyron within his exilic poetry in that they allow him to explore how he, as physically locked out of Rome, feels during his own literal paraklausithyron.
Chapter Four
The Didactic Paraklausithyron in Ovid

Postibus et durae supplex blandire puellae,
et capiti demptas in fore pone rosas.
Cum volet, accedes; cum te vitabit, abibis.
A.A. 2.527-529

As a suppliant, flatter even the posts of the hard girl,
and place on the doorstep the rose wreath from your head.
When she wants you, you will come; when she shuns you, you will leave.

Reaching beyond his Roman predecessors, Ovid, like Theognis, uses the paraklausithyron in his *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris* as a didactic moment, specifically to teach lover and beloved how to both obtain and discard love. Unlike Theognis, however, Ovid’s *praecceptor amoris* is not an apprehensive teacher warning against the paraklausithyron; instead, Ovid’s narrator suggests methods for getting behind the door, reasons for opening the door, and reasons for keeping the door shut. The paraklausithyron, as a practical, instructional tool, affords the narrator – as a universal teacher, instructing both lover and beloved – an authority not yet seen in Roman erotic elegy and, in turn, highlights the true power of Ovid’s poetry: its ability to get behind the door.

The *Ars Amatoria* is an elegiac poem dedicated to amatory instruction. In the first two books of the poem, Ovid’s narrator acts as an instructor in the art of love. He provides advice for lovers seeking girlfriends, including how to find a beloved, how to win the girl over, how to use aphrodisiacs, and how to keep the affair secret. In the third book, however, Ovid’s narrator shifts his focus and begins addressing the female beloveds. He instructs women on how to take care of their appearances, how to appeal to the sensibilities of a man, and how to act during the affair.

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41 Cf. Thgn. 1.1351; Chapter 1.
In the *Ars Amatoria*, one of the techniques the narrator teaches the lovers is how to take advantage of the paraklausithyron. We first find this when the narrator explains how tears are advantageous because with tears a lover can move the hardest iron (*A.A.* 1.659). With this, the narrator, though he never explicitly states that he has cried at the door, presents himself as experienced, giving the audience the impression that his advice carries weight. As such, the narrator invites the audience to trust him and, if we do, we cede to him an authority over the subject. With this, we see how the paraklausithyron fits into the didactic nature of the poem: like the other techniques given by Ovid’s narrator, a lover performing a paraklausithyron well can gain a successful night of lovemaking.

Ovid’s narrator asserts his authority through the paraklausithyron in the second book of the *Ars Amatoria*. He does not promise that the lover will always break through the locked door, but he gives the lover every known strategy for earning admittance:

*Atque erit opposita ianua fulta sera,*
*At tu praeceps tecto delabere aperto:*
*Det quoque furtivas alta fenestra vias.*
*Laeta erit, et causam tibi se sciet esse pericli;*
*Hoc dominae certi pignus amoris erit.*
*A.A.* 2.244-248

And the door will have been shut with a fastened bar, but you will slip inside through the opened roof: she may also give a secret path through a high window. She will be happy, and she will know that she is the cause of peril for you; this will be the pledge of your mistress’s certain love.

Nearly 300 lines later, he picks up on his advice for a lover confronting a closed door:

*Dicta erit isse foras: intus fortasse videre est:*
*Issa foras, et te falsa videre puta.*
*Clausa tibi fuerit promissa ianua nocte:*
*Perfer et inmunda ponere corpus humo.*
*Forsitan et vultu mendax ancilla superbo*
*Dicet, “quid nostras obsidet iste fores?”*
*Postibus et durae blandire puellae,*
*Et capiti demptas in fore pone rosas.*
*Cum volet, accedes; cum te vitabit, abibis.*
*A.A.* 2.521-529
She will have been said to have gone out. You may see that she is inside. Think that she has gone out and that you have seen falsely.

On the promised night the door will have been closed to you; endure to the end and place your body on the filthy ground. Perhaps even the lying slave girl with her arrogant expression will say, “Why does this man besiege our doorstep?”

As a suppliant, flatter even the posts of the hard girl, and place on the doorstep the rose wreath from your head. When she wants you, you will come; when she shuns you, you will leave.

Though he suggests multiple strategies – including slipping through opened roofs and high windows, enduring the beloved’s refusals, lying on the ground, and flattering the door keeper and the door itself – for getting behind the closed door, Ovid’s narrator never gives guarantees. Further, he never directly refers to himself as an authority. Instead, he makes his audience see that he is the experienced teacher we should trust and that his poetry, and the lessons we learn within, is the tool that will help us get behind the door.

It is in the third book of the *Ars Amatoria* that Ovid turns his attention away from his audience of male lovers and instead addresses the female beloveds he has taught his men to seek. This change in audience, paramount to the purpose of the overall poem in that it shows his ability to teach those on both sides of the door, is a variation not yet seen in Latin erotic elegy.

We see the narrator’s instructions to the beloveds behind the door within the first hundred lines of the poem. He warns the beloved that old age will come and, when it does, lovers will no longer lie at her doorstep:

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Tempus erit, quo tu, quae nunc excludis amantes,
frigida deserta nocte iacebis anus,
nec tua frangetur nocturna ianua rixa,
sparsa nec invenies limina mane rosa.
A.A. 3.69-72
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There will be a time when you, who now shut out your lovers, will lie old and alone in the cold of night, and you will not find your entrance damaged by some nocturnal quarrel, nor your threshold sprinkled with roses at dawn.
Threatening a girl with old age to lure her outside is not a tactic unique to Ovid’s narrator, but it does put forward the essential motivation underlying the use of the paraklausithyron as a didactic tool within the work. The motif teaches that time will pass by and that there is impermanence in life. This, in turn, gives urgency to the motif by implying that the only way to fight old age and achieve immortality is to open the door to love.

In contrast to using the motif to instruct beloveds in opening the door, Ovid’s narrator uses the paraklausithyron to teach them how to attract the right type of lover: one who will fight for her love:

Ante fores iaceat, ‘crudelis ianua!’ dicat,
Multaque summisse, multa minanter agat.
Dulcia non ferimus: suco renovemur amaro;
Saepe perit ventis obruta cumba suis;
Hoc est, uxores quod non patiatur amari:
Convenient illas, cum voluere, viri;
Adde forem, et duro dicat tibi ianitor ore
‘Non potes,’ exclusum te quoque tanget amor.
A.A. 3.581-588

Let him lie before the door, saying: ‘Cruel entrance!,
pleading very humbly and threatening a lot.
We can’t stand sweetness: bitterness renews our taste;
often a ship sinks [as it is] swamped by a favorable wind:
this is what bitter wives cannot endure:
their husbands can come to them when they wish.
Add a closed door and a hard-mouthed doorkeeper,
saying: ‘You can’t,’ and love will touch you, too.

The lover is pleading and the beloved is to let him lie there. With this, the narrator’s instruction empowers the beloved and provides for her an example from which she can learn under what circumstances she should open her door: she should hear a balance in his song, not all sweet pleas and not all hard demands. The persistence of the lover, then, should attract the beloved and compel her to open her door, but the illicit nature of the affair should also entice her. Temptation increases when anyone hears the word “no” or “cannot” (357-358).

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42 For a catalog of threats of old age in both Greek and Latin literature, see Johnson (2004) 121 n. 25.
As both a reader and interpreter, the beloved must now decide how to take the elegiac lover. So, in Ovid’s paraklausithyron, the beloved is to be as crafty and learned as the lover, since Ovid’s narrator desires understanding in his addressees, no matter what side of the door they are on. The narrator instructs the girls to open their doors to their lovers, reminding them, as he does in the Amores, that old age will come to them soon (venturae memores iam nunc estote senectae, A.A. 3.59). He warns, however, not to open the door to lying men (ianua fallaci ne sit aperta viro, A.A. 3.456). Instead, girls must be learned in the art of the paraklausithyron, and they must know when to let their lovers in and when to make those at the door beg a little longer. Ovid’s narrator instructs his addressees to let their lovers lie on the doorstep (ante fores iaceat, A.A. 3.581) and to be pleased by the lover’s threats and tears, not just sweet supplications (multaque summis, multa minanter agat, / dulcia non ferimus: suco renovemur amaro, A.A. 3.582-3). In Ovid’s elegiac world the performance of a paraklausithyron does not solely rely on the actions of a lover at the doorstep; instead, the success of the paraklausithyron, and the assurance that the paraklausithyron has been performed in the correct manner, depends upon both the pleas of the lover and the efforts of the learned beloved.

From his instructions on how to gain access to a beloved through the door, it is logical that Ovid’s elegy would include the Remedia Amoris, a book on how to cure love if it should go too far. The true force of the Remedia Amoris, in this context at least, lies in the fact that it represents the narrator’s stand against Amor. Throughout the Amores and Ars Amatoria, Ovid’s narrator struggles with the power Love has over him. Oftentimes the lover cannot help himself because cruel Love has led him to his beloved’s doorstep. In the Remedia Amoris, however, the lover spends the first 78 lines of the 814-lined poem arguing with the god. In the first books of Ovid’s corpus, the narrator has no power against Love, but here, in the beginning of the Remedia

43 For more on the role of the “learned girl” in Latin erotic elegy, see James (2003).
Amoris, the lover had found his power over Love and, thus, his authority. We are again invited to trust the narrator’s instructions (*discite sanari, per quem didicistis amare*, Rem. 43), and, as he has defeated Amor himself, we place our trust in the song of the poet, hoping that he will lead us to love and cure us of love if anything should go wrong.

Though Ovid’s narrator uses the didactic nature of the paraklausithyron to teach both lover and beloved the art of love, he also uses the didactic nature of the motif to show the power of poetry in gaining access behind the closed door. The narrator has established for himself a strong sense of authority, and he has also proven that poetry, in and of itself, is powerful in that it can control both sides of the door. At this point, power resides in elegy, and it is this power, as established in his *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris*, that will allow Ovid to use elegy in getting behind the closed doors of Rome during his exile, his very real paraklausithyron.
Chapter Five
Locked-Out of Rome:
The Literary Paraklausithyron Turns Literal

Exulis haec vox est: praebet mihi littera linguam,
et si non liceat scribere, mutus ero.

_Ex. Pont._ 2.6.3-4

This is the voice of exile; my letters will provide a tongue for me,
and if it is permitted to write, I will be mute.

Though he employs slight variations of the motif throughout his erotic elegy, Ovid uses
the fundamental elements of the paraklausithyron, including its use as a mode of characterization
and didactic tool, in ways similar to his Greek and Roman predecessors. It is in his exilic poetry,
the _Tristia_ and the _Epistulae ex Ponto_, however, where we see the true evolution of the motif as
it turns from the literary into a very literal and personal locking-out. In these books, the literary
lover is no longer locked out of his beloved’s home, but instead the poet is physically locked out
of Rome. With this, the true power of the poet’s song is revealed: though the narrator himself
cannot penetrate the doors of Rome, his poetry can.

Throughout the five books of the _Tristia_, Ovid tells of the pain and sorrow he suffers in
exile in Tomis. Book 1 contains eleven poems. In the first of the poems as we have them, Ovid
addresses his book, instructing the work on its actions when it arrives in Rome. The second,
fourth, and tenth poems detail the poet’s voyage to Tomis, and the third poem describes his final
night in Rome.

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44 A brief outline of Ovid’s exile: In 8 CE, Augustus banished Ovid to Tomis on the Black Sea without a decree
from the Senate or any Roman judge (_Trist_. 2.131-132) for a song and a wrong (_carmen et error_, _Trist_. 2.207). In the
second and third books of the _Epistulae ex Ponto_, Ovid admits that his wrong was worse than committing murder
(_ex Pont_. 2.9.72) and more harmful than any poetry (_ex Pont_. 3.3.72). Though there is much speculation on the
nature of Ovid’s wrongdoing, there is no scholarly consensus on the exact poem written and the exact offense
committed. See Coon (1927), Thibault (1964), and Williams (1994). By tradition, Ovid continued to live his life in
exile until his death in Tomis between 17 and 18 CE.
Ovid, concerning himself with friendships maintained and friendships lost, begins the

*Tristia* by sending off his book to Rome in his place in the hopes that his poems will stir a
memory of him (*parue*—*nec inuideo*—*sine me, liber, ibis in urbem: / ei mihi, quod domino non licet ire tuo!*), *Trist.* 1.1.1-2). He bids his book farewell:

```latex
Vade, liber, uerbisque meis loca grata saluta:
contingam certe quo licet illa pede.
siquis, ut in populo, nostri non inmemor illi,
siquis, qui, quid agam, forte requirat, erit:
uiuere me dices, saluum tamen esse negabis;
id quoque, quod uiuam, munus habere dei.
atque ita tu tacitus, (quaerenti plura legendum)
ne, quae non opus est, forte loquare, caue!
protinus admonitus repetet mea crimina lector,
et peragar populi publicus ore reus.
*Trist.* 1.1.15-24
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Go, book, and greet my beloved places in my name;
certainly I will reach them with whatever foot I am permitted.
If, in the crowd, there will be anyone who has not forgotten me,
if there will be anyone, perhaps, who asks how I am,
say that I am alive, but deny that I am well:
that I am even alive is a gift from a god.
Otherwise, be silent – let those seeking more read –
beware, lest you say, by chance, what is not needed!
The reader, prompted, will soon recall my crimes,
and the crowd’s voice make me a common criminal.

Ovid is not only referencing his physical footstep but also a metrical foot. In adding “whatever foot I am permitted” (*quo licet illa pede*), the poet is giving power to his poetry and to the

*Tristia*, specifically. Another metrical foot (i.e. another poem) may have caused his exile, but this new metrical foot will allow him back into Rome. This, then, leads to a conflation of physical step and poetry: Ovid is his poetry, and if it can get behind the door, he has gotten inside Rome.

With this, though Ovid trusts his verses to greet those places in Rome of which he is fond, there is a certain degree of risk involved; while the poems may stir up memories of him among his friends in Rome, the book may also stir the memory of his crimes. If his audience remembers his wrongdoings before they remember him, he will not, we safely assume, get behind Rome’s locked doors.
We directly encounter Ovid’s literal paraklausithyron in the third poem of *Tristia* 1 when he and his wife lament his impending exile. He says goodbye to his wife and three times he touches the door, three times he is called back and his step, indulging his mind, is late (*ter limen tetigi, ter sum reuocatus, et ipse / indulgens animo pes mihi tardus erat, Trist. 1.3.55-56*). Each time he attempts to leave the doorstep of his home, a doorstep which, now, is considered a synecdoche for the gates of Rome, Ovid is pulled back to the door, planting kisses upon the threshold. It is this farewell to his doorstep that represents his official, physical, and very literal locking-out. What follows in the next three books, then, is a supplication to the doors of Rome. His entire work is now inside its own paraklausithyron, and the words that follow have become the song at the door of his beloved Rome. In this, no longer is the paraklausithyron a literary feature meant to characterize or teach. Instead, it is a means of representing his very real banishment.

The first book of the *Tristia* continues as Ovid praises the loyalties of both his friends and his wife. The eighth poem of Book 1 tells of the betrayal of a friend, and the final poem of the first book ultimately acts as Ovid’s apology for both the tone and the quality of the work. The second book of Ovid’s *Tristia* is comprised entirely of a single poem. He uses this poem to defend his works (*Trist. 2.77-88, 237-290, 329-360, 497-572*), to justify the song that caused his exile by outlining precedents set down by other authors (*Trist. 2.19-76, 313-328, 361-496*), and to request forgiveness (*Trist. 2.139-186, 201-236, 573-578*). Though these poems do not contain references to Ovid’s literal paraklausithyron, they do play the part of songs at the locked doors. His stories from exile are the lovers’ stories, his pleas are the lovers’ pleas, and his desires to get behind the closed door are the lovers’ desires.

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45 The support given by his friends will figure prominently in the *Epistulae ex Ponto.*
The third book of the *Tristia* picks up the sending of the poems to Rome and begins in the voice of the poem as Ovid’s work addresses its readers (*Trist. 3.1.1-20*). The poems beg a friend to show them around the city. The pair passes through Caesar’s forum and the precinct of Vesta (*Trist. 3.1.27-29*), and finally makes their way to the Temple to Jupiter Optimus Maximus at the top of the Capitoline Hill (*Trist. 3.1.35-46*). As the book of poems enters the temple, it begins to look for its brothers – Ovid’s other works on love. When the book finds the banned poems and comes too close, the guard at the temple immediately ushers the third book out of the precinct (*Trist. 3.1.67-68*). Though the book has entered into the house of Jupiter, it is shut out from the innermost quarters of the temple. The book reaches the threshold of the deepest chamber of the temple, but it is locked out from seeing Ovid’s works – one of which is literally entitled “Loves” – when it approaches too closely. Just as the literary lover is locked out from his beloved’s inner chamber, Ovid’s poetry and, thus, Ovid himself are locked out from his own *Amores*. In this, Ovid is now banished not only from Rome but from his former self. He is unable to locate himself as a poet, and his pain seems nearly unbearable.

It is this inability to reach one’s former self that dominates the second chapter of *Tristia 3* as Ovid submits to what he regards as his ill-fated demise. The poet laments that Rome steals into his home and the places he has desired and that everything in him remains in the city he has lost (*Roma domusque subit desideriumque locorum, / quicquid et amissa restat in urbe mei, Trist. 3.2.21-22*). To escape from the pains his mind bears, he pounds on the door of his own tomb, but he is locked out. The door, and what lies inside, has transformed into an unreachable harbor, and though he may attempt to knock down the doors to gain relief from his pain, he cannot. In this image, Ovid has now suffered death and is disembodied, locked out from his tomb.
and, thus, himself. Because of this, the threat of the closed door has become very real, and Ovid is threatened that he can never again be the poet he once was.

The *Epistulae ex Ponto* marks a turning point in Ovid’s exilic poetry. These letters, a collection meant to be sent to Rome, act as a more pointed form of communication than the ambiguously addressed poems sprinkled throughout the last eleven chapters of *Tristia* 3. The genre and meter of the *Epistulae ex Ponto* remain elegiac, but the mode has changed from song to letter. With this, the letter has not become more private but more direct in that Ovid seeks out the specific thresholds he knows his poetry can cross. The *Tristia* holds for Ovid no guarantee that his poetry is being read, but the *Epistulae ex Ponto* answers the poet’s previous exilic work since now Ovid’s letters have found a way behind Rome’s closed doors and into the private homes of his allies.

We see a transformed, literal paraklausithyron in these letters. Unlike the *Tristia*, in which Ovid describes his exile and the effects of his *carmen et error* on his reputation in Rome, the *Epistulae ex Ponto* makes a direct attempt to get past the locked doors of Rome’s public spaces by seeking out allies in their own private residences within the city. The work begins as the poet realizes his poems are no longer allowed in the public libraries of Rome (*ex Pont.* 1.1.5). He suggests that the recipient hide the letters away from the public monuments (*ex Pont.* 1.1.5: *publica monumenta*) in a private household (*ex Pont.* 1.1.10: *sub Lare privato*) for a time and then present the letters as anonymous missives in the hopes that the removal of the author’s banned name will allow his words to infiltrate the doors of the public sphere in Rome.

Ovid shares his anxieties about his reputation in Rome and begs those whom he is writing to appeal to Caesar on his behalf. In the first twelve lines of letter 1.2, the poet worries that the

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46 Examples include poems addressed to a friend (*Trist.* 3.4 and 3.14), to a faithful friend (*Trist.* 3.5), to an old friend (*Trist.* 3.6), to an enemy (*Trist.* 3.11).
addressee Maximus, a potential heir to Augustus’ principate, will not receive his letter well when he knows who sent it (ex Pont. 1.2.7-8). He begs Maximus to move the heart of Augustus (ex Pont. 1.2.113) and to let his voice soften the ears of the emperor (ex Pont. 1.2.115). Ovid tells Maximus to plead with Augustus and ask him to lessen his punishment by allowing him to live out the rest of his exile in a place closer to Rome (ex Pont. 1.2.127-128). In Ovid’s requests, we see the intent of the poet’s letters. Like the pleas sung by the lover outside of the beloved’s door, these letters are used specifically to convince Augustus to open the doors of Rome for Ovid.

At this point, one might think that Ovid’s pleas, like those of the lover at the door, are falling on deaf ears. But, unlike the locked-out lovers in Ovid’s Amores, Heroides, Ars Amatoria, and Remedia Amoris, the poet’s letters have been read, his pleas have been heard, and several of his addressees have responded to his laments. In the seventh letter of the Epistulae ex Ponto 1, addressed to Messalinus, Ovid warns the recipient not to deny that the poet’s words have crossed his doorstep before. Like a lover at the closed door, Ovid is referencing times in which he has successfully gotten behind the door before, and in doing so, whether he has been well received or not, the poet has managed to keep the attention of his addressee.

In Epistulae ex Ponto 2.6, Ovid tells his friend Graecinus that his letters have furnished a tongue for him as an exile (praebet mihi littera linguam, ex. Pont. 2.6.3). We see again Ovid’s desperation for his poetry to stand in for him in his absence from Rome. His poetry, as it was in his elegiac works, is the lover’s song at the door. Without that song and the laments it brings to the door, there is no hope for Ovid to gain access – either literal or figurative – back into Rome. That said, we see throughout his first book of letters that his poems are giving him a voice; Ovid is being heard.

47 References to responses can be found in ex. Pont. 1.3, 1.5, and 1.9.
Ovid, since writing his *Amores, Heroïdes, Ars Amatoria*, and *Remedia Amoris*, has suffered a shift in circumstances: no longer is he a poet singing of love and the literary paraklausithyron. Instead, he is, like his elegiac lovers, locked out from where he desires to be, and, in this, his use of the literary motif has turned literal. The potential power of the poet, as he is exiled to the eastern edge of the Empire, now lies in the success of his poetry in getting around the locked doors of Rome and in being heard. If his songs and letters can be read in Rome, even privately, then he has gotten past the threshold and his paraklausithyron is a success. Whether his apologies and supplications at the doors of Rome, via his *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, are sincere or not is irrelevant here. These poems may or may not be an earnest plea to Augustus, but what is essential is that Ovid has expanded the literary motif into a literal act that has the power to overcome physical space. The poems have found their way around doors and into private homes, and, as such, Ovid’s public life as an artist is able to continue through his poetry. What Ovid has done with the paraklausithyron in transforming it from literary to literal, then, is to intensify the power of his poetry and, thus, transcend his exile from Rome, ultimately gaining immortality.
Bibliography


