The Rebirth of Rape: Tracing Ovidian Rape Motifs with Respect to Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* as a Piece of Classical Reception

by

Moira Scully

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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Abstract

Rape, as it is understood in a modern context, is approached with a completely different perspective than that of an ancient, and even a post-Renaissance, audience. With the contributing factors of cultural, historical, and educational aspects all playing a role in shifting how this act of sexual violence was perceived from a pre-modern to a modern society, it is possible to identify the gradual process that went into rethinking rape. The question arises, however, if there is a similar shift in both the perception and reception of rape between first century Augustan Rome and the city-state of Rome in the early seventeenth century. By selecting two influential pieces depicting the act of *raptus*, this study examines 'Roman' cultural perceptions of rape cross-temporally and attempts to reveal if sexual violence was viewed similarly or differently by the succeeding Roman culture. Using both Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Gian Lorenzo Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* as the main primary sources for this investigation, ensures an opportunity for clear comparisons or discrepancies in reception to be drawn. In addition to these two sources, supporting material such as legal codes, medieval commentaries, translations, paintings, and sculpture, are employed to properly situate both Ovid and Bernini's works in their respective cultural contexts. Through an assessment of these listed sources, this paper demonstrates the significant overlap in cultural attitudes towards rape in each time period, and how Bernini's sculpture can be seen as a piece of Ovidian reception for sexual violence.

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

Introduction

Themes of forced abduction and sexual violence towards individuals fill the pages of ancient Roman literature and mythology, stories of their history and artistic representations of all three of the genres.[1] Its presence stretches across the ancient Roman world appearing in such disparate and varied contexts as *topoi* in comedic plays, as decorative reliefs in burial contexts, and even in foundation myths of Rome itself. These *topoi* were so ubiquitous and ingrained in Roman society that they lasted through the Republic, into the Roman empire, and even beyond as a source of inspiration for later writers and artists of Renaissance Italy. Given the horror to which modern audiences approach these themes the question becomes what did ancient and Renaissance audiences find so captivating about these *topoi*? What was so intriguing about *raptus,* meaning to seize, that was worthy of repetition across written and visual culture?

The most influential Roman author on the theme of rape and abduction, on both the ancient and later medieval and Renaissance audience periods, was the poet Ovid. Of all of Ovid's texts on these themes, the *Metamorphoses* holds singular importance. When this text was rediscovered in the twelfth century, scholars and scribes alike eagerly analysed and sought to interpret Rome's mythological corpus within the new Humanist and Christian context of the Renaissance world. While the seemingly immaculate preservation of Ovid's piece offered an almost complete collection of ancient Roman heroes, gods, and stories to study, the emergence of the *Metamorphoses* in the medieval world also introduced a link to Italy's cultural past. This connection to Rome's earlier history apparently encouraged Renaissance intellectuals to

[1] The terms 'rape' and *'raptus'* will be used in relation to both abduction and the act of non-consensual intercourse throughout the paper. As rape and abduction are both acts of sexual violence, which violate one's freedom through the attacker's seizure of the victim, they will be used almost interchangeably. In instances where there is no sexual violation, terms such as "attempted assault" will be employed for the sake of clarity. Leo C. Curran, "Rape and Rape Victims in the "Metamorphoses"" *Arethusa* 11, no. 1 (Spring, 1978): 214.

explore a new avenue of their cultural past, while also inviting these scholars to contribute to the mythological tradition. Evidence of Ovid's impact on Italian intellectuals can be seen rippling across the medieval commentary tradition, before pooling into a fount of inspiration fit for late Renaissance literary and artistic tastes.[2] A culmination of these issues - Ovidian rape myths, classical reception, and Renaissance to Baroque artistic interpretation - can be found in Gian Lorenzo Bernini's statue, *Pluto and Persephone*. (Figure 1) This freestanding marble sculptural group was commissioned by Scipione Borghese in 1621 but was presented to Cardinal Ludovico Ludovisi as a gift instead of its original intent to decorate the Villa Borghese. As a skilled sculptor and painter, Bernini was praised for his realistic and dramatic composition. He was afforded a prominent position among Europe's elite circles due to his prestigious patronage from papal officials and royal monarchs. This sculptural group depicts Pluto, the Lord of the Underworld, hoisting a fear-stricken Persephone aloft, as she attempts to escape his firm grip. Identical themes are also apparent in Bernini's ensuing commission of *Apollo and Daphne*, which shows the attempted rape of the nymph Daphne by the god Apollo (Figure 2). Due to the overlapping *raptus* imagery in both these pieces, the *Apollo and Daphne* will be used as a reference tool for the *Pluto and Persephone*. Although a generous amount of scholarship has focused on Bernini's *Apollo and Daphne*, it is the minimal presence of scholarship on the assault of a goddess which led the *Pluto and Persephone* to be selected as the core artistic piece of this inquiry. Also, the depiction of a goddess mid-abduction could be insightful for the way in which rape could be seen across the social hierarchy. Persephone is a virgin, a woman, and a goddess, and she can therefore stand in as a model for women of all ages and social statuses. Despite the discernible differences between a divine mythological figure and mortals, Persephone's connection to the historical female life stages she is a

[2] Ovid's influence appears to be at its height between the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, when a revival of classical literature and artistic forms surged across the European continent. This is not to say that Ovid was poorly received during the medieval period, but rather that the enthusiasm accompanying the rebirth of classicism in the Renaissance greatly assisted in the poet reaching a broadened audience.

symbolic presence rather than an identical one. Additionally, the use of pagan subject matter in a Christian world, especially since it was commissioned by and for a Cardinal, may indicate how the revival of classical culture was integrated into Christian 'Renaissance' and post-Renaissance society through Baroque aesthetics.

Despite the prestige of the seventeenth century artist and the positive acclaim associated with his dramatic works, Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* remains somewhat neglected in numerous areas of scholarship. Although efforts from scholars like Genevieve Warwick, Andrea Bachhi, and Andrea Bolland have all contributed to the discussion on the inspiration and reception of the *Pluto and Persephone*, the majority of scholarship favours the artist's other works. This absence of scholarly information on a statue, which is personally considered to be a masterpiece of the Baroque style, is as individually disheartening as it is academically distressing. Considering the prominence of Proserpina - the Roman equivalent of Persephone - as an influential deity in the ancient tradition, the limited amount of academic attention granted to Bernini's statue appears disproportionate. Furthermore, the emotional portrayal of the young goddess being seized by Pluto may act as a bridge between the ancient art forms and Renaissance *raptus* imagery, possibly demonstrating a harmony between past and contemporary attitudes. It is the hope that through a multidisciplinary analysis of Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone*, some light may be shed on one of the artist's earliest works, which is frequently overshadowed by his later endeavours. In addition to contributing to the overall scholarship on Bernini's marble group, the greatest objective of this endeavour is to examine the ways in which the Proserpina myth can disclose contemporary attitudes towards rape in both temporal contexts of the ancient and post-Renaissance worlds.

The story of the rape of Proserpina, as recounted in Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* is an extremely valuable resource within the ancient Roman mythological tradition for unearthing ancient attitudes of sexualized violence towards women. This first century CE poet's work

contains almost the entirety of Roman mythology, told through a series of transformative tales. As a member of the Augustan age *literati* Ovid played an integral role in the shaping of Rome's new status as an empirical state. Through his favour with Augustus, Ovid's written works were received by a large audience, which established him as an important source for understanding the leading Roman attitudes during this time.[3] Even though propagandistic points from the Augustan agenda appear within Ovid's corpus, there are also subtle indications of the poet's social comments neighbouring these items. The societal influences on his works act as an asset in attempting to uncover the social *mores* and attitudes within his corpus. Furthermore, any social commentaries which oppose the propaganda may demonstrate the populace's attitudes towards the subject.

His addition to the mythological corpus is undeniably significant, as his *Metamorphoses* was well preserved, translated, and transmitted throughout the Middle Ages into the Renaissance, where it received greater attention. Thus, his tales were not only worthy of reading, but were the inspiration for succeeding additions to the *Metamorphoses* tradition, which extended beyond the Iberian Peninsula into the English Isles and remaining European continent.

In comparison to other ancient *raptus* narratives, Proserpina's status as a goddess, along with the ensuing events following her abduction, set her myth apart from others in the canon.[4] As a co-ruler of the Underworld, and prominent cult figure in matters pertaining to the afterlife, Proserpina's abduction uniquely does not result in a physical transformation or death as other

[3] All Ovidian works used throughout were written prior to his exile in 8 CE, following the release of his *Ars Amatoria*. Ovid fell from Augustus' grace for this lover's handbook, which included immoral themes such as how to hide one's mistress. In an ironic twist of fate, the promoter of the emperor's morality campaign was banished for later writing pieces, which seemingly displayed direct opposition to Augustan legislation. Therefore, the works Ovid completed while in high favour with the emperor appear to better reflect the political climate.

[4] When using the term 'canon' it is beneficial to clarify the boundaries that the term encompasses. In this particular study, the canon refers to any account of the Persephone/Proserpina abduction myth from early sources like Homer to the seventeenth century, whether it is depicted in a written or visual format. As a result, any inspired, translated, or transcribed renditions of the myth are considered to be a part of the Proserpina canon.

rape victims face in mythology. In fact, it is for these reasons that the Proserpina myth holds more significance than other accounts for uncovering ancient attitudes towards sexual violence targeted at females. Despite the narrative's mythological origins, the goddess' experience of being assaulted or forced into marriage against her will seems to be a more realistic reflection of ancient *raptus* than accompanying myths.[5] Furthermore, through the lens of Ovid's Proserpina myth it may also be possible to detect how Bernini's Renaissance adaptation either differs or aligns with first century Roman views. By analysing two significant depictions of the Proserpina myth, this paper seeks to unveil how sexual violence, specifically rape, was discussed and received cross-temporally through Rome's and Italy's cultural past. The scrutinizing of an ancient piece of literature and a Renaissance sculpture, depicting the same myth, may determine if initial perceptions of *raptus* from the ancient world persist for a millennia and a half. By extension, this examination can help discern how sexual violence directed towards females can reveal contemporary attitudes of women in a given society. Also, using the same geographical location will further assist in concentrating ancient and Renaissance Rome's reception of sexual violence due to the shared historical and cultural aspects between the two periods.

In many aspects, both Ovid and Bernini share similar circumstances, which help place them on an equal plain. Although their preferred mediums differ from literature to sculpture both Ovid and Bernini received patronage from an influential political and religious ruler following a period of political instability. Much like the success of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* gained a significant amount of acclaim since its creation, thereby permitting each man to be a benchmark of inspiration within the Proserpina myth.

[5] Guido Ruggiero, "Violence and Sexuality: Rape" in *The Boundaries of Eros: Sex Crime and Sexuality in Renaissance Venice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 92.

Using the Proserpina myth from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as both a starting point for this investigation and the main frame of reference up until the creation of Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone*, this study's primary goal is to discover how attitudes towards *raptus* changed between first and seventeenth century Rome. A secondary question that is also addressed towards the end of the investigation is how Bernini's sculpture can be used as a piece of classical reception, and more specifically as a work of Ovidian reception. In order to carry out this investigation effectively, three different methodologies from the legal, literary, and artistic disciplines were applied.

The first method of analysis adopted a legal approach, which used marriage focused legislation from Augustan, civil, and papal courts. The analysis of laws from the *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* and *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* offers evidence for the ancient context, while examples from canon and Venetian law reveal later conceptions of sex crime. Moving into the second methodology, a literary analysis was applied to Ovid's account of the Proserpina myth. Following an assessment of the poet's literary techniques and narrative structure in this passage, case studies of Ovid's poem were conducted with the assistance of medieval commentaries, allegorical readings, and the humanist tradition. These medieval and Renaissance interpretations are important for tracking the reception of Ovid and any potential changes that were made to the *Metamorphoses* that could have influenced Bernini's depiction. Finally, the third methodology that was used was the visual analysis of late Renaissance and early Baroque artworks. Similar to the literary examination of Ovid after the first century, this approach uses case studies of three near contemporary works that not only predated Bernini's statue, but also depicted ancient subject matter and Ovidian sensibilities towards *raptus.* In this analysis, visual cues from works by Giambologna, Titian, and Damiano Mazza are examined to determine characteristics of *raptus* depictions in the broader visual culture. From there, the findings in this investigation are compared to Bernini's baroque portrayal of *raptus*. Now that

the path towards answering this study's question has been determined, we can travel onward and lay down our foundations chapter by chapter.

To begin, a thorough assessment of the legal realm in chapter one focuses on *raptus* laws and legislation during both periods, thereby providing important contextualization. Additionally, aspects such as what type of crime rape was classified under, as well as the number of reported cases and designated punishments will also be considered. Despite the mythological subject matter, this analysis of historic documents will grant insight into each society's reality and thought processes. Following the development of the legal sphere from the ancient to post-Renaissance contexts, chapter two will focus specifically on Ovid's literary account of the Proserpina myth in the second chapter.[6] Important aspects of this primary source such as word choice, narrative themes, and potential underlying social comments will lead the analysis. Although other versions of Persephone's tale are employed, they are intended to act as references for how this particular account of the Persephone myth in the *Metamorphoses* stands apart from previous renditions. Subsequently, chapter three is dedicated to the transmission of Ovid's text and its Renaissance reception. Tracking Ovid's *Metamorphoses* throughout a selection of texts from the Middle Ages may determine to what extent his account survives among the numerous translations, transcriptions, and additions. Subsequently, aspects of the Renaissance literary climate may surface, which offer a glimpse into the poet's influence on the written tradition. This chapter, however, also attempts to lay the foundation for how Ovid's influence expanded beyond the literary realm to inspire artworks as well. By following the path built by the second and third chapters, it may be possible to discover a connection

[6] Despite an overlap in myths between Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, the former will be utilized as the main primary source for this investigation. It is also important to note the discrepancies in the goddess' name between the Roman mythological tradition and its Greek origin. The daughter of Ceres, the Roman equivalent of Demeter, is frequently named Proserpina in the Ovidian account, and Persephone in both preceding and succeeding instalments to the canon. For clarity, the chapters dealing with the literary account will adhere to Ovid's identification as Proserpina, while references in the material culture chapter will follow the piece's title of Persephone.

between Ovid's text as an influence for Bernini's statue, whether directly or indirectly. After accounting for the literary realm, applying a visual culture approach for the fourth and fifth chapters is of equal importance. Beginning with a select catalogue of semi-contemporary Renaissance and early Baroque artworks in chapter four, we will set out to contextualize the types of *raptus* depictions that were available to Bernini. This exploration is not limited to sculptural groups, but also includes discussion on painted depictions. Furthermore, identifying how rape and classical themes were depicted in a period removed from the initial mythological accounts may reveal visual cues, sources of artistic inspiration, and sculptural techniques employed in the visual culture. Finally, this will culminate in a full exploration of the theme in Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone,* in chapter five. Similar to the fourth chapter, this discussion is rooted in a visual culture approach. Underlying components such as the influence of patronage, the artist's own technical abilities, and the incorporation of Christian themes depicted through pagan subjects will be taken into account. With the legal, literary, visual, and Roman cultural fields all working in unison, this single study may act as a model which illustrates insight into the larger issues of how rape was conceptualized by ancient writers and then received and transmitted by Renaissance artists to an audience craving images of ancient Roman ideals.

Chapter 1. Crucial Cross-examinations: An Analysis of *Raptus* Laws in Ancient Rome and Post-Renaissance Italy

In order to begin the investigation into how rape may have been understood in the ancient and post-Renaissance worlds, it is best to begin with examples from the laws that were in place. The term "rape" has meant different things at different times, so defining the term within its historical context is important. What legally constituted rape and what were the legal ramifications of such an act? Understanding the political climate in which laws against rape were created reflects current societal attitudes towards sexual violence. In particular, Augustan legislation regarding moral character and marriage is arguably the most important for understanding how violence towards women was understood and treated in ancient Rome, as it illuminates a woman's role in society as well as legal standing. His well fought campaign to recover a moral lifestyle appears to be the key to understanding how sexual violence was viewed during the first century BCE and CE. While the analysis of laws and their ensuing punishments offers historical context for Ovid and Bernini's active periods, a brief observation into the court records of the Renaissance alludes to the effectiveness of each state justice system. Also, determining how *raptus* was classified as a crime in various *leges* provides necessary legal terminology present in contemporary literary accounts, such as Ovid. The appearance of legal jargon in the *Metamorphoses* is important since it offers a direct link between historical legislation and Ovid's poetic composition. By extension, the poet's word choice clearly connects Rome's first century reality to the city's mythological origins. This bridge sealing the gap between Rome's past and one's creative present is also applicable to Bernini's sculpture centuries later. However, the artist opts for ancient subject matter and baroque forms in place of official terminology to seemingly mirror both historic and seventeenth century viewpoints. Furthermore, identifying the potential influences contemporary legislation likely had on either Ovid or Bernini's works roots each piece in a

particular context where broader attitudes of sexual violence can be interpreted through legal proceedings. In order to determine the proposed connections Bernini's sculpture holds to Rome's cultural past - specifically to first century attitudes as referenced in Ovidian literature - the first piece of evidence requiring examination is Augustan legislation.

1.1 Augustan Rome: A New Era with New Legislation

After a tumultuous period in Rome's history, fraught with both political and martial strife, Rome's republic system of government gradually transitioned into an empire in the first century BCE. Positioned at the helm of Rome's future was the adopted son of Julius Caesar, Octavian, who became known as Augustus following his rise to power. Within the span of Augustus' four-decade long governance, Rome was steered across familiar and uncharted waters. Through the introduction of new laws, public artworks projects, and substantial funding in literary endeavours, the young Julio-Claudian emperor was seemingly able to ensure a seamless passage from one government system to another. Of these three factors, Augustus' literary patronage is especially noteworthy. Under his patronage, poets such as Horace, Vergil, and Ovid produced praiseworthy pieces, which appear to contribute greatly to Rome's mythological corpus, and sometimes included traces of Augustan propaganda. While a more detailed discussion of the literary impact during the first centuries BCE and CE will be undertaken in the next chapter, it is imperative to acknowledge that Augustus' legislation may have set the tone for cultural themes conveyed by contemporary poets like Ovid. Before investigating the literary sphere further, determining how Augustan legislation was understood from a legal perspective is required.

Between the mid-first century BCE to the early first century CE, Augustus introduced a series of laws to the Roman populace within his rule as the *princeps*, or 'first citizen.' His numerous additions to the legal realm are notable for a variety of favourable and unfavourable

reasons. Firstly, implementing new *leges* was an effective means of demonstrating one's power. By establishing a firm control over the legal realm, Augustus began laying the foundation of authority to construct what would become the Julio-Claudian dynasty. One aspect of Augustus' law-making worth commenting further on is how he conducted himself as a politician focused on restoring morality through the familial unit. An apparent master of self-promotion, the young ruler remained "true to his usual *modus operandi*, [and] refused to accept the legal position of *curator legum et morum*, but in fact that is precisely the function that he exercised."[7] In what Karl Galinsky interprets as a conscious decision on the ruler's behalf, Augustus refrained from accepting more legal influence than his tribunician power permitted. This verbal refusal of an official legal position appears as an effective strategy on Augustus' part to ensure he was not assuming the despised role of a king, either in title or in appointed power. Also, the seemingly modest role Augustus held in legal matters, beyond his tribunician authority, partially reinforces the moral nature of his political proceedings. Appearing to follow Aristotle's teaching of 'the golden mean,' Augustus accepted his power in moderation, a decision which effectively enhanced his moral credibility. A leader who abstained from acquiring an excess of power appeared as a capable choice for moderating the immoral excesses plaguing the Roman lifestyle. The second important aspect of the *princeps'* constructed political image is an emphasis on the family unit and relations between households. Clear evidence of Augustus exhibiting a 'family-man' political position appears in the name of his marriage legislation, which omitted his own name in exchange for his daughter's, Julia. The inclusion of Julia's name, which drew a direct connection to himself, simultaneously exemplifies the importance designated to these laws as well as Augustus' family forward political approach. Furthermore, the reference to his own kin subtly implies that his laws are not only intended to protect everyone's loved ones, but they are also expected to continue to

[7] Karl Galinsky, "Augustus' Legislation on Morals and Marriage," *Philologus* 125 (1981): 140.

protect households for generations to come.[8] Within the boundaries of Augustan society, these decisions exhibit the ruler's political position, while stepping back to assess the larger image reveals a similar emphasis on familial importance in Ovid's literature. Connections between contemporary laws and the poet's Proserpina account not only highlight the close relationship between politician and artist at this time, but also reiterate the vital role daughters played within the Roman household.

In particular, an underlying role of the Roman daughter was their ability to strengthen male bonds through shared kinship. The political and personal connections between two families were oftentimes established through marriage.[9] Therefore the sexual assault of a high-ranking Roman woman would not only violate Augustus' laws but could also affect these kindred bonds. Ovid briefly offers insight into the inner turmoil *raptus* inflicts within a family when Ceres pleads with Proserpina's father, Jupiter to order the safe return of the maiden from his brother's domain (*Met*.5.512-522). Although the mythological account features incestuous connections between the deities, Jupiter's dual role as father and judge pulls him in opposing directions within his own family. If Proserpina is returned from the Underworld, Jupiter risks fracturing the relationship with his brother Pluto, whereas his inaction prolongs Ceres' drought inflicted on the mortals. Both the interconnectedness of the familial unit through the daughter and the repercussions associated with her assault are likely nods to Augustus' family focused moral campaign. Judith Hallet emphasizes the importance of these father-daughter relations in early imperial Rome as well as how they reflect Augustus' familial political approach. Relying on the literature of Vergil, who includes the titles of *socer/*son-in-law and *gener/*father-in-law in reference to Pompey and Julius Caesar in book six of the *Aeneid,* Hallet demonstrates the shared responsibility of the two leaders over Julia's well-being. She also elaborates on the

[8] Judith P. Hallet, "The Roman Daughter's Place and Value" in *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), 76.
[9] Hallet, "The Roman Daughter's Place and Value," 77.

intense focus on these familial relations under Augustus' reign, indicating the overlap in his chosen successors, Marcellus, Agrippa, and Tiberius as his sons-in-law.[10] His decision to acknowledge his daughters' husbands as worthy inheritors implies the influential, if not somewhat indirect, role women played in cementing kindred relationships within the political world. Not only does this emphasis on allied relationships suggest the universal nature of forging connections through marriage in Rome, but it emphasizes the extent of Augustus' familial values throughout his political platform. Furthermore, the presence of Augustan aspirations in contemporary literature indicates the exterior influences which subtly shaped Ovid and Vergil's works.

Given the numerous moral laws Augustus introduced at the end of the first century BCE, it is apparent that this particular aspect of the Roman lifestyle was perceived as an area of extreme concern. Embarking on his moral campaign early on in his reign, Augustus instituted specific marriage laws as early as 29 or 28 BCE.[11] Both the introduction and improvements made to these laws throughout his principate displays how serious the matter of restoring *mores* to Rome was for Augustus. Through his multiple moral laws, it appears that Augustus believed he could steer the populace back towards the path they had veered from. However, the severity of these laws increased with further restrictions in later years when the well-known, but historically controversial, marriage and adultery laws were implemented. This juxtaposition between Augustus's moral aspirations for Rome and the populace's displeasure with the legal means equipped in achieving this goal established a conflicting climate of opinions, which Ovid could allude to in his *Metamorphoses*.

[10] Augustus' selection of successors may also indicate his desire for hereditary governorship. This also appears to be an effective way of consolidating power within the family, which would lay the foundation that the Julio-Claudian dynasty would be erected upon.

[11] At the time of the first instalment of marriage laws, Augustus was still using his given name Octavian. I opted to use Augustus here for the sake of consistency and clarity throughout the chapter.

In 17 BCE, the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* along with the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* were introduced to the Roman populace. The former of these '*leges*/laws' officially outlawed adultery for the first time in Rome's history, while the latter established incentives for those who married and produced children. Not only did the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* prohibit extra marital affairs, but it also established a series of penalties for those who broke this law. In what can be interpreted as a shocking inclusion by the lawmakers, this legislation even educated individuals on how to properly report someone who did not adhere to the new laws.[12] Encouraging neighbours to monitor each other's actions for the sake of upholding Augustan law as well as Rome's '*mores*/morals' did not have the desired effect the ruler intended. Unsurprisingly, his legislation was not received well by the populace for two important reasons. The first area of concern was the complete invasion of privacy these laws promoted, while the second issue that arose was a feeling of hypocrisy towards the unmarried lawmakers.

Another significant factor to consider about legal jurisdiction is how new laws may be used as reflections of what is lacking in a certain society at a given time. In her article, "Augustus, History, and the Landscape of the Law," Kristina Milnor discusses how laws were used in ancient societies as a tool of representation. Milnor puts forth the notion that laws were a type of social rhetoric, which could reveal the problems within a given society and address the most acceptable means of living.[13] Furthermore, as the needs of a society changed or new measures were required for maintaining stability, laws adapted and changed accordingly. Thus, the institution of new laws could not only reflect a means of implementing safety where a threat may arise, but it also, and arguably more importantly, could be interpreted as a code of conduct.

[12] Kristina Milnor, "Augustus, History, and the Landscape of the Law," *Arethusa* 40, no. 1 (2007): 9.
[13] Milnor, "Augustus, History, and the Landscape of the Law," 7.

When considering Augustan marriage laws under Milnor's theory, both the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* as well as the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* appear as a reflection of how an ideal Roman citizen should conduct themselves.[14] Moreover, it may also serve as a handbook of sorts for future marriages due to the emphasis these law codes placed on monogamy. Although the introduction of the *leges Iuliae* were initially met with backlash, Augustus' projected model of a morally restored realm documents an important shift in the Roman way of life. Similar to the political changes Rome was experiencing during the transition from a republic to an empire, the legal system was also continuously evolving and adapting to mould its citizens. Through the introduction of moral legislation as well as his refusal of the position of *curator legum et morum*, Augustus was able to express his power as a ruler without the appearance of overreaching. By prosecuting those who did not adhere to either legislation, while also encouraging citizens to monitor one another, appears as a successful method for ensuring Augustus' ambitions came to fruition. As Augustus' laws firmly directed the populace forward towards his own perception of a morally greater society, the resulting infractions upon one's individual freedoms increased. Examples of both the ruler's and populace's perspectives appear in Ovid's retelling of the Proserpina myth, allowing the poet to unknowingly document contemporary attitudes in foundational mythology. Amidst the friction brought on by marriage legislation, Ovid successfully managed to record opposing stances in a single narrative. By illustrating the twin realities of Augustus' intent with his legislation and the way in which that legislation was received by the populace, Ovid demonstrates how his literature can be a reflection of the social, legal, and political realities that coexisted in Rome at this time. It is within this framework that law, and literature

[14] Both the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* and the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* were passed in 18-17 BCE.

collaborate to disclose how rape and abduction were perceived by individuals and counteracted by legal action throughout Augustus' reign.

1.2 Marriage and Morality Laws: Augustus Looks to the Roman Past

Taking into account the discord of first century Rome, it is important to consider both positions related to the laws, which Ovid incorporates in his myth. Addressing the issue of privacy first confers important context for understanding the initial resistance towards the marriage laws. Karl Galinsky comments on the seemingly polarizing receipt of Augustan legislation in contemporary society, and the absurd extent these laws stretched, which affected all social classes rather than the targeted nobility.[15] These regulations appear to have filtered into the private homes of the populace, and even revoked one's participation in cultural rites or public celebrations if they were unmarried. As Galinsky identifies, the execution of these laws was perceived as overbearing and deliberate. If one did not adhere to Rome's new legislation, their status as a Roman was seemingly threatened through the restrictions placed on attendance at public events or celebrations. By outlawing adultery, Augustus sought to bring private matters into the public sphere where they could be governed and perhaps - in the populace's mind - controlled. Additionally, the prohibiting of unmarried individuals to attend public functions threatened one's freedoms as a Roman citizen. Under this seemingly restrictive legislation, Augustus subliminally sends the message that the unmarried Roman is not truly a Roman, and therefore is not worthy of engaging with the finer aspects of Rome's culture.

A second significant issue raised by the populace was the creation and enforcement of marriage laws from unmarried officials. High ranking individuals within Augustus' close circle who were single at the time of the *leges*' creation included Papius, Poppaeus, Vergil, and Horace. This intriguing factor led to the question of why the populace should be expected to

[15] Galinsky, "Augustus' Legislation on Morals and Marriage," 126.

adhere to such strict rules when those who constructed them did not. As a result, the moral legislation held hypocrisies for some. The insertion of public jurisdiction within the private sphere as well as the hypocritical elements of the creation of these laws, demonstrates why Augustus' new *leges* were initially met with resistance.[16]

However, the backlash which ensued from the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* and the *lex Iulia maritandis ordinibus* did not deter Augustus from his moral path. Returning once more to Milnor's comment on the evolutionary aspect of law, evidence of experimentation to appeal some of the more ludicrous infringements to the populace are exhibited in the *Lex Papia Poppaea.* This apparent revision of the *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*, implemented in 9 CE, simultaneously eased restrictions and offered incentives for those who married.[17] Two things in particular can be deduced from this comment. Firstly, the rigidity of Augustus' marriage laws was acknowledged by the ruler and were adjusted in the creation of the *Lex Papia Poppaea*. His alteration to these laws is not only indicative of his capabilities as a ruler, but additionally expresses the dangers of alienating leading individuals excessively. This attentiveness to the Roman people's issues with the *lex Iulia*'s demonstrates Augustus' willingness to adapt - within reason - in order to appease the current societal climate.

Secondly, the introduction of marriage incentives illustrates the relentless efforts of Augustus to restore morality to Rome. In an important passage from the *Res Gestae*, Augustus describes how his new laws will provide an essential, and currently, absent link to the Roman past. This passage reveals his dream for a life filled with *mores* stating: "By new laws proposed by me, I restored many of the good practices of our ancestors that were dying out in our time,

[16] For an ancient perspective on the backlash of Augustan legislation see Cassius Dio's *Roman History* 56.1. For modern scholarship see Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, "Propaganda and Dissent? Augustan Moral Legislation and the Love-Poets," *Klio* 67 (1985): 180-184.

[17] Although the *Lex Papia Poppaea* was issued after Ovid was exiled in 8 CE, its creation suggests that there were discussions about changing the structure of the marriage laws prior to this code. For this reason, there may be indications of both the populace's upset and Augustus' political agenda in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

and I myself have passed on to posterity examples of many things worthy of imitation (8.5)".[18] The Julio-Claudian ruler's mention of 'the good practices of our ancestors' appear to possess a dual importance. The first significant point is the use of 'our,' when referring to both the ancestors and contemporary first century BCE society, which suggests a shared past as well as responsibility for the present. Augustus' use of the first-person plural in this passage successfully strengthens the concept of a mutual obligation amongst all social ranks to restore *mores* to Rome. Also, the first-person form implies the familial connection between all households, not through bloodlines but rather by means of culture. With himself as the *pater* of the populace, and Livia as its *mater*, Augustus appears to effectively tie every household to his own through moral responsibility while simultaneously establishing himself as the authoritarian head of Rome itself.

The second noteworthy aspect of his statement in the *Res Gestae* is his decision to look to the past. Recalling the conduct codes established in the Twelve Tables, and what he considers to be a more virtuous period in Roman history, Augustus remarks on how he follows the examples of Rome's founders to establish a successful society. Under his legislation, Augustus reflects on founding concepts that contemporary authors came to immortalize in ink. These ripples from the past as well as Augustus' anticipated hopes for Rome's future are apparent throughout first century legal and literary realms. Moreover, the act of introducing new laws likens Rome's first emperor to the founders of the Twelve Tables, ushering in an apparent second founding of the city. Augustus' political re-founding of Rome through laws, was greatly assisted by Ovid's mythological accounts of the deities and heroes who brought Rome into existence. In his poem, Ovid includes examples of different types of *raptus* and in the Proserpina myth, uses the characters of Cyane and Ceres to explicitly state Pluto's illegal

[18] Milnor, "Augustus, History, and the Landscape of the Law," 10. The translations of the *Res Gestae* are from Milnor.

actions. By providing entertaining references to contemporary law, the poet reinforces appropriate legal practices while the mythological backdrop implies the intended longevity of these laws. The status Ovid's *Metamorphoses* earned as a foundational work of Roman mythology suggests it was seen as an accompanying text to the transition from a republic into an empire. As a result of this literary re-founding of the city, Ovid follows Augustus' model by promoting contemporary moral themes while looking reminiscently to the city's mythological past.

1.3 Legal Practice in the Ancient Literary World

Up to this point, the discussion on *mores* and Augustan legal codes have hinted at the broader socio-legal interpretations of *raptus*. Analysing more explicit examples of *raptus* laws in the *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis,* however, will establish a clearer image of how rape was classified in the legal sphere. Prior to Augustan laws, rape charges could be brought before criminal or civil courts but were considered as a crime of "*vis*/violence," "*iniuria*/damages," or "*stuprum per vim*/dishonour through violence".[19] The classification of *raptus* as a form of damage or dishonour is telling of the proprietary nature women were treated with. Following in the tradition of the marriage laws and a moral lifestyle, these perspectives of damaged property or a loss of a woman's "*dignitas*/honour" do not allot any agency to the victim but emphasize the ensuing effects of *raptus* on the victim's household. Although *raptus* was considered a crime against one's family, and many laws concerning rape were not changed throughout the ancient world, the greatest alteration to legal handlings of this crime was Augustus' decision to permit any citizen to bring a charge of *strupum* to an open court.[20] Similar to the ruler's efforts in bringing private matters into the public domain, this advancement in criminalizing rape was not eagerly pursued by the populace, who chose to file

[19] Jones, "The Poetics of Legalism," 77.
[20] Jones, "The Poetics of Legalism," 77.

their cases as *iniuria* in order to maintain a sense of discretion. This latter course of legal action was also favoured as it limited the potential social ramifications to a family's status. Despite Augustus' efforts to punish *raptus,* the continued classifications of this crime as a damage or dishonour reflect the negative associations towards the victim and their family that persisted in the early empire.

As discussed previously, the emphasis on *mores* was crucial to the restoration of the Roman lifestyle. Specifically, focusing on eliminating the immoral excesses that had supposedly consumed the nobility, Augustus promoted virtue through the image of a stable household provided by a monogamous marriage. Although recent scholarship is oftentimes divided on Augustus' intended target, ancient and contemporary perspectives align in the shared view of the laws' overbearing nature, as well as the observation that they were self-serving to the *princeps* and could even be interpreted as legal blackmail towards the aristocracy.[21] Tacitus also discusses the negative effects of the marriage laws among households that felt they were under constant scrutiny of others. In Book 3 of his *Annals,* he notes the continued solitary lifestyle prevalent in Rome, and that the marriage laws did not incite an immediate positive reaction.[22] Tacitus' comment on continued solitary life is telling of the discrepancy between the institution of Augustus' laws and their immediate effectiveness in his aspirations for Rome. This discrepancy between legal action and the city's practices is also prevalent in Ovid when he slyly draws comparisons between Augustus and his divine ancestor, Venus. Relating the almost tyrannical nature of the goddess to the princeps is discussed more thoroughly in the second chapter, but much like the passage in Tacitus' *Annals,* this comparison exemplifies first century displeasures towards their ruler.

[21] Milnor, "Augustus, History, and the Landscape of the Law," 9.
[22] Milnor, "Augustus, History, and the Landscape of the Law," 12.

Interestingly, some of the best supporting examples of the status of women in Roman law survive in the literary world. A substantial amount of evidence regarding the Roman legal system remains in contemporary literary works, thereby granting access to how those who were governed by these laws felt about them. While Tacitus' comment in the *Annals* marks one instance, Horace is a further example of the relationship between poetry and politics. Subtle references to Augustan leadership are prevalent in Horace's *Odes*, especially his verse critiquing Cleopatra's excessive wealth.[23] Although Horace initially appears as if he is slandering the late Egyptian monarch, it is also possible to interpret a subtext on Augustus' excessive use of power. Among his contemporaries, Ovid is especially important not only because of the subject matter of his works, but also because he served as a '*iudex*/judge*'* in property and inheritance cases. This primary experience in the courts translates seamlessly into the choice of diction throughout Book V of his *Metamorphoses*.

One point of crucial significance is Ovid's mastery of the Latin language, specifically his early use of the term for abduction. *Raptor* is first used in the Proserpina myth and stands as the first clear instance of an abduction rather than rape; a point Ovid emphasizes by relying on legal terminology to describe the story's events as being executed with '*vis*/violence.' In what may be interpreted as a clever use of diction, Ovid identifies Proserpina's case as *vis,* which is quite close to *violare,* the legal term used for sexual assault. Even though Ovid refrains from explicitly deeming Pluto's actions as a sexual assault his repeated use of violence and its similarity to *violare* are an effective implication of his thoughts on the matter.[24] Andrew Wallace-Hadrill and Patricia Johnson both comment on the possibility of Ovid ridiculing the adultery and marriage laws in his work as a result of his equestrian class and earlier poetry

[23] Robert W, Carrubba, "Octavian's Pursuit of a Swift Cleopatra: Horace, *Odes* 1.37.18," *Philologus* 150, no. 1 (2006): 180.

[24] Brandon F. Jones, "The Poetics of Legalism: Ovid and Claudian on the Rape of Proserpina," *Arethusa* 52, no. 1 (2019): 79. Jones contradicts himself slightly in this passage as he later refers to Pluto as a *raptor* through the mouthpiece of Cyane. The ruling of the crime as an act of violence rather than theft or a sexual deviation may reflect how *raptus* was classified under Roman legislation.

mocking the laws. From his account of the Proserpina myth, Brandon Jones magnifies how topical the discussion of marriage laws was to Ovid's readers and suggests the poet's expectations of the audience to engage with these allusions. For example, Ceres' plea to Jupiter, following the nymph Cyane telling Pluto he does not have consent to the marriage, highlights the legal aspects of an abduction marriage. Primarily, there was a need for consent from the *pater familias,* who was also the one who had the power to rectify the situation. Due to the absence of consent from the bride's father or the bride herself, a marriage may be considered invalid without *conubium*. A surviving quote from Ulpian clarifies the proper practice of engagement for Roman individuals, stating:

> "A marriage is legitimate if there is conubium between the parties who contract the marriage; the male has reached puberty and the female is of age, and both consent if they are sui iuris, or, if they are in their fathers' power, their parents agree too. Conubium is the capacity of lawfully taking a wife."[25]

Consequences for the victim would be a minimal chance of remarriage or a loss of *dignitas* in the higher ranks, which was the closest thing to legal power a woman could possess. Pursuing a case against the assaulter would be classified under violence or destruction of what was likely considered as a problem of property. Additionally, there is an issue of status being compromised since the new laws forbid marriage without consent. An interesting parallel to the outcome of events appears in the *Fasti* where instead of Jupiter claiming that Pluto committed no '*iniuria/*harm,' Ceres calls him a *raptor* and affirms that a crime has been committed.[26] Despite the presence of similar wording in both scenes of the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti,* Ovid rules the acts differently in the separate works. His divergence between these accounts could reflect the reality of abduction marriages in ancient Rome, where judgement was passed differently on similar cases. However, the most prevalent point regarding these

[25] Jones, "The Poetics of Legalism," 76.
[26] For the full imitation of a *raptus* trial, see Ovid, *Fasti,* 4. 585-621.

passages is that Ovid considers Pluto's actions to be criminal. The absence of parental or individual consent, along with the threat Pluto's forceful abduction poses to Proserpina's purity, explain how women were viewed as possessions in the legal sphere.

Later reflections of Roman authors bearing the torch of Ovid's rendition of the Proserpina myth emerge to demonstrate the enduring connection between literature and legislation. The continuation of the Proserpina myth in later years appears to be a noteworthy aspect of the legal world, despite its origins in the literary realm. These later instalments to the Proserpina myth seemingly were a way for one to demonstrate their learning and actively contribute to the original text. Also, the myth's themes of abduction and restoration possibly serve as a metaphor for the theft of the Roman people's freedoms in the *lex Iulia*'s strict jurisdiction, and Augustus' desperate desire to recover a moral way of life. As a result, Ovid's coining of *raptor,* and his example of abduction marriage in the *Metamorphoses,* forges a vital link between his poem and the legal jurisdiction of Augustus. This legal and arguably political subtext parallels the contemporary events of the author's period, while synchronously publishing the varying responses within the current climate. Having gone through these *leges,* social comments, and Ovid's discussion, one can get a general sense of what these laws were meant to evoke and change in first century Rome. Continuing forward, addressing these listed aspects in the Renaissance and post-Renaissance can reveal the socio-cultural and legal context of the Roman city-state.

1.4 Understanding Italian Post-Renaissance Society and the Gender Hierarchy

Akin to the idea that laws provided a kind of conduct code for a society, writers of conduct literature produced an exemplary genre of literature that was steadily published across the Italian city-states. Written by both clerical and secular individuals during the Renaissance, pamphlets and leisurely stories were positively addressing a gender-hierarchy in sexual

relations. This production of conduct literature directly contributed to the persistent division between the social expectations of males and females. Composed in the vernacular, these works reinforced gender roles through their targeted female audience. Littered across the pages of conduct codes, novellas, and most notably laws, are numerous versions of males in an active role, while females were expected to maintain a passive role.

Within the majority of these aforementioned works, the expected passivity of females is most prevalent in intimate scenes. In her article, "Women on top: Coital positions and gender hierarchies in Renaissance Italy," Marlisa Den Hartog observes a disconcerting display of stereotypes, particularly with how "female characters are presented as something that sex is 'done' to, rather than as actual participants."[27] If the notion that sex is something that is done to a woman can be applied to rape victims, this thought process forges an apparent justification of the male aggressor's actions. Since a woman was not given an active role in carnal relations, she appears to have no agency of her own to refuse or accept the active male's advances. Den Hartog expands on this concept further as she presents the literary trope of sex being an amorous battle with natural victors and losers. Not only does this competitive construction of intimacy successfully reinforce an imbalance of power between participants, but it also correlates to an ancient literary trope, which equipped hunting imagery for descriptions of rape. Furthermore, it is not beyond the realm of understanding to decipher that the majority of victors in an allegorical hunt would be males. This ancient hunting trope was often used by Ovid, and so it is intriguing to see how it endures as a literary trope during Bernini's lifetime, reinforcing gender imbalances with descriptions of an active male hunter stalking down a female target. In the pursuit of one's prey, the hunting trope implies that resistance or flight should be seen as a

[27] Den Hartog, "Women on top," 15. A more extensive investigation into the hunting motif, especially as found in
Ovid as a ubiquitous image in Ovid is undertaken in Chapter 2.

stimulant for the male instead of a female's refusal.[28] Evidence of flight as a sexual stimulant for the aggressor in the hunting motif is most apparent in Ovid's account of Apollo and Daphne. In Book I of the *Metamorphoses*, Daphne is described as "*decens*/fair" in her "timido [...] cursu fugit/fearful flight," (*Met*. 1.525-527) while Apollo is likened to a Gallic hound, an eagle, and lion, which demonstrates the dominant role of the sexually excited male towards the fleeing female. Moving into Bernini's period, however, contemporary gender expectations, which Bernini likely incorporated into his sculpture, also contribute to dramatic displays of dominance by the male aggressor. A representation of excessive force is visible in Bernini's work, with how deeply Pluto's fingers sink into Persephone's smooth thigh. Also, the strained muscles in the god's form as he pulls the maiden towards him clearly illustrate which figure is in the powerful position. The physical contest between Pluto and Persephone recalls the underlying sexual aspects of the hunting trope, and the woman's expected passivity.

Intriguingly, in the few existing instances of women adopting an active role, their display of autonomy is presented negatively as a subversion of standards. An altering to the accepted division of roles was a seemingly delicate course to navigate. For example, in Baldessar Castiglione's *Courtier*, he cautions men of the dangers of showing too much affection towards a woman, believing that doing so would lead one to absorb a female's weakness. In a comparison to Marc Antony's adoption of Egyptian dress and culture, Castiglione identifies the apparent reversal of roles with Antony's loss of virility and Cleopatra's absorption of his male power.[29] As a result, one may deduce the cultural attitudes, and evident threat that a woman's initiative in the bedroom, posed to either their husband or lover's preconceived ideas of their own masculinity. At the risk of overstating the point, both

[28] Although a more extensive investigation into the hunting motif will be explored in the next chapter, it is interesting to identify the continued connections between ancient, Renaissance, and post-Renaissance attitudes of sexual violence.

[29] Ann R. Jones, "Heterosexuality: A Beast with Many Backs" in *A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Renaissance*, edited by B. Talvacchia (Oxford: Berg, 2012), 38.

Den Hartog's observations and Castiglione's writings exhibit the cultural beliefs that persisted in creating an imbalance between genders. However, this is not to say that every novella, pamphlet, or romance epic was written with the intent of educating against sexual experimentation, but rather that the belief of male superiority in the bedchamber was a concept deeply rooted into the mindset of Renaissance authors. Moreover, these examples from literature - designed as forms of entertainment - coincide with the messages distributed in conduct codes and canon law. The presentation of 'proper and improper' relations between men and women are valuable resources in contextualizing how women were perceived during the Italian Renaissance.

Through the male lens that written documents were composed in, it is possible to see how Renaissance people conceived gender roles. Fictional works such as the novellas appear to primarily focus on the male experience rather than the female, while evidence in conduct literature described marriage to be a peaceful place for the husband. Therefore, the ways in which sex was depicted in literature, discussed in conduct codes, and understood by a Renaissance audience seems tailored to delight the male reader while damning the female. Nicholas Scott Baker elaborates on the supposed importance of maintaining these gendered expectations in sixteenth century societal structures, expressing those subversions of gender roles had the power to endanger the entire political community.[30] Consequently, the supposed threat that sexual divergences posed to social order proved the gender hierarchy's practical nature as well as the communal expectation of all classes to uphold current practices for a stable society. As Baker's article discusses and the contemporary literature demonstrates, these deeply rooted concepts of gender permeated other mediums, such as artistic depictions and official legislation, effectively causing audiences to continuously consume the same material.

[30] Nicholas Scott Baker, "Power and Passion in Sixteenth-Century Florence: The Sexual and Political Reputations of Alessandro and Cosimo I de' Medici" *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 19, no. 3 (2019): 433.

Perhaps the fear that straying from established stereotypes would lead to discord in society is a potential explanation for how similar gender expectations were able to persist from Ovid's time period into Bernini's. It may also forge additional links between Ovid's poetry and Bernini's artistic composition of Proserpina. Furthermore, as papal court records of rape cases reveal, the permeating thoughts writers, artists, and lawmakers unwittingly incorporate in their works, resulted in legal action that fulfilled expected active and passive roles.

1.5 Canon Law and the Crusade for Sexual Morality

Considering the self-governance of Italian city-states such as Florence, Venice, and Rome, it is unsurprising that each individual region had its own secular legal codes. Although geography likely played a role in different approaches to criminalizing or prosecuting rape within each state, the pervading concepts of gender roles, a shared - or in Venice's case, creating links to a - Roman cultural past, and a mutual adherence to canon law closely associate each state to one another.[31] As discussed in the previous section, conceived gender roles were evident even in the ancient Roman world and persisted with minimal changes into the seventeenth century. It is the presence of these perspectives, accompanied by the city-states of Florence and Rome's origins from the ancient Roman empire, which contribute to the notion of a shared culture that extends beyond an individual state identity. Although Venice did not share the same foundational origins as contemporary Rome and Florence, their efforts to connect their own city-state to ancient Rome through literature and legal codes that mirror the attitudes presented in the material from contemporary Italy suggests how Venice participated in the shared cultural past of ancient Rome. Having said that, it is important to note how specific laws against *raptus* do not survive from a Renaissance Roman context as they do from a

[31] Franco Cardini, "The Self-Definition of the Venetian Republic," in *City States in Classical Antiquity and Medieval Italy*, edited by Anthonu Molho, Kurt A. Raaflaub, and Julia Emlen (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1991): 102.

contemporary Florentine or Venetian context. Surviving records of the vigilante responses for settling rape cases outside of the legal system, however, exist across the neighbouring territories of the peninsula, implying how similar thought and action were among the Romans, Florentines, and Venetians.[32] Overall attitudes towards certain aspects of life appear strikingly similar even if some small differences remain between secular legal codes.[33] Yet, there was another significant factor enhancing the cultural kinship. Religious laws offered moral guidelines for the maintenance of one's spiritual self, which strengthened the shared culture of these federated states now as Christians and as the inheritors of ancient Roman values. Through an accordance with canon law, every city-state was placed under the papacy's authority, whose emphasis on moral teachings appears reminiscent of Augustan legislation. Due to these intellectual, cultural, and religious components, it appears as if supplementary evidence from both Florentine and Venetian legal documents may be employed to construct a more complete image of contemporary Roman jurisdiction. Initiating this investigation into Renaissance laws is a review of how rape was treated in the religious world and tried in the papal courts.

It was not until almost the thirteenth century that secular juries began to differentiate between lustful sins in the Christian context and sexual offences that should be criminalized.[34] Part of the reasoning for a delay in distinction was that sex crimes were a difficult area of jurisdiction to cover. The main area of concern for judging a sex crime was that the act itself occurred in private, leading a case to fall into hearsay quite easily. Unless one party confessed to the crime, proving one's guilt was a significant challenge. As a result of this, the amount of evidence required in order to properly convict someone was extraordinarily difficult to achieve. This was in large part due to the court's request for evidence that was '*plena probatio*/clearer

[32] Cardini, "The Self-Definition of the Venetian Republic," 103.
[33] Joseph Figliulo-Rosswurm, "Rural People and Public Justice in Fourteenth-Century Tuscany," *Renaissance Quarterly* 72, no. 2 (2019): 419.
[34] James A. Brundage, "Playing by the Rules: Sexual Behaviour and Legal Norms in Medieval Europe," in *Desire and discipline: sex and sexuality in the premodern West* edited by Jacqueline Murray and Konrad Eisenbichler (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996): 26.

than the light of day' when dealing with criminal matters. Since acquiring concrete evidence to win a case was extremely difficult, many instances of *raptus* were not pursued in either the ecclesiastical or secular courts.

Following the Fourth Lateran council at the beginning of the thirteenth century, Pope Innocent III took measures to reduce the amount of proof needed for a sex crime to be brought before the court. Rather than the need for evidence that was 'clearer than the light of day,' the Church decided that bringing forth a '*denunciatio/*complaint' was a sufficient means for conducting a trial. This method also appears to consider the importance of protecting a victim or witness, with the anonymous nature of bringing forth a formal complaint or accusation. Despite the allotted protection offered by concealing one's identity, a majority of cases were personally handled outside of the city, and the jurisdictions that governed those within it. Massimo Firpo comments on the return to a "granite like orthodoxy" that the Catholic Church steadily implemented from the papal reign of Innocent III up until the Council of Trent in the mid-sixteenth century. By clarifying crucial aspects of Church doctrine, which could help in eliminating the threat heretics posed to papal authority, more restrictions towards immoral activities were introduced in canon law. The combination of increased governance through laws and the declining religious authority caused by the growth of more Christian denominations, led to an increase in civil conflicts and legal jurisdiction across the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries.[35] As a result of the overlapping themes of over governance and violent resistance to assertions of power from a weakened authority, we can use examples from the most recently listed centuries to understand the broader religious climate of the Counter Reformation. Also resulting from this increase in canon law, Renaissance scholar Peter Blastenbrei discusses how law enforcement in the secular realm faced issues with individuals

[35] Massimo Firpo, "Rethinking "Catholic Reform" and "Counter-Reformation": What Happened in Early Modern Catholicism - a View from Italy," *Journal of Early Modern History* 20 (2016): 300.

settling their disputes on their own rather than in the legal courts. Consequently, there was an abundance of violence throughout the streets, without adequate authority to prevent further disorder. Blastenbrei magnifies the Church's instability during the late sixteenth century through his discussion on the Counter-Reformation. The two areas of focus in his article are the Church's inability to properly enforce their legal jurisdiction and the population's preference of seeking justice outside of the law courts. Acting through what appears to be a sense of honour, the settling of legal disputes without court sanctioned procedures reveals a decisively male approach to legal handlings. While women were more likely to verbally report a crime to a court official, men frequently opted for a violent resolution.[36] Although it is a stretch to credit an ancient literary motif as an explanation for reporting a crime in the Renaissance, the implied passivity of the female's approach to justice finds an ancient parallel in something like Ovid's use of the hunting trope. More specifically, parallels between Renaissance legal practices and Ceres' appeals to Jupiter in the *Metamorphoses* are immediately brought to the fore, reflecting the enduring connections between ancient and Renaissance procedures of reporting rape. According to Blastenbrei's research, bringing a case to court was seen as a last resort for the populace of the city-states.[37] Instead of taking matters into their own hands, Blastenbrei also documents that individual would frequently retreat to the countryside and wait for a change in power - and hopefully laws - before returning. The resolution to either fight or flee from one's troubles appears as a common practice for males during the late sixteenth century, while women were faced with limited opportunities.

Another comment on the pitfalls of the papal courts is how the reporting of crimes reveals an imbalance between the male and female demographics. In a simultaneous effort to restore stability and morality through the institution of laws, the medieval Church began

[36] Figliulo-Rosswurm, "Rural People and Public Justice in Fourteenth-Century Tuscany," 423.
[37] Peter Blastenbrei, "Violence, arms and criminal justice in papal Rome, 1560-1600" *Renaissance Studies* 20, no. 1 (2006): 74.

introducing oppressive regulations. Appearing remarkably similar to Augustus' marriage laws of the first century, these new additions to the legal world banned premarital intercourse for its indulgence in a deadly sin and the subsequent issues it could pose to both inheritance and a woman's value. Not only was the insertion of canon laws into private affairs objectionable to late Renaissance societies, but the moral aspect driving these laws into existence greatly resembles the disgruntled legal climate of first century Rome. Also, in a male dominated society, the woman's consent in premarital relations was not considered an important factor when penalizing those who engaged in premarital intercourse. Due to the resulting scorn directed towards the female participant - or victim in the event of rape - the contemporary society appears to be more concerned with governing the woman's body rather than punishing the male.[38] It appears that a woman's loss of innocence supposedly condemned them in the eyes of society, diminished their marital value, and validated their guilt. Forbidding carnal relations prior to wedlock is an excellent example of the rigid moral tones that continued to exist in the law-making process, while also identifying the more detrimental effects sex crimes had on the female party.

One surviving example of how women were more negatively affected by rape in the legal context appears in the religious records of the Avogadari. As diocese officials, the Avogadari were the legal representatives that made up 'The Forty' in the papal courts. In a case from the mid-fourteenth century, a man named Zanino Viscia was tried for raping an apprentice dressmaker, Francesca. According to the official records, Viscia was given the option to pay a fine of forty soldi, be incarcerated for half a year, or marry the woman he had harmed.[39] Francesca's ultimate acceptance of her attacker as her husband is a surprising reflection of how detrimental premarital relations of any kind were to a woman's value. Her decision to marry

[38] Brundage, "Playing by the Rules," 23.
[39] Guido Ruggiero, "Violence and Sexuality: Rape," in *The Boundaries of Eros: Sex Crime and Sexuality in Renaissance Venice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 98.

the same man who forced himself on her, is indicative of the blow to the now damaged virtue she could offer as another's wife. Despite the rigidity of such rules being put into place by the Church, medieval scholar James Brundage observes the shortcomings of both the laity as well as the clergy to adhere to abstinence before marriage and refrain from 'sinful' sexual activities outside of marriage.[40] Brundage's article weighs the discrepancies between canon law and social action, building upon previous scholarship and providing an assessment of lay attitudes towards sex in the midst of strict Church doctrine. The disparity between instituting laws and the populace's adherence to new legislation is quite similar to the continued solitary lifestyle in Augustan Rome after the *leges Iuliae* were implemented. Thus, both Bernini and Ovid can be situated during periods of insufficient legal authority, in which women were socially prosecuted more harshly than males. In both contexts, consent is seemingly irrelevant to the female's inevitable outcome of a decreased value in marriage and 'participation' in immoral deeds.

1.6 Legal Language in Venetian *Raptus* Laws

Shifting focus away from religious doctrine into the secular realm, illuminates the challenges lawmakers faced when attempting to criminalize sexual violence. Surviving evidence in Venetian law codes appears as the most accessible jurisdiction, which also suggests it is the most indicative for contextualizing rape in the legal climate. The origins of how *raptus* was classified in Venetian law courts appears to use Augustan legislation as a legal model. From this forged connection to an ancient culture and codex, the classification of *raptus* in

[40] Brundage uses the word sinful to encompass other sexual activities that were considered deviant by the Church. Some of these acts involved serious activities such as adultery or premarital relations, while other deviances included in this term were coital positions other than missionary. The notion of such activities being sinful is directly related to the notion of the marriage bed and fornication with the intent of procreation. Surviving medical records from this period comment on the uterus' inability to hold a male's sperm in any position except for missionary. Therefore, the act of reproduction would be void in the Church's mind and the two individuals could be seen as indulging in lustful desires.

Venetian law was even assimilated into post-Renaissance civil law. Valentina Cesco tracks the progression of *raptus* across a century, clarifying that this term was mainly concerned with abduction in later centuries instead of non-consensual sex. An interesting factor of *raptus* is how it was also perceived as an offence against the male relative, who was in charge of a female relation's overall safety. Therefore, Cesco notes how taking a woman away from her father or other male guardian, either by force or with her consent, was punishable under Venetian law. In an attempt to connect to the Roman cultural past, this particular aspect of Venetian law recalls the requirement of *conubium* prevalent in official marriage practices from Augustan Rome. In both instances a marriage was invalid without a guardian's consent, meaning the groom could be accused of abducting the bride.[41] The undeniable overlap between Augustan and late sixteenth century Venetian law demonstrates how *raptus*, as it referred to abduction marriage, remained a prevalent issue for the law to govern.

When assessing the broader context in which laws aimed at preventing sexual violence were introduced, one is met with a startling amount of civil unrest. Firpo identifies the equal efforts made by secular and papal courts to reassert their authority in order to decrease violence in the streets. Noting a particular emphasis on Rome in the restoration of ecclesiastical authority, Firpo identifies the Church's strict repression of devotional and moral deviance in their new legislation.[42] Despite the attention devoted to the Roman state, which housed the Church's authorial seat, additions to canon law affected all the city-states to some extent. Coinciding with these ecclesiastical laws was secular legislation, also aimed at restoring peace, and possibly intending to fill the vacancy of religious power with their own jurisdiction.

[41] Once again it is ironic to observe the emphasis granted to a male's consent in proceedings, whereas a female's consent was dismissed when a crime was committed or brought to court. It seems as if the only consent required for the courts came from a male relation, demonstrating the minimal presence of female agency.
[42]Firpo, "Rethinking "Catholic Reform" and "Counter-Reformation": What Happened in Early Modern Catholicism - a View from Italy," 295. For further discussion on the methods used by the Church in the Counter Reformation see Kathleen M. Comerford, "The Future of Sixteenth Century Studies, or Nostradamus Speaks in Many Voices," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 40, (2009): 177-179.

Another example of the enduring conflict that remained across the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries arises in a 1574 Venetian law, which was implemented in what appears to be a direct response to the still increasing forms of violence brought about by the Counter Reformation. The following passage not only illustrates the continuation of the Church's severe instability three centuries later, but it also indicates the rippling effect a loss of ruling authority could bring to the populace. Cesco's translation also acknowledges the legal action officials took in an attempt to affirm their power, which reads as follows:

> "If someone by himself or accompanied, with traps and in ambush will go to anyone's house or in the street and will commit murder, rape, abduction, arson or violence against property or life, if caught *in flagrante crimine* they can be captured in that precise moment with impunity and if they resist, they can be killed by anyone even in foreign countries."[43]

With reference to this law, it is possible to see how serious of a problem rape was throughout the city-states with the Church's waning power, but especially in Venice where papal authority did not possess a firm hold prior to these political events. The severity of committing such a crime is evident in the fatal penalty documented here. Also, the permission allotted to lay people in pursuing an abductor could provide further insight into how frequent infractions of this nature were occurring. An interesting comparison between the new powers granted to the Venetian people in this law and Augustus' advocating of monitoring one's neighbours arises to reveal the remarkably similar contexts of ancient and early seventeenth century society. Put simply, both societies encountered civil unrest as the result of political instability. In order to combat a loss of power, ancient, secular, and religious authorities alike reasserted their power through legislation, which led to a cycle of further unrest and increased sexual violence. Due to the similarities in both religious and secular proceedings from the early to the late

[43]Valentina Cesco, "Female Abduction, Family Honor, and Women's Agency in Early Modern Venetian Istria," *Journal of Early Modern History* 15, no. 4 (2011): 352-353.

Renaissance, Venetian law provides the clearest reflection of the increased violence in the city-states affected by absences of political authority.

Another vital point Cesco raises involves the recorded claims of abduction raised across all social classes. It was not until the Venetian state instituted the aforementioned law, that an increase in the number of cases from both nobility and non-aristocrats were brought under inspection. This appears as a positive progression from the ancient laws, which only enacted punishments for crimes committed to free women. Although Cesco's article is tailored to early seventeenth century Venice, she discusses how this northern Italian republic exemplifies similar if not identical incidents occurring across the rest of the mainland in secular jurisdiction. Therefore, it appears that the model of Venetian law can be an example for contemporary approaches in neighbouring regions burdened by the crimes of sexual violence. It is also in this period that advancements to the legal system demonstrate the similar constitutional environment Bernini and Ovid possibly incorporated into their works. These exterior influences of contemporary legal proceedings are easily identifiable in the *Metamorphoses*, while overt connections to post-Renaissance laws are more subtle in the *Pluto and Persephone*.

1.7 Lawful Literature: Legal Terminology in Contemporary Works

Given the absence of an individual term for sexual violence in the ancient world, written works relied on other terms to determine the type of assault being used. Across the genres of literature, poetry, and legal jurisdiction in Augustan Rome a variety of words including *iniuria, vis, raptus,* and *stuprum per vim* were used to document sexual violence. Although there remains an element of ambiguity with these terms, some clarity is provided in the *lex Iulia de vi*. Under this legislation, which was implemented by Caesar and reinforced once more by Augustus, rape was described as *vis* and *stuprum per vim*. Providing more specific terms for particular acts of violence is notable despite the seemingly narrow definition of rape solely

being "the forcible and non-consensual penetration of a free girl, boy, woman, or man by a man."[44] This definition appears to encompass a limited demographic of the populace as only free individuals are noted, and males are the only potential perpetrator listed. From a modern perspective, this explanation fails to address the multitude of forms rape can hold. However, the limited scope offered in the Roman legal realm reveals a vital cultural perspective of how rape was viewed during the first centuries BCE and CE. Melissa Marturano comments on the misogynistic nature of the law, believing that the *lex Iulia de vi* was instituted for a male's security in marriage rather than a female's safety. She expresses the imbalance of legal protection between men and women, stating: "that laws against rape were not to protect women or to honour their sexual choices, but to protect men from the vitiation of a woman's chief economic value, as a pure reproductive agent for men, and to protect a man's legitimacy in the eyes of other men."[45] Therefore, the crime of rape was not an action committed against a sole individual, but instead it was seen as a slight to one's household. Furthermore, only male relatives were permitted to seek prosecution for the crime, which emphasizes the severity of rape within the male sphere while disregarding the personal effects it had on a victim.

Conclusions

Despite a gap of roughly fifteen hundred years between the two areas in question, the intentions, nature, and effectiveness of the implemented laws are akin to one another. Ancient Roman moral laws dealing with marriage looked to their own past as an example for restoring their present circumstances, whereas the Renaissance laws elaborated on the efforts of Augustus with the addition of Christian influences in canon law. Also, at the core of each legal system was an emphasis on morality. The efforts from lawmakers to correct the perceived

[44] Melissa Kathleen Marturano, "*Vim Parat*: Patterns of Sexualized Violence, Victim-Blaming, and Sororophobia in Ovid," PhD diss, (The City University of New York, 2017): 5.
[45] Marturano, "*Vim Parat*," 5-6.

corruption within their jurisdiction not only exhibit leading members' concerns, but also reveal the cultural climate. Much like Augustus' efforts to eliminate adultery, the initiatives put forth by the Avogadori attempted to eliminate any premarital relations, which in both circumstances proved to be more damaging to the female party's honour. The similarities between the attempted governance of private affairs in both time periods further indicates the extent of both immorality and sexual violence permeating the populace. Now that this legal background has been acquired, it is possible to interpret potential perceptions of contemporary legislation in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the next chapter, and a later discussion on Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* more confidently.

Chapter 2. Snatched from the Pages of Time: Analysing Rape in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book V

2.1 Contextualizing Rape in the Literary Tradition

Proceeding forward in the investigation of how sexual violence - as exhibited in the act of *raptus* - was perceived in the ancient world, it is important to assess another significant component of ancient Roman culture. By redirecting the spotlight onto the literary realm, it is possible to interpret contemporary attitudes towards public laws. In the context of Augustan Rome, Ovid appears as an exceptionally important resource for understanding 'rape culture' of first century Rome more coherently.[46] Ovid's literary corpus includes an impressive range of material, encompassing topics of Rome's mythological history, and affairs pertaining to romantic relationships. The most influential of his works for this study is the *Metamorphoses,* which was a collection of myths outlining the accounts of Roman deities and heroes. Through the *Metamorphoses,* Ovid not only seemingly bridges the gap between Rome's foundation and the newly established empire, but he also constructs a vision of first century ideals. A substantial factor of Ovid's success is likely related to the close position he held as a client of Augustus. His proximity to the Julio-Claudian ruler situated the *Metamorphoses* in the transforming legal climate previously established in the first chapter. Amidst the conflicting attitudes towards Augustus' marriage laws, Ovid appears to include both propagandistic elements and indications of the populace's perspective in his writing. Thus, the tales of revered deities and celebrated heroes likely recount both Rome's past and indirect comments on Ovid's present. Moreover, the *Metamorphoses* received significant attention in the Renaissance, following its rediscovery in the eleventh century. As a result of Ovid's contemporary and

[46] I would like to comment briefly here that the concept of rape culture is a modern notion that the ancients would not have been aware of. Its use in this passage is to reference the surrounding cultural attitudes towards rape that exist in Ovid's active period. Therefore, the interpretations that will be made about how rape fit into ancient Roman culture are not indicative of the entire civilization, but more specifically this particular period of Augustan leadership.

continued success, the *Metamorphoses* seemingly permeated both literary and visual disciplines, making it a supposedly indispensable work in both time periods.

Supplementary to the literary success of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is the looming presence of rape narratives throughout this poem. The abundance of both attempted and successful assaults in a piece of formative literature initially appears puzzling. However, through extensive research, Elizabeth Robertson and Christine Rose establish the importance of rape in foundational stories, especially in Western culture. Elaborating on how the most common findings among rape stories concern the power dynamics between male and female individuals, Robertson and Rose also suggest that an imbalance in gender roles is revealing of one's perception and place in society.[47] While the inclusion of abductions and sexual violence exhibit varying degrees of assault within the entire Ovidian corpus, the myth of Proserpina exemplifies three forms of *raptus* in a single story. Therefore, applying the theory from Robertson and Rose, the *Metamorphoses* appears to be a foundation myth for Augustus' new Rome. With the assistance of Ovid's wit and writings, this collection of transformative tales appears to herald the transition of Rome into a new beginning. In particular, the Proserpina myth may reveal contemporary attitudes towards rape due to its inclusion of three different forms of *raptus*.

2.2 Caught in the Crosshairs: Hunting Motifs in Ovidian Poetry

Prior to the prominence he received as a poet, Ovid served as a judge in the Roman courts. Both his impressive education and personal experience in overseeing court cases appear to positively benefit his renditions of ancient myths.[48] Clear evidence of his legal experience

[47]Eleanor Glendinning, "Reinventing Lucretia: Rape, Suicide and Redemption from Classical Antiquity to the Medieval Era," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 20, no. 1 (2013): 63. For additional discourse on the significance of rape in foundational myths see, Elizabeth Robertson and Christine M. Rose, "Representing Rape in Medieval and Early Modern Literature," *The New Middle Ages* 20 (New York: Houndmills, 2001).
[48] Jeremy Dimmick, "Ovid in the Middle Ages: authority and poetry" in *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid* edited by Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 264. Dimmick comments on Ovid's

resides in Ovid's choice of diction when he adopts legal terminology such as *stuprum, rapio,* and *violo* to describe instances of sexual violence. The inclusion of proper judicial terminology seemingly enhances the credibility of his piece, as it directly relates to current Roman laws. Additionally, employing terms used to identify criminal actions simultaneously removes any ambiguity of events, while also implying the violent force used by the attacker on the victim.

As illustrated above, the victims of *raptus* are numerous throughout Ovid's written corpus. Even though Ovid composes a diverse range of abduction-based scenarios with sexual implications, the victims are most often free virgins or women with a high social standing.[49] For instance, in the Proserpina myth, the initial victim is both a maiden and a goddess. Thus, the impact of Pluto's attack is supposedly amplified as Proserpina is deprived of her virginal youth and stripped of the respect she is owed as a deity. Another potential reasoning for Ovid's preference of free women concerns an ancient audience's ability to sympathize with the victim. As previously noted, Jane Gardner's scholarship discussed the severity of punishment for committing rape, recorded in the *lex Iulia de vi publica*. The discrepancies between enforcing punishments are a clear reflection of the Roman social hierarchy. In the event that a slave is assaulted, reparations are made through fines, whereas the punishment for raping a free woman was punishable by death.[50] Despite the notion that both women were considered a form of property, the value and subsequent retribution for damaging this feminine possession was ultimately determined by the woman's class. Consequently, it seems that the intended audience of Ovid's work would more willingly sympathize with someone of a free and prestigious standing over an enslaved victim. This is arguably a reflection of Ovid's patrician values, which

philosophical studies, which would offer further moralizing themes (beyond the potential influences of Augustan propaganda) for the poet to introduce into his work.

[49] In Book 10, Ovid recounts the story of Orpheus and his preference for same-sex relationships after he loses his love, Eurydice. Within this book, Ovid assigns Orpheus the role of narrator, and includes descriptions of other homosexual pairings such as Jupiter and Ganymede. Even though the majority of rape victims are females, Ovid applies the same criteria of social standing and virginity to his male victims.

[50] Gardner, "Sexual Offences," 119.

demonstrated an imbalance in perspective, as the more severe punishments were reserved for violations against members of their own high-ranking social class. Therefore, if an aggressor sexually assaulted a slave the punishment would be less severe than if the same crime was committed to a patrician class woman. A further comment to make is how this description potentially reveals how the poet's personal views of *raptus* align with contemporary thoughts of a woman's value. By reducing an individual's worth to their virginal and social status, while also treating them as a piece of property, Ovid indicates the shared attitudes of *raptus* between himself and the higher classes of ancient Rome.

Other *topoi* of Roman literature frequently used in *raptus* scenes emerge in Book V of the *Metamorphoses*. Assisted by the complimentary use of legal terminology, Ovid utilizes these motifs to construct his accounts of sexual violence. Eleanor Glendinning comments on Ovid's gripping portrayals of rape stories in the *Fasti*, *Metamorphoses,* and *Ars Amatoria*. One of the most compelling motifs in his accounts of the rapes of Lucretia, Proserpina, and the Sabine Women is the pursuit of prey by a predator. This contest between the hunter and hunted is further commented on by Hemker, who believes that hunting motifs seek to emphasize the helplessness of a victim being violently pursued by their assailant.[51] An unintentional outcome of applying this *topos* to *raptus* myths is the almost admirable image allotted to the physically dominant and in control hunter. Glendinning notes how rapists were frequently likened to eagles or wolves in the literary accounts, which forges an instant association with power and danger in the audience's mind, but also brings to mind the might of Rome itself with the eagle of Rome and the she-wolf who fed Romulus and Remus. Additionally, these social and political symbols of Roman strength also recall the power of Augustus. This action-driven imagery not only likens the context of sexual violence to a competitive pastime, but it also reinforces both the narrative's intensity and associations between the *princeps* and the predator. As a result of

[51] Glendinning, "Reinventing Lucretia," 66.

Ovid's repeated use of hunting imagery, Marturano concludes that a victim's opposition to the attacker's desired union is a clear indication of identifying rape. Through the poet's effortless ability to build suspense, which is exhibited through the female's resistance, descriptions of fear, and the male's violence, Ovid provides vivid portrayals, which Claassen argues are crucial to the piece's enjoyment.[52] Through the rich descriptions of the hunter stalking its prey, Ovid appears to grant a glimpse into how he desired one to read about rape accounts. Furthermore, by spotlighting the defenceless female victim and ruthless male predator, Ovid effectively heightens the mood of his texts while emphasizing the violent nature of rape attacks. This type of dramatic representation of rape from Ovid, with an emphasis on the tension in hunting motifs, is visually represented by Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone*. In later chapters we will also see how sixteenth century artists like Titian, Damiano Mazza, and Giambologna incorporated predatory elements in depictions of rape.

2.3 Assault by Association: Sexual Violence in *Metamorphoses* Book V

In the Roman cultural setting, male sexuality was seemingly formed through acts of violence and dominance, with the intention to display one's own power. However, Ovid creates an interesting subversion of expectations in Book V by applying this association of male sexuality to the goddess Venus. Both her prestigious position as the goddess of love, and the ruler of two thirds of the universe's triumvirate, speak to the extent of her influence and power. However, her hasty decision to target both Pluto and Proserpina - and thereby expand her domain into the underworld - reveals her assertively masculine sexuality. Firstly, Proserpina is punished violently by the goddess for appearing to follow the virginal path of Minerva and Diana. Venus demonstrates her displeasure at Proserpina's disregard of her dominance with Pluto's act of violence erupting in a sexual nature. It is increasingly apparent through the

[52] Jo-Marie Claassen, "Word Pictures: Visualizing with Ovid," *Acta Classica* 56 (2013): 33.

goddess' actions that the ancient Romans believed there was an innate bond between unrequited sexual desire and pursuing power. Hence Venus' use of sexual violence to assert her dominance over immortals and mortals alike is characteristic of her implied Roman male sexuality. Also, the notion that rape could be used as a means of obtaining power was an accepted trope of Roman literary culture, which justified the use of sexual violence.

Further indications of Venus' assumed masculinity in Book V reside in her adoption of the male gaze. Once more Ovid subverts the audience's expectations with the predominantly male role Venus assumes over Pluto. Gazing at the Lord of the Underworld, with an insatiable desire for expanding her own power, Venus visualizes Pluto as nothing more than an object to achieve her goal. The reduction of a powerful deity to a visual symbol of unconquered territory immediately dehumanizes Pluto, while also condoning his subjugation to Venus. Marturano expresses how the male gaze parallels the act of rape itself through the penetrating stare which objectifies a victim. Furthermore, she addresses the negative effects of the male gaze on how an audience perceives who should be held accountable for the rape.[53] Since Ovid presents Venus in a masculine manner, is she solely responsible for Proserpina's abduction, or are Cupid and Pluto equally guilty for their roles?

Even though Pluto becomes a victim to Venus and Cupid's meddling, he is not exempt from using the male gaze. Under Cupid's manipulation, Pluto forms an instantaneous attraction to the young maiden, Proserpina. An element of voyeurism is introduced in Ovid's description of the goddess' beauty prior to her rape. Objectifying these individuals with comments about their body, physical appearance, and sometimes overall manner invites audiences to see a female character through the sights of the male gaze. Additionally, the descriptions of striking beauties in untamed nature dehumanizes a victim while also indicating the uncivilized aspect of wilderness and the female deities within it. Due to the primitive associations of females in a

[53] Marturano, "*Vim Parat*" 43.

pastoral setting, Proserpina does not overtly embody a goddess of cultivation as Pluto looks at her. Instead, Ovid parallels Venus' lustful gaze for power with Pluto's insatiable desire when he spies the beautiful maiden. Restoring his dominant position through his objectifying gaze, Pluto is presented in contradictory roles of the victim and aggressor. Having discussed the use of the male gaze, voyeurism, and Claassen's article on visuality in Ovid, the poet's writing appears to create a highly visual experience for the audience, and by extension, a great source of influence for materializing these myths in artistic depictions. Scholars frequently note how Ovid's *Metamorphoses* were heavily used by Renaissance artists, who clearly saw how visual Ovid's poetry was. This intermedial connection is an early bridge closing the gap across sixteen centuries, to demonstrate the relationship between Ovid's poem and seventeenth century sculptural depictions of Ovidian subject matter.

An interesting secondary point Marturano makes in her chapter on rape in both the *Fasti* and the *Metamorphoses* is the notion that metamorphosis of a victim is an act of violence. Relying on the scholarship of Richlin, Segal, and Enterline to support this claim, she discusses how each scholar comments on the bodily experience of transformation and its violation of the physical form. Marturano further exposes parallels between the violence brought on by one's metamorphosis and how it mirrors the brutality of sexual violence. Acting as a sort of surrogate of violence, metamorphoses symbolize the cruelty of rape through their detailed descriptions, which permit audiences to 'see' the victim's suffering.[54] Given the absence of rape descriptions in Ovid, it is possible to see how the details from an act of sexual violence resurface in either the transformation, death, or mutilation of an individual. For example, Pluto penetrates Cyane's waters in order to pass into the Underworld, causing the nymph to dissolve into and become one with her waters. Although this metamorphosis appears relatively painless, the implication

[54] Marturano, "*Vim Parat*" 168. For additional reading see Lynn Enterline, "Medusa's mouth: body and voice in the *Metamorphoses*," in *The Rhetoric of the Body from Ovid to Shakespeare*, 39-42. Also, see Amy Richlin, *Arguments with Silence: Writing the history of Roman women*, 62-80, and Charles Segal, "Philomela's Web and the Pleasures of the Text: Reader and Violence in the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid," 261-270.

and sexual undertones of Pluto's actions are clear. The god's invasion of Cyane's pool mimics the penetrative act of sex, not only resulting in a loss of the nymph's bodily integrity but also her human embodiment. Following her transformation, Cyane's waters remain as an '*inconsolabile vulnus*/open wound', an explicit image of the physical damage inflicted on her, and inevitably a metaphor for Proserpina's fate. Also, the deafening silence of Cyane after her transformation speaks volumes to the absence of the victim's perspective in Ovidian text. Despite her moralizing speech to the Lord of the Underworld, Cyane is rendered mute after she is compromised. The small glimpse into the immorality of rape found in her passage of direct speech is immediately obscured through her loss of voice. The juxtaposition between her initially powerful stance against her rapist and her subsequent muteness exemplifies the seemingly minor importance of recording a victim's experience. While her verbal berating of Pluto's actions reveals contemporary attitudes of disapproval towards rape, her ensuing silence demonstrates the importance of literary techniques over a female perspective.

The cruelty of abduction and rape is not a foreign topic for Ovid, whose corpus includes numerous mythical accounts of *raptus*. In the Ovidian account of the Sabine women, which deals with rape on a grand scale, the poet reveals an unsettling concept of how a woman's resistance led to increasing a male's desire. Ovid's statement in the *Ars Amatoria* of '*et potuit multas ipse decere timor*/and fear itself could make many looks more pleasing' (*Ars*.1.126) seeks to unveil the objectification of women during this period. Moreover, this quotation returns to the previously discussed notion of abduction being akin to a hunting contest, where the flight of the prey enhances the thrill of the chase.

It is possible to draw conclusions between the literary realm and Roman life through the accounts of the rape of Proserpina and the Sabine women. In both narratives, Jo-Marie Claassen pinpoints Ovid's descriptions as an invitation for readers to visualize how enticing a

victim could be despite their fear.[55] Furthermore, the Latin description of Proserpina's abduction "*visa est, dilectaque raptaque*/ (in one act did Pluto) see and love and carry her away" (*Met*. 5.395) is brief, providing a perfect parallel to the swiftness of the god's actions. The poet's use of *videre* almost immediately followed by *raptor* identifies the impulsive and undoubtedly violent nature of Pluto's assault. Claassen's discussion on the Proserpina myth is of particular importance as she examines how Ovid attempts to create an immersive experience for the audience. Thus, Ovid undertakes the feat of ensuring a reader can see the pastoral setting before them and feel the emotional turmoil of the victim being chased. Diction plays a pivotal role in the success of this endeavour, as it expresses how through Pluto's - and by design Ovid's - male gaze, one can readily view the beautiful Proserpina as a target. The Lord of the Underworld's overwhelming desire is ignited through his sight, while Proserpina's inability to perceive a threat when plucking the blooming narcissus leads to her capture.[56] An audience's adoption of the male gaze when envisioning Ovid's narration presents a view of predatory voyeurism. This same viewpoint is also employed when admiring artistic depictions of Ovidian rapes from the late Renaissance and early Baroque, which is discussed more in depth in the fourth chapter. Philip Hardie discusses another aspect of sight in Ovid's *carmen perpetuum* that likely contributed to the prominent use of the *Metamorphoses* in sixteenth and seventeenth century art. Noting the poet's use of symbolism throughout his descriptions of rape, Hardie identifies the natural monuments of foliage which become visual references to the victim.[57] For example, the image of laurels for Daphne or hyacinths for Hyacinthus provide a clear visual symbol that an artist could incorporate into a piece as an identification tool for audiences. Along with Ovid's vivid poetic descriptions, this additional visuality could have enticed later artists

[55] Claassen, "Word Pictures," 39.
[56] The experiential element Ovid introduces may indicate how the Proserpina myth was likely intended for a male audience. Due to the recurring use of the male gaze, and the omission of Proserpina's perspective, the immersive experience is restricted to the aggressor's vantage point.
[57] Philip Hardie, "Death, desire and monuments" in *Ovid's Poetics of Illusion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 64.

towards the *Metamorphoses*. While the shared use of a male gaze in both literary and visual culture exposes the same predatory perspective used to characterize rape victims, Ovid's use of symbolism creates visual references to not only identify, but also memorialize a figure's loss of freedom or innocence.

Expanding the analysis of the male gaze further, one cannot overlook the almost exclusively female demographic of rape victims in Ovidian literature. As a result of the staggering number of female victims in the *Metamorphoses*, it is apparent that audiences are meant to witness events through a male lens; even if there is a female mouthpiece attached to it. Glendinning illuminates how the depiction of the aggressor and victim is indicative of how an author perceives expected gender roles.[58] Throughout the *Metamorphoses,* both immortal and mortal women are repeatedly realized as physically beautiful targets, over whom the male aggressor is thrown into a frenzy and must sexually dominate to slate his lust. Although audiences are deeply immersed in the account, Ovid's narrative techniques keep readers present within the scene, but at a safe distance just "as in traditional epic, readers mentally 'watch' while protagonists 'see' or 'look' and then 'do'."[59] Regardless of a deity's interference in events, such as Venus and Cupid's contributions to the Proserpina myth, the revisited imagery of predator and prey, as well as the surrogacy of sexual violence as regular violence, and the filtering of female speech by a male writer all allude to the supposed superiority of a male perspective. Consequently, women are not shown as their own beings, but instead are dehumanized through objectification via the male gaze and presented as an elusive catch for the male hunter and audience. Ovid's inversion of roles with Venus' use of the male gaze towards Pluto not only subverts the audience's expectations but demonstrates his own subtle twists to the Proserpina narrative.

[58] Glendinning, "Reinventing Lucretia," 78.
[59] Claassen, "Word Pictures," 33.

2.4 A New Narration: The Rapes of Proserpina, Cyane, and Arethusa in Calliope's Poem

Ovid's variations on the myth are not limited to his use of the male gaze, as he also makes innovations in the narrative structure. Within the extensive canon of the Proserpina myth, Andrew Zissos advocates for the unique quality of Ovid's account in the *Metamorphoses* above all others. Despite the poet scribing a contemporaneous version of the myth in his *Fasti*, Zissos identifies the importance of an internal audience in the former text, which he believes is a significant inclusion that positively affects how one is meant to read the tale.[60] Another vital point for understanding the uniqueness of Ovid's piece in the *Metamorphoses* is breaking down the layering of narrators. The rape of Proserpina is told by the Muse Calliope, who is challenged by the Pierides to a poetry contest, where the victor shall gain control over the source of poetic inspiration, the mythical Heliconian Fount. Sitting in judgement over the contest are the nymphs, whose presence within Calliope's entry to the competition would appeal to the judges. Zissos notes the Muse's stratagem in selecting her narrative as well as how she appeals to the judges by altering earlier renditions of the myth to include nymphs in a prominent role. Their significance to the proceeding of events is identifiable in their greater use of direct speech, which is even more frequent than the speech of gods or mortals, who are not the storyteller's intended audience. In this instance, the use of the nymphs' direct speech in the passage is noteworthy for two reasons. The foremost aspect is that Ovid's account is the first instance where the nymphs are given the ability to speak in the Proserpina tradition, demonstrating the innovative nature of Ovid's account. By granting a voice to these largely silent characters, Calliope, and by extension Ovid, reveal the importance of considering one's audience. Although the overall myth resembles earlier accounts by Homer in his *Hymn to Demeter*, Ovid's intentional tailoring demonstrates his ability to present the most appealing product to

[60] Andrew Zissos, "The Rape of Proserpina in Ovid *Met.* 5.341-661: Internal Audience and Narrative Distortion," *Phoenix* 53, no.1 (1999): 97.

his largely patrician and equestrian audience.[61] Also, the approaching evaluation of the water nymph, Cyane's dialogue likely demonstrates another instance of Ovid enticing his Roman audience with personal comments on contemporary legal practices that were analogous with their own thought processes. In an effective literary construction, Ovid has Cyane verbally reprimand Pluto for his violent actions, permitting a glimpse into ancient perceptions of *raptus*. This inclusion of dialogue is especially important as it allows both Calliope's and Ovid's narrations to engage their intended audiences with a possibly shared perspective. As a former judge and member of the equestrian class, it is not only likely that Ovid's thoughts on sexual violence mirrored those of his fellow patricians and *literati*, but they would also reflect near-contemporary legal perspectives on *raptus*. Namely, the literary descriptions of social and physical violence that were linked to Augustus' over governance seemingly recall Ovid's current political climate, while his inclusion of Cyane and Ceres' later comments on the legality of Pluto's actions reveal the poet's experience as a judge and by association, the equestrians' perspective on the violence, dishonour, and familial involvement in rape cases.

A second area worth commenting further upon is the number of lines where the nymphs use direct speech within the text. Not only does Ovid bestow the gift of exercising their voice to this demographic, but the quantity of their lines is almost three times more than what is granted to the gods. This sheer quantity of lines appears to dictate whose expressions are considered more important to convey. As Ovid establishes the context of the myth, it is also important to consider how Ovid potentially utilizes the nymphs to insert his own legal commentary into a well-established myth. Briefly noted above, Calliope's appeal to the panel of judges likely mirrors Ovid's own tailored narration to incorporate contemporary perceptions of Augustan morality in regard to rape. As Cyane exhibits in her dialogue, Ovid acknowledges

[61] Stephen Hinds, "The Homeric Hymn to Demeter: Metamorphoses 5" in *The Metamorphoses of Persephone: Ovid and the self-conscious Muse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 72.

the violence of Pluto's actions when the nymph mentions Proserpina's abuse, and he also references the breaking of *conubium* in the comments about Pluto becoming Ceres' son-in-law without her consent. Overall, these observations on Augustan law in the Proserpina account initially demonstrate Ovid's understanding of the violence and damage related to *raptus*. Wallace-Hadrill expands further on this concept, however, suggesting an allegorical interpretation of Pluto's assault of Proserpina being akin to Augustus' theft of the populace's freedoms.[62] By including contemporary instances of the love-poets discussing Augustan legislation in their works, Wallace-Hadrill indicates the similarities in perspective among Ovid, Horace, and Vergil, along with the views of the patrician and equestrian classes they belonged to.

Continuing with the topic of the nymphs' prominence, Ovid once again relies on the narration of Calliope to rejuvenate the Proserpina myth. Innovation appears in the physical form of the water nymph, Cyane, who heroically attempts to thwart Pluto's abduction of the goddess from lines 413-420. Arguably the most impressive action Cyane takes is her adoption of moral argumentation while using herself as a barricade to obstruct their descent to the Underworld. Comparing her own situation to Proserpina's, Cyane berates Pluto for daring to commit such an immoral act, claiming "*non potes invitae Cereris gener esse: roganda, non rapienda fuit*/you cannot be Ceres' son against her will, (the girl) should have been asked and not abused" (*Met*. 5. 414-416). This drastic divergence from earlier versions of the Proserpina myth presents a clear moralizing element concerning the Lord of the Underworld's actions. Cyane's comment about Pluto marrying Proserpina without Ceres' consent reinforces the notion that a daughter's marriage was considered a family affair and required the legal component of *conubium*. Not only does Cyane emphasize Pluto's use of force with her mention of abuse, but Ovid subtly seems to reference contemporary Augustan legislation with the

[62] Wallace-Hadrill, "Propaganda and Dissent? Augustan Moral Legislation and the Love-Poets," 182.

implication of needing a guardian's consent in acceptable marriage practices. Therefore, Pluto appears as an exemplum of immoral actions for ancient audiences through his violation of both Proserpina and Ceres, as he effectively disregards newly established laws. Cyane's identification of his criminal act reinforces the inappropriateness of the god's actions in an apparent display of cultural attitudes. This brief emergence of contemporary events within a mythological setting alludes to the possibility of more than one exterior bias influencing Ovid's writing. Further indications of Ovid incorporating topical themes into foundational mythology arise later on in the text.

Unfortunately, Cyane's unsuccessful attempt to prevent further harm to Proserpina marks the second, and possibly more explicit, act of *raptus* in the epic. When Pluto abducts Proserpina against her will, the first infraction of the god is made. However, the forceful act of penetrating Cyane's waters in order to flee with his prize marks an imperative addition to this instalment. Through his violent actions, Pluto represents the two forms of *raptus* with his seizing of Proserpina and his forceful entrance into Cyane's waters despite both their protests. Ovid's metaphorical use of Pluto's plunge into the nymph's pools seemingly stands in place of a more thorough description of the sexual acts towards Proserpina. Amy Richlin notes how Ovid frequently insinuates the impending rape by placing violence in an intimate setting.[63] For instance, when Cyane remarks how her partner won her over with words and not by force, Ovid fashions a supposedly safe setting for the nymph as she recalls her lover. However, this imagined sanctuary of being with her husband is abruptly replaced by Pluto's violent parting of her waters. Zissos also remarks on the duality between Proserpina, the 'actual' victim, and Cyane's subsequent violation, commenting on Ovid's revision to the mythological account.[64]

[63] Amy Richlin, "Reading Ovid's Rapes" in *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 173.

[64] Zissos, "The Rape of Proserpina in Ovid's *Met*, 5.341-661," 100. Elaborating further on the importance of additional rapes in the Proserpina myth, Zissos refers to later Roman renditions for reference. In his findings, it appears that not only does the prominence Calliope grants to the nymph create an imbalance of positions between gods and mythical entities, but it was not an adaptation that was embraced by later authors. Claudian

By assaulting Cyane, Calliope supposedly evokes sympathy from the judges, while Ovid installs another form of *raptus* that audiences were not familiar with in this myth. Cyane's assault is imperative for unveiling the complexity of factors that make up perceptions of *raptus* in Augustan Rome. While her words indicate contemporary legal practices, the importance of familial consent, and an audience's sympathy towards Proserpina, her violation reveals the physical assault of *raptus* next to the goddess' abduction. It is in this passage that Ovid not only indicates his knowledge of the varying forms rape could manifest in, but more importantly he documents the complex construction of ancient Roman perceptions of sexual violence. Once again, the innovative quality of Ovid's account is visible through his credentials as a poet and former judge; he can frame contemporary attitudes poetically, but with an eye to the specific meanings of legal terminology. Consequently, the image he paints with his poetic descriptions is not only based in Rome's current reality but is also well supported through the author's personal experience in the courts. Ovid's inclusion of subsequent rapes, however, is not limited to Cyane's narrative digression.

A third instance of *raptus* within the Proserpina myth concerns the wood nymph, Arethusa. This inclusion of an additional rape provides audiences with another circumstance of how females were treated in the literary account regardless of an implied mythical hierarchy. While social ranks between classes of immortals reside in other mythical accounts, Ovid apparently inverted this model in his *Metamorphoses*. Since nymphs frequently held the role of task masters - who contributed to the plot minimally and were rarely individually acknowledged - their allotted prominence in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* would likely not have gone unnoticed. Calliope's elevation of Cyane to a prominent role caters to her panel of judges in the competition while also marking a fresh twist to an adapted myth. The central position

for example, replaces Cyane in the role of protestor with Athena and Diana in an appearance of adhering more closely to the 'epic' style of the tale.

held by Cyane is essential for identifying a moral message within the text. Cyane's plea towards Pluto's morality appears to mirror the marriage laws of the *princeps* during the first centuries BCE and CE, which bore similar appeals to restore a moral lifestyle. Therefore, the insertion of the Arethusa account possibly serves a further purpose as it seemingly speaks to the prevalence of *raptus* within Ovid's timeframe. Furthermore, the Arethusa story presents another form of sexual violence towards women with her attempted rape. Throughout the few hundred lines of the Proserpina myth, Ovid weaves a tale of the goddess' abduction, Pluto's forceful entrance through Cyane's pools, and Arethusa's attempted violation at the hands of Alpheus. With each instalment from the goddess to the two ethereal nymphs a glimpse into the numerous types of sexual violence women could encounter in ancient Rome is offered. These additional accounts are telling of the ancient mindset and provide a source of potential inspiration for later artists who depict the intensity of Ovidian myths in Renaissance and Baroque styles.

2.5 Metamorphosis and Death: Transforming from One Life to Another

Despite the shocking number of attempted rapes that occur within the *Metamorphoses,* the majority of these sex-driven attacks are left unfulfilled due to either the death or the transformation of the victim. Robert Cowan's observation of foiling a rapist's attempts through either death or metamorphosis is worth noting for its perspective that rape is a type of death itself.[65] In Proserpina's abduction, Pluto is initially successful with carrying Ceres' daughter into the Underworld. Does her crossing into the Underworld symbolize her death, even though she was portrayed in a prominent role as a joint ruler later on? Following Cowan's theory, it could be argued that Proserpina's abrupt removal from the meadow and entrance into Pluto's realm was a metaphorical death of her freedom. As a consequence of her absence in the mortal

[65] Robert Cowan, "A Brutal Hack: Tyranny, Rape, and the Barbarism of Bad Poetry in Ovid's Pyreneus Episode" *Antichthon* 54 (December 2020): 84.

world, Proserpina's mother becomes distraught and neglects her duties of creating a bounty. Once again, the theme of death arises, as the tilled fields do not sprout the planted seed. Ceres' negligence continues the pattern of allegorical death brought about by Pluto's actions as the absence of a harvest poses a real threat to the mortals' chances of survival. Thus, the abduction of Proserpina is not only a story concerning the death of one's freedom, but also the death of nature.

Interestingly, these themes of death evolve into a metamorphic interpretation following Proserpina's return to her mother. Paralleling her ascent from the Underworld, the seeds take root and sprout, indicating the restoration of the earth's bounty. This transformation from death to life is notable as well. Beyond the etiological purpose of explaining the seasons, Ovid exhibits the communal destruction rape poses to an ancient society. Even though Pluto's abduction targeted a single person, the turmoil from his actions negatively affected Proserpina's immediate family, and those they served.[66] In a unique occurrence, the Proserpina myth holds many contradictions as Pluto is simultaneously successful and unsuccessful in his capture of the young maiden. Although her *raptus* is initially considered a death of her autonomy, her governing position in the Underworld and her return to the mortal realm implies a metamorphosis of status. Proserpina's presence in the lands of the living and dead at different halves of the year also establishes her role as a keeper of secrets pertaining to the afterlife in the ancient tradition and likely associates her with ideas of resurrection in a Christian context. However, these glimpses into Proserpina's perception in the contemporary Roman world are not the only instances of Ovid using mythological proceedings to reflect current events.

Another possible example of Ovid incorporating reality into myth surfaces in Cowan's discussion on the tyrannical nature of the Proserpina myth. The term "*tyrannus"* is used twice

[66] The consequences of Proserpina's rape ripple across the community, which reinforces the ancient notion that *raptus* was not considered a crime against an individual. The communal aspect of this perspective may more directly reference the relationships between families, or clients and patrons who were negatively affected by a relative's assault.

in reference to Pluto, but the Lord of the Underworld is not the only tyrant present in Ovid's account. The second 'tyrannical' deity Cowan identifies is Venus in her "imperial project to make love conquer all" (*Met.*5.359, 508). As the rulers of the Underworld and the realm of Love, both Pluto and Venus make for formidable forces against Ceres' unsuspecting daughter. One interpretation of the tyrannical nature of the gods could be a social commentary to the marriage laws implemented by Augustus in the late first century BCE, and the more contemporary easing of these restrictions in the *Lex Papia Poppaea*. If a poetic understanding can be applied to a theory based on historical events, it is possible to view Augustus as both Pluto and Venus. In his role as the Lord of the Underworld, the Julio-Claudian ruler abducts the freedom of the Roman populace with his new legislation, in a similar manner to Pluto's *raptus* of Proserpina. Additionally, Augustus appears to mirror Venus' desire for obtaining individual power over all in their domain. Fanny Dolansky examines the parallels between Venus' actions and Augustus' ambitions, identifying their shared desire to assert their governance into other peoples' personal affairs.[67] This idea is firmly rooted in the marriage laws, which promoted a stable monogamous relationship at the centre of a household. Therefore, the former comparison to Pluto may reveal Ovid's thoughts on Augustus taking away the freedoms allotted by private affairs of Romans, while the latter comparison to Venus could reflect his efforts toward "political domination, as indicated by his tyrannical imposition of unjust rule upon his subjects".[68] It is through this divine association between tyrannical goddess and an overbearing *princeps* that Ovid is able to simultaneously critique Augustus, and also reflect the comparable attitudes of patrician and equestrian classes towards the unjust insertion of public governance in private affairs. Further supporting evidence for this divine

[67] Fanny Dolansky, "Rape, the Family, and the "Father of the Fatherland" in Ovid, *Fasti* 2" in *Roman Literary Cultures: Domestic Politics, Revolutionary Poetics, Civic Spectacle*, edited by Alison Keith and Jonathan Edmondson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 39.
[68] Cowan, "A Brutal Hack," 89.

association surfaces in the political promotion of the Julian clan's genealogical connection to the amorous goddess.

2.6 Venus Imperator: Augustan Propaganda or Ovidian Commentary?

As a member of the Julio-Claudian family, Augustus was allegedly a direct descendant of Venus through her son, Aeneas. Through this genealogical connection to Rome's founder and an influential deity, Augustus appears as a second founder of Rome with this transition away from a republic government system. In the case of Venus' depiction in Book V, the close associations of Augustus with his divine descendant do not depict Rome's leader favourably. Patricia Johnson identifies and discusses the political commentary Ovid establishes in the Proserpina myth. The three active components Johnson proposes the poet utilized to reveal underlying thoughts about Augustan rule are the connections between the divine realm, imperial structure, and sexual power. Similar to arguments made by Andrew Zissos, Johnson documents how "critics fail to consider the possible social and narrative purposes of a highly significant digression from not only the *Hymn* and *Fasti* versions, but all versions of the rape: Calliope's attribution of the rape to the sole agency of Venus and Cupid."[69] In Calliope's narrative of the Proserpina myth, the two gods of love are metaphorically reimagined as a sovereign and military general rather than mere immortal divinities. Venus' desire of extending her powers into Pluto's realm provides a somewhat striking parallel to Augustan marriage laws, which strictly outlined appropriate ages for marriage, prosecution of adultery, and provided benefits for marrying and reproducing.[70] Throughout the myth, Ovid seems to subtly imply that both Venus and Augustus' efforts to overreach their own power is directly related to the ensuing violent events. For instance, the goddess' plan to bring Pluto under her power in the *Metamorphoses* results in the abrupt abduction of Proserpina, along with the subsequent rapes

[69] Patricia J. Johnson, "Constructions of Venus in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* V" *Arethusa* 29, no. 1 (1996): 125.
[70] Dolansky, "Rape, the Family, and the "Father of the Fatherland,"" 40.

of two nymphs, and ultimately the barren soil Ceres exacts on the earth. Venus' manipulations of the Lord of the Underworld are apparently made from a solely self-serving position without consideration for any negative outcomes. This unbridled desire for more power is clearly reflected in the following passage where she urges Cupid to use his missiles "*quibus superas omnes*/which overcome all" saying:

> "Tu superos ipsumque Iovem, tu numina ponti victa domas
> ipsumque, regit qui numina ponti. Tartara quid cessant? Cur
> non matrisque tuumque imperium profers? Agitur pars tertia
> mundi...
> You domesticate the gods, and Jupiter himself, and the
> divinities of the sea and their ruler; why does Tartarus hold back?
> Why aren't you extending our empire? A third of the world is at
> stake..."[71] (*Met.* 5.366-370)

Ovid's use of poetic diction in this excerpt of direct speech is paramount to unveiling parallels between the goddess and the *princeps*. Firstly, Venus employs martial terminology such as *arma, tela,* and *potentia* to express how she will bring her plans to fruition. Her reliance on divine weapons, such as arrows - wielded by her faithful son - to expand her power indicates a forceful approach where the path of war must be trod. Also, the mention of the threefold universe, as well as Tartarus being the missing piece under Venus' rule, introduces the almost tyrannical position the goddess has adopted. Furthermore, the use of "*domus*/home" in the first line elides the spheres of public and private life into a collective unit, just as Augustus did with his marriage and adultery laws. By means of Cupid's divine weaponry, Venus intends to hold influence over the entire universe, spotlighting the hubristic nature of her desires to possess total control. An important component of this passage is Venus' question towards her son in the second and third lines. The inquiry into Cupid's delay for not '*cur non matrisque tuumque imperium profers*/extending our empire' is telling of how the goddess views her own prominence within the mortal and immortal realms. Apart from the Underworld, Venus asserts

[71] This translation was provided by Patricia Johnson in her article, "Constructions of Venus in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*" on page 127.

the joint ownership of the heavens and seas to herself and Cupid, rather than the former domain holders Jupiter and Neptune. Both male deities are unknowingly usurped by the goddess, whose assistance from her son permitted her to obtain what she appears to believe as her empire. Moreover, her need for further expansion via violence into the final fold of the universe carries an imperial tone, clearly reflecting Roman ideas of conquering territory.

Expanding on the imperial language present in the recounting of overtaking the realms of Jupiter and Neptune, is the unique dynamics between mother and son. Differing from other accounts in the Proserpina corpus where he is depicted with more independence over his actions, Cupid is shown here in a subordinate role. This is particularly revealing as the imbalance in power implies that Venus is the absolute ruler, while the use of *matrisque tuumque* in the passage refers to a joint rulership. The similarities between Venus' governance and Augustus' seemingly sole rule as the *princeps* appear almost identical.[72]

Ovid's reconstruction of Venus as a scheming goddess who achieves her tyrannical ambitions through martial means appears to provide a perfect parallel for the contemporary reign of Augustus. Drawing connections between the written goddess and the current ruler was not too far of a leap for educated Roman audiences to make, since the Julio-Claudians frequently commissioned images that alluded to their direct descent from Venus. Thus, the almost synonymous association between the Julio-Claudians and the amorous Venus was not only an enduring propagandistic component in Augustus' reign, but it also permeated into the contemporary literature of the early empire. Johnson singles out the final book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as a prime example of the extent of the Augustus and Venus pairing, commenting on how Ovid concludes his mythological corpus with the restatement of the Julian

[72] Also, Venus' intention to obtain power throughout the three realms of the skies, earth, and the Underworld potentially reference Augustus' rise to power in the second triumvirate. Overcoming the final tier in order to achieve her goal, is quite similar to Augustus' defeat of Marc Antony, thereby eliminating any potential opposition to his power.

clans divine ancestry.[73] While the consistent use of iconography or allusions to the goddess in public displays such as statuary or monuments was a strategic method for justifying Augustus' reign, these frequent reinforcements made both positive and negative literary depictions of Venus reflections of the current Julian clan. Following the thread of the direct connection further, it is possible to investigate Venus' speech in *Metamorphoses* V as an Ovidian commentary on Augustus. The themes of martial strength and imperial expansion discussed above likely embody the attitude Augustus donned when approaching matters of morality amongst the populace. Similar to his divine ancestor, the *princeps* equipped himself accordingly in order to exert his power. However, his arsenal of weapons was not arrows, but rather a series of overbearing laws.

The goddess continues her speech, providing additional context for how Proserpina's rape came to be. Venus alludes to her fears of waning power, as virgin goddesses such as Minerva and Diana who unwittingly threaten her authority with their autonomy. Proserpina is identified as another potentially deviant deity, marking her as a target for Venus to maintain a firm hold over those she chooses. Thus, Proserpina's virginal state is interpreted as a slight against the goddess, whose political ambitions take precedence over the wellbeing of those living under such invasive tactics. In a reflection of ancient Roman reality, Proserpina's slight may allude to violating the marriage laws, which Ovid suggests was also perceived as an offence to Augustus' authority. The variety of both subtle and more forthright comparisons between Venus and the *princeps* throughout Book V appear to display conflicting perceptions of Augustus.[74]

[73] Johnson, "Constructions of Venus in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* V," 129.
[74] Wallace-Hadrill, "Propaganda and Dissent? Augustan Moral Legislation and the Love-Poets," 183.

Conclusions

Ovid's own social commentary is an intriguing component of his *Metamorphoses*, which seemingly illustrates underlying concerns within his contemporary environment. Over the course of three hundred lines, the poet appears to exceed the audience's expectations through alterations to earlier accounts of the Proserpina myth. His use of familiar literary tropes, such as hunting imagery, reveals the predatory nature of *raptus*, as audiences are meant to observe events through the male gaze. However, innovations such as his employment of the Muse, Calliope, to narrate events as well as the introduction of both Cyane and Arethusa's assaults provide a more detailed account of the varying degrees of rape in first century Rome. Among these deviations to Proserpina's narrative, the prominence gifted to the nymphs in using direct speech signals the importance of catering to one's audience. Despite the seemingly prominent verbal roles Ovid permitted female characters to exhibit within Book V, he extinguishes their once powerful voices through physical transformation. The elimination of a victim's speech following either an attempted or a successful sexual violation prohibits the presentation of an important perspective. Cyane clearly voices her displeasure with Pluto's actions before her waters are penetrated and she becomes silent afterwards, when she is one with her pools. Anne Carson comments on the philosophical connection to Cyane dissolving into water, and how her metamorphosis reflects an ancient idea that women are composed of liquid and cool states, making them more malleable, bounded, and pliant to the warm solid makeup of males.[75] In the context of Cyane's rape, specific associations between women and fluids such as menstruation, tears, and virginal blood all rise to the front of the mind. With Carson's discussion on these metaphysical elements at the forefront, it appears that Pluto's penetration of Cyane's form and her liquid metamorphosis symbolize Proserpina's impending

[75] Anne Carson, "Dirt and Desire: The Phenomenology of Female Pollution in Antiquity" in *Constructions of the Classical Body*, edited by James I. Porter (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 79.

tears and virginal blood. Consequently, Cyane's return to a liquid form references her original state, according to Platonic and Aristotelian thought, while the nymph's malleability under Pluto's force reinforces the imbalance of genders.

Even though a metamorphosis alleviates one of their speeches, and the audience of a victim's insight, it is possible to derive ancient Roman attitudes towards this topic in the earlier passages where speech is provided. The overtly moral stance Cyane adopts when berating Pluto recalls acceptable procedures in marriage, which appear to promote the *leges Iuliae*, and more importantly endorse Augustus' efforts to restore Rome's morality. Through Ovid's prominent position amongst the *literati*, as well as the prestigious patronage this relationship afforded him, it is possible to reveal overlapping parallels between the text and contemporary events. Similar to his divine descendant, Augustus issued his own overbearing legislation to the populace, seizing the freedoms found in private affairs. Consequently, Ovid's tyrannical portrayal of Venus in the *Metamorphoses* supposedly mirrors conflicting contemporary responses to the implication of Augustus' marriage laws.

From these social references it may be possible to interpret Ovid's own attitudes as well as those of the equestrian and patrician classes towards rape. One of the most significant changes the poet made to the Proserpina myth, which could reveal a personal perspective, was the prominent role he granted to the nymphs. Through Cyane's moral speech, Proserpina's abduction is described as an act of abuse against the virgin and her divine mother. This not only feeds into the legality of *raptus* - which Ovid's experience as a judge could accurately reflect in a literary format - but also suggests Ovid's more sympathetic stance on sexual violence. By contrasting Proserpina's non-consensual coupling to Cyane and her husband's mutual courtship, the poet seemingly demonstrates an example of a more acceptable form of sexual relations in the nymph's instance. Cyane's personal story of her marriage is recounted in a way that engages the audience for its presentation of like-minded views, while also causing the

audience to sympathize with the sorrow of her closely following metamorphosis. As a result of these listed factors, both Ovid and the higher classes of Roman society appear to view rape as a violent crime that affected the individual and their family. Although the previous discussion on Tacitus's *Annals* revealed the opposition both the patricians and equestrians had towards overbearing Augustan legislation, Ovid's use of the nymphs evokes a sympathetic response, which seemingly reflects his own perspective on *raptus*.

These subtle references to reality in a mythological platform are not unique to Ovid, or literature for that matter, but also arise in visual representations across the artistic realm. Therefore, an analysis of Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* in chapter six may expose similar comments on early seventeenth century Rome, along with possible traces of influence from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. However, in order to confidently conduct a comparative study between an ancient myth and Baroque sculpture, it is vital to understand the enduring presence of Ovid a millennia after composing this rendition of Proserpina's rape.

Chapter 3. Transforming Mythology: Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the Medieval and Renaissance World

Following the introduction of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to the manuscript tradition in the eleventh century, there was an eager audience of scribes and academics who wished to work with this first century document. Ovid's status as a writer, along with the study of his *Metamorphoses,* rapidly increased as a seemingly direct result of rediscovering his written work.[76] One question worth addressing is why were the myths in the *Metamorphoses* specifically given additional commentaries, imitations, and translations rather than Ovid's other preserved works? Over the course of this chapter, a small selection of medieval and Renaissance works will be used as case studies to determine how ideas of sexual violence in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* were perceived and imitated by some later writers. Beginning with an analysis of early commentaries and allegorical readings and concluding with an evaluation of Giovanni Anguillara's *Le Metamorfosi di Ovidio* is expected to track the similarities and departures from rape interpretations in the original text. Also, charting the progression of the inclusions or alterations to Ovidian *raptus* attitudes into the seventeenth century may forge a potential connection between first century perspectives and written depictions of *raptus* contemporary to Bernini. It is through this method that one can see how the poet's presence seeped into other disciplines, like Bernini's sculptures, through later Medieval and Renaissance commentaries and versions of Ovid. This endeavour is expected to situate vital perspectives of *raptus* in the cultural milieu of Bernini's Rome while also offering context for corresponding artistic sources depicting Ovidian rape scenes in the next chapter.

[76] Frank T. Coulson, "A Bibliographical Update and corrigenda minora to Munari's Catalogues of the Manuscripts of Ovid's Metamorphoses," *Manuscripta* 38, no. 1 (1994), 9.

3.1 The Transmission of Text Throughout the Commentary and Manuscript Tradition

Beginning in the eleventh century, Ovid's appeal spread rapidly across the literary realm. According to scholars like Jeremy Dimmick, medieval academics held the ancient Roman poet in high regard due to his distinguished education. As a student of philosophy and the natural sciences, Ovid gained an understanding of morality and detailed theorizing, which not only enticed medieval scholarship in both the religious and secular spheres, but also cemented the poet as an "*auctor*/renowned scholar."[77] This reference to Ovid's impressive intellect indicates his positive reception amongst twelfth century poets, scholars, and scribes who considered his academic interests to be a concrete confirmation of his credentials, encouraging them to eagerly study the poet's mythological text. Returning to the question of why the *Metamorphoses* seemingly received the most noteworthy attention of his corpus, is somewhat related to the passing of time. Over the millennia between the *Metamorphoses*' creation and its renewed interest, this mythological account survived in somewhat remarkable completion. Unlike the fragmentary and lost writings other ancient authors suffered from the ravages of time, the *Metamorphoses* boasted an extensive, and most importantly an almost complete, collection of ancient Roman mythology. Although certain themes found in Ovid such as sexuality or 'pagan' theology would sometimes face omissions or liberal editing later on, the importance of his *Metamorphoses* is undeniable when considering the resulting pieces of medieval literature dedicated or inspired by it.

Expanding further into the literary realm, additional receptions of Ovid reside in the scholarly endeavours of academics and scribes. Throughout the twelfth to sixteenth centuries, there was a steadily increasing production of commentaries for Ovid's *Metamorphoses.*

[77] Jeremy Dimmick, "Ovid in the Middle Ages: authority and poetry" in *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid* edited by Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 264. Dimmick also includes a quote from Geoffrey Chaucer, referring to Ovid as 'a man of great *auctorite*'. Although specifically a Chaucerian twist on an established term, the mention of auctorite strengthens the extent of Ovid's influence for poetry.

Despite the heightened interest in this ancient text towards the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Renaissance, many of Ovid's literary bells and whistles were gradually stripped in the medieval commentary tradition due to the salacious nature of the text which did not align with medieval philosophy of literary ethics.[78] The absence of his unique narrative elements such as multiple narrators within a single account, reveals a shift in literary culture across the centuries. Accompanying this advancement in literary culture and structure, was the development of new approaches to Ovid where scribes and scholars could be selective in the material they included in their adaptation. The importance of looking at medieval interpretations in the broader scope of this study is to determine the initial alterations made to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and how the influence of Christianity affected the reception of his piece. Although the survey presented below is not indicative of the entire medieval literary mindset, the chosen pieces were selected for their overall popularity following their release as well as their ability to show the route from point A to B in enduring perceptions of Ovidian rape. Moreover, new types of reading Ovid included focuses on allegory, morality, and pre-humanistic approaches, cementing the route for Renaissance mindsets to expand further on the works of their medieval predecessors. Among these three methods, allegorical readings account for the majority of medieval commentaries related to Ovid's writing, which was likely related to the influence of Christian morality. As Katherine McKinley discusses, the importance of moral reading within the late medieval manuscript tradition led to departures from both Ovid's narrative structure as well as the omission of some of the poet's written material.[79] Arguably one of the most prominent examples of severe editing to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* remains in the uncredited *Ovide Moralise*.

Released in the early fourteenth century, the *Ovide Moralise* was a French adaptation

[78] Jamie C. Fumo, "Commentary and Collaboration in the Medieval Allegorical Tradition," *A Handbook to the Reception of Ovid, edited by John F. Miller and Carole E. Newlands* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2014), 115.
[79] Katherine McKinley, *Reading the Ovidian Heroine: Metamorphoses Commentaries 1100-1618* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 121.

of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which as the title suggests, highlighted the moral interpretation of the first century piece. This French work is an excellent example of how non-Christian writings could be reimagined and incorporated into a Christian world at this time. Through substantial editing, the *Ovide Moralise* transformed an account of Roman mythology into a series of teachable tales with mythological figures that aligned with Christian ideals of morality. Due to this tradition of reading classical texts for literacy in schools and a secondary goal of discovering a moral undertone, many medieval commentaries limit the opportunity to engage with Ovidian text on more than one level.[80] Although the medieval commentary tradition led to the reshaping of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in many instances, the survival of these later endeavours exhibits how a pagan work could be repurposed for Christian readership. Furthermore, the flourishing study and production of Ovidian commentaries for three centuries indicates the continued prominence of his *Metamorphoses* a millennium later. The accessibility of the *Ovide Moralise* was greatly increased with its vernacular composition, providing additional evidence for its status as a launching point for early understandings of the *Metamorphoses.* As the thorough editing of the original material suggests, Ovid's content was 'sanitized' for new readership, which reflects how those using an allegorical approach abided by their own moral structures when the poet chose moral ambiguity.[81] Acknowledging the potentially supplementary nature of the *Ovide Moralise* for the original text points to the transformation of Ovid to align with contemporary views of the fourteenth century. Through the conscious inclusion and exclusion of material, interpretations of rape motifs were reimagined and consumed in an acceptable format for the medieval audiences. From this starting point, it is possible to see how later adaptations were influenced by Ovid's moral

[80] Katherine McKinley, "The Medieval Commentary Tradition 1100-1500 on Metamorphoses 10," *Viator* 27, (1996): 118.
[81] Fumo, "Commentary and Collaboration in the Medieval Allegorical Tradition," 117. For further discussion on the moral editing of Ovid in medieval scholarship see Fumo, 116-118, and Frank T. Coulson, "Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the School Tradition of France, 1180-1400: Texts, Manuscript Traditions, Manuscript Settings" in *Ovid and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) 52-59.

restructuring in this text, and moreover how attitudes towards rape deviated or aligned with these more recent perspectives to affect artistic depictions of Ovidian subject matter.

Other adaptations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* arise throughout the medieval world, with some of the most influential renditions including Giovanni Bonsignori's *Ovidio Metamorphoseos Vulgare* (1375-1377), both Giovanni del Virgilio's medieval Latin translations *Expositio* and *Allegorie* (1322-1323), and Pierre Bersuire's *Ovidius moralizatus* (1342). The impact of Giovanni del Virgilio's fourteenth century translations is especially notable as it became an "in-between text" for other writers to reference.[82] Gemma Prades discusses how Del Virgilio's translations can stand independent of one another, as they were intended to serve different purposes. His *Expositio* focused largely on the grammatical composition of Ovid's poem, which acted as an informative tool for scholars, while the *Allegorie* provided commentary on Ovidian inspired allegorical writings.[83] The primary use of Ovid in medieval education followed by the secondary approach of allegorizing the text that Del Virgilio demonstrates in his two works was a common practice in late medieval philology, which Jamie Furmo identifies in his discussion of Ovid in the medieval commentary tradition. Considering the successful translation from ancient into contemporary Latin, Del Virgilio's addition permitted medieval intellectuals to engage with ancient material in an easily accessible format, which led to his translation becoming a touchstone for later Italian authors. Similar to the influential nature of the *Ovide Moralise*, the *Allegorie* presents a consciously constructed view of Ovid's material, while the close adherence to the *Metamorphoses*' language in the *Expositio* offered a seemingly unfiltered presentation of Ovid for educated classes. An important aspect evident between Del Virgilio's pieces is that moral accounts were made more accessible, allowing them to reinforce and reflect acceptable societal views, whereas the

[82] Gemma Mellissa Prades, "The Italian sources of the Catalan translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* by Francesco Alegre (15th c.)," *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 133, no. 2 (2017): 446.
[83] Some authors that Prades identifies for prominence in the allegorical tradition are the uncredited Vulgate commentary and Arnulf of Orleans.

unfiltered representations of Ovid were largely available to those with a comprehensive understanding of Latin. These divergences between accessible allegorical commentaries and Latin translations not only reveal the intended audience of these later additions, but also imply an educated discussion of 'immoral' themes in Ovid in universities or informally in intellectual circles, in which Bernini's patronage and significant education afforded him a position.

A crucial comment to address before proceeding further is the enduring presence of Ovid throughout later adaptations. As previously discussed, translated versions of the *Metamorphoses* transport ancient literature into an accessible form, while ensuing additions, particularly the vernacular accounts, further expand the influence of the original text. Due to the direct connection between Ovid and later medieval translations, the influence of the ancient poet's piece is unquestionable as one would likely be interacting with the original text. Furthermore, as these translations became touchstones or benchmarks in the literary tradition, other individuals would utilize translations, thereby creating an indirect link to Ovid. Despite the transformations the *Metamorphoses* underwent in transcription, language, and later narrations, Ovid's presence survives in the majority of succeeding editions, ensuring that whatever text Bernini consulted was full of Ovid's voice and intent.

Another important medieval contribution in the manuscript tradition is the "Vulgate" commentary published in the thirteenth century. This French addition to the *Metamorphoses* commentaries approached the original text in a unique way by including comments on medieval poetics in the margins of the main Latin text.[84] Although traces of moralizing messages take residence within this commentary, the "Vulgate" emphasizes the importance of Ovid's wit and grammatical techniques in full, rather than omitting primary material as contemporary commentaries practiced. As a result of this alternate approach to Ovid's

[84] McKinley, "The Medieval Commentary Tradition 1100-1500 on Metamorphoses 10," 124. The "Vulgate" is the name of a larger work, which also provides commentaries on Latin poets such as Horace and Vergil. As the section devoted to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the Vulgate canon is the primary focus of this argument, I shall refer to this particular section by the name of the whole work.

Metamorphoses, the "Vulgate" gradually experienced increased popularity within France and abroad, resulting in it becoming a frequent source of scholarship in the next two centuries. Additionally, this redirected focus on how to approach the *Metamorphoses* created a shift in the Ovidian manuscript and medieval commentary tradition. Scholars like Frank Coulsen and Katherine McKinley have identified the extent of the "Vulgate's" influence on late medieval Ovidian scholarship by discussing its frequent appearance in Renaissance additions.[85] Looking at fourteenth and fifteenth century commentaries on Book X of the *Metamorphoses,* McKinley comments on how the majority of marginal notes are made by the same thirteenth century scribe as the "Vulgate." Thus, the minor number of later comments can be identified by the change in hand and script, which included additional grammatical glosses.[86] One final effect was that grammatical notes on narrative techniques, diction, and navigating the poet's multiple digressions increased in succeeding commentaries, while the quantity of moralizing entries decreased. In contrast to the seemingly Christian influenced contemporary commentaries, the "Vulgate" marks an early indication of where Ovidian literary scholarship was headed. Furthermore, its evident significance within the broader corpus of the Ovidian manuscript tradition suggests it would be an equally significant source to international Latin commentators, intellectuals, and even artists.

Continuing onwards in the commentary tradition of Ovid, evidence of another approach to the classical material arose at the beginning of the sixteenth century and steadily grew in popularity until the eighteenth century. Rather than emphasizing narratological progression or

[85] For an extensive catalogue of Ovid's transmission across the medieval world, see Coulson, "A Bibliographical Update and corrigenda minora to Munari's Catalogues of the Manuscripts of Ovid's Metamorphoses," 3-22.

[86] A shortcoming of studying the "Vulgate" in modern scholarship is that a comprehensive modernized edition has yet to be created. Consequently, scholars rely on direct interaction with the manuscripts or the work of other academics to further understand medieval commentary.

moralizing allegories, commentators highlighted rhetorical digressions made by Ovid.[87] In particular, Colin Burrow identifies Ovid's self-awareness - or in many cases his self-consciousness - about the survival of his works and their interpretation in ensuing years as the commentary tradition's new direction. Although the most frequent instances of these rhetorical digressions remain in Ovid's *Tristia*, Burrow elaborates that the shifts in time, as well as transformations to oneself and circumstances in the *Metamorphoses* contributed to the immense study of the *Metamorphoses* over others. Not only did this work offer an abundance of Romanized tales for later writers to assess, but it also laid a foundation for humanist scholars to mimic in their own pursuits of reviving past works. Similar to Ovid's own process of constructing Rome's mythological origins, humanist scholars consulted Ovid as a means of connecting to their own cultural and literary pasts. As a result, this specific humanistic approach appears to solidify a more intense reading than previous methods. The mirrored emotions and concerns that humanist commentators were experiencing while studying Ovid's text imply an emotional connection to the material, which is less apparent in the narratological or allegorical readings. It seems that this deeper engagement with the text unintentionally preserves an important aspect of Ovid through his own musings or apprehensions. In addition to the supposedly deeper connection associated with this humanistic analysis, echoes of the poet's inner monologue are also present in later translations and commentaries on the *Metamorphoses*.

3.2 The Metamorphoses of Rape: Revisiting Ovid in Sixteenth Century Italy

A notable rewriting of the *Metamorphoses* was by the Florentine scholar, Gabriele Simeoni, whose 1559 text drew inspiration from an earlier French revision of the original

[87] This is not to say that both the allegorical and narratological approaches disappeared, but instead received less attention as different perspectives on how to approach Ovidian literature gained popularity. For further discussion on co-existing types of Ovidian commentary see Burrow, 302.

work.[88] Simeoni's *Metamorfoseo* was composed under the patronage of the French King Francis I's mistress, Diane de Poitiers, and is unique for its use of epigrams accompanying the text. The gratitude towards his patron is evident in a few components of the full text, such as the astrological appendix and closing sonnet, which were both dedicated to the Duchess de Poitiers. Although these deviations suggest the potential influence of Poitiers on his rendition, it is much more conceivable to view these subtexts as tributes appealing to his current benefactor.

Apart from the flattery in Simeoni's work, the most notable element of his account is the reorganization of the narrative structure from continuous to segmented.[89] Differing from Ovid, Simeoni condensed all the myths from the *Metamorphoses* into separate sections with brief summaries of the previous myth at the beginning of each episode. This division of Ovid's *carmen perpetuum* 'continuous song' was intended to create "space for new links that exalt the author's knowledge of the original *Metamorphoses* and also helps the reader to catch similarities among different tales, thus simplifying the reading."[90] Simeoni strategically shortened and restructured Ovid's narrative structure to not only appeal to readers, but more importantly, to demonstrate his own knowledge of the original piece. The latter action appears somewhat self-serving as Simeoni also adjusted the poetic form by transitioning from the removed third-person approach in Ovid's epic towards the more accessible first-person epigram. This stylistic change adheres to the classical literary tradition with Simeoni's employment of a light tone, stylistic refinement, and brevity of single epigram, often compressing longer myths into eight verses. His personal insertions within the myths appear to introduce him as a character whose own experiences mirror those of the Ovidian figures.

[88] Elisa Modolo, "Metamorphosis of the Metamorphoses: Italian Rewritings of Ovid Between Renaissance and Baroque" PhD diss., (University of Pennsylvania, 2015), 1.
[89] This is of particular note as Simeoni's division of a continuous text appears to mimic Ovid's original composition while also incorporating another ancient mode of writing.
[90] Modolo, "Metamorphosis of the Metamorphoses," 14.

In addition to his own insertions, Simeoni makes external references to his intellectual contemporaries such as Razzallo Serafino and Francesco Mazzei in the myths of Pyreneus and Aeneas. Simeoni's parallels between mythical figures and his fellow intellectuals is a deliberate action, which would effectively cement his status as a scholar as well as a source of inspiration for other authors. Despite the personal touches Simeoni made to his *Metamorfoseo*, he notably credited Ovid as the original author of the work with a bibliographical segment dedicated to the Augustan poet. Similar to his self-insertion within the epigrams, the inclusion of Ovid's influence appears to link the Florentine scholar with the Roman writer. Once more, Simeoni reinforces the notion that he is a desirable investment for patrons. Given his extensive knowledge of past and present literature as well as his ability to transcend the passage of time through translation and rewriting, Simeoni's addition to the *Metamorphoses* tradition emerges as an excellent example of Ovid's echoes in the Renaissance period and to continue forward to influence post-Renaissance minds. Furthermore, it appears as a stepping-stone between previous approaches to reading Ovid and the introduction of contemporary humanistic methods that were also advancing the artistic realm.

Although Simeoni's 'personalized' *Metamorfoseo* demonstrates the preservation of Ovid temporally, the reception of the former's account is vital for perceiving its geographical transmission. At the time when Simeoni was writing his *Metamorfoseo* he was living in exile from Florence and struggling to secure a long-term patron in France. The clearest obstacle Simeoni faced in France revolved around language. Despite his prominence in Italian, French, and Latin, Simeoni's work composed in French was met with scolding critiques, while his Italian writings were only accessible to the upper classes.[91] Unfortunately, these limitations of language on both the audience's side as well as his own, hindered the accessibility of the text Simeoni had deliberately designed for sixteenth century readers. The anticipated

[91] Modolo, "Metamorphosis of the Metamorphoses," 69.

underwhelming response to his *Metamorfoseo* in the French court is most apparent in the *Apologia* section, where he comments on the difficulty of writing in a foreign language and being away from one's homeland. Another factor that led to a limited and arguably negative reception of Simeoni's piece was a timing issue. In 1559, his Florentine account was released only two years after a French publication of the *Metamorphoses* by Aneau. This meant that Simeoni's epigrammatic account written in Italian, was unintentionally competing with a detailed and recent rendition composed in French. Therefore, Simeoni's humanistic attempts to revive classical literature and present it in an accessible way to a Renaissance audience in France ironically faced a restricted reception.

Shifting the Ovidian tradition once more, evidence for fresh approaches appeared alongside well-established readings during the mid-sixteenth century in Italy. Corresponding with the application of humanistic thought to the artistic realm, Ovidian commentators reassessed how they interpreted the *Metamorphoses*, now analysing it with a humanistic mindset. Differing from the earlier allegorical and moral commentaries, humanism drew attention to the literary structure of Ovid's piece with specific focus on narration, plot progression, and characters. The greatest divergence from the allegorical tradition was that humanism represented a completely secular approach to the material. Unlike the moral readings, which sought a lesson in each metamorphosis and omitted material, humanistic readings commented on the grammar and structure of Ovid's writing. Another factor to consider with this change in analytical approaches is the increased incorporation of primary material. McKinley summarizes the banning of some moralistic accounts, including the *Ovidius moralizatus*, by the Church during the sixteenth century. Although McKinley does not identify the precise reasoning for banning some of the moral texts, other scholars like Ann Moss have speculated the cause is related to the inflated or far-reaching allegories of Ovid's classical literature. Moss raises a significant issue with this deduction, as it reveals how some

commentators in the twelfth to sixteenth centuries attempted to push a religious agenda with their interpretations and editing of the *Metamorphoses*.

In an engaging sequence of events, Simeoni's inability to acquire a stable benefactor led to his travels across France, the Italian peninsula, and England, placing him next to the author of one of the most well-known translations of Ovid's epic, Giovanni Andrea dell'Anguillara. Composing his *Le Metamorfosi di Ovidio* in the mid-sixteenth century, Anguillara's translation demonstrates an advancing literary approach to classical material. This particular method of working with classical literature placed a primary focus on creating vernacular translations from Latin models, while also attempting to refine the vernacular product so that it structurally mirrored the piece it was emulating.[92] In order to effectively compose classically inspired vernacular literature, writers altered the original formatting with idiomatic translations, as well as additions and digressions where necessary in their commentaries. As Mondolo discusses, these edits to Ovid were considered to maintain the true essence of the poet's work, despite sometimes leaving an author open for ridicule of rewriting the text entirely. Anguillara's efforts were supposedly successful as the influential literary critic Natalino Sapegno praised the *Le Metamorfosi di Ovidio* as "the most enduring fruit of this cult of Ovid".[93] The elegant imitation of Ovid's intricate Latin in an accessible medium contributed to the translation's celebratory reception, and ultimately led to updated editions featuring collaborations with other scholars and artists. The latest edition was published at the end of the sixteenth century and incorporated illustrations from Giacomo Franco in a clear union of art and text working together to tell a narrative.

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[92] Anguillara was supposedly so successful in his translation that it was also referred to as the "*bella infedele/* Unfaithful Beauty". The choice of *infedele* refers to Anguillara's poetic structuring of the material in the vernacular as well as any additional comments he inserted to enhance the accessibility and progression of his piece. Due to the largely idiomatic translation Anguillara provides, sixteenth century academics considered his work more as a rewriting that closely related to Ovid but did not perfectly mirror the original Latin text word for word.

[93] Beatrice Premoli, *Giovanni Andrea dell'Anguillara, Accademico sdegnato ed etereo 1517-1572* (Rome: fondazione Marco Besso, 2005), 66.

Despite Anguillara's impressive education, *Le Metamorfosi di Ovidio* targeted a large audience of all reading levels, while simultaneously preserving and emulating the core elements of Ovid's text. Combining all the aforementioned factors of Anguillara's success, namely creating an elevated vernacular text with illustrated editions and the timeframe of his publications, his work appears as an accumulation of the entire Ovidian tradition. From the condensed format requiring extensive editing of the allegorical approach, to the attention to structural composition of the humanistic method, and even the illuminations which foreshadow future avenues, each element within *Le Metamorfosi di Ovidio* reflects an aspect of Ovid's reception. As a result of Anguillara's success, it is quite likely that Bernini or his patrons used his account in their studies. Furthermore, Anguillara was a successful lawyer who attended the *Accademia degli Infiammati*, where he actively engaged in literary circles where a mingling between authors and artistic patrons could occur. Finally, the well composed vernacular translations of the humanistic method reveal a change in audience, which now allowed previously immoral themes to reach more people. One effect of this increased audience was the possibility of depicting more racy themes like *raptus* in visual culture, which could be discussed more confidently from a variety of allegorical, philological, or legal perspectives. Through the humanistic approach, more people could engage in an educated discourse on *raptus* and comment on their shared or differing interpretations of Ovid's written accounts of sexual assault. Moreover, these discussions expanded beyond the boundaries of literature into the realm of visual culture with the portrayal of Ovidian myths decorating both public and private domains. With the completion of both his *Apollo and Daphne* and *Pluto and Persephone,* Bernini seemingly became an active contributor to the depiction of Ovidian myth, which possibly furthered the contemporary conversations on receptions of rape motifs.

Conclusions

Many rewritings of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* emerged across the centuries, with a prominent influence marked in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Accompanying the revival of classical themes in literature and art during the Italian Renaissance, was a resurgence of accounts, inspired by the first century poet's transformative piece. Throughout the Middle Ages, Ovid's account of the *Metamorphoses* was rewritten and altered by notable figures such as Del Virgilio, Simeoni, and Giovanni Anguillara, who manipulated the text to best suit their own temporal and cultural contexts. In addition to the prominence of Ovidian scholarship in sixteenth century Rome, the *Metamorphoses* also experienced notable attention abroad on the continent and as far as England. These later adaptations became widespread across Western Europe as academics frequently travelled to different countries in search of a wealthy patron to fund their research endeavours. As a result of these travels, the transmission of Ovid's text along with its subsequent accounts permitted an extensive exchange of written materials while simultaneously inspiring additional instalments to the tradition in different mediums.

Beyond its presence as an academic pursuit for scholars or a leisurely pastime for the literate populace, Ovid's influence even extended into early education. Used as a teaching tool for Latin poetry, grammarians employed the *Metamorphoses* in language lessons for schoolboys. Burrow notes learning techniques such as translating Latin verse into the vernacular and back into Latin prose as a popular method of teaching at this time.[94] This educational approach serves a dual purpose as it simultaneously documents the study of Ovid at entry and advanced learning levels, while also indicating Ovid's enduring prominence in the

[94] Colin Burrow, "Re-embodying Ovid: Renaissance afterlives" in *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid* edited by Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 303. He also goes on to discuss additional exercises such as structuring the vernacular translation into Ovidian meter and verse. Thus, traces of the commentary tradition are evident in the poetic curriculum, which offers further indications on how widespread the revival of classicism was during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

sixteenth century. Furthermore, the continued emphasis placed on Ovid specifically over other ancient poets determines how likely it was that Bernini was partially inspired by the poet's Proserpina myth.

Mirroring the success Ovid received in the literary sphere, his prominence extended beyond the page and into more popular media like the theatre. One of the most prominent examples is how Shakespeare incorporates the tale of Primus and Thisbe as a summary at the end of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Acting as a parallel to the play's main plot lines, the inclusion of ancient Roman mythology appears to serve more than one purpose. In addition to connecting contemporary works with Ovid's mythological past, references to the *Metamorphoses* in the theatre assured there was an accessible format for audiences regardless of literacy or social standing. Also, Burrow briefly documents the negative associations of archaic violence and rape within Ovidian writings, which playwrights, much like allegorical writers, actively softened or alluded to in their dramatic rendition. Overlapping occurrences of conscious editing are evident in the exclusion of 'sinful' or immoral elements, which would not align with either contemporary cultural views or broader Christian beliefs. As a result, references to same sex preferences are either omitted or used allegorically to reflect contemporary moral views. Given the simultaneous success and continued imitation and inclusion of Ovid in theatrical productions, it is clear that the *Metamorphoses* was not restricted to the scholastic literary realm. The continued growth of Ovid into visual realms strengthens the possibility of his work being a source of artistic inspiration. His presence across an extensive range of literary genres, educational levels, and visual mediums exhibits his influence as it was at the forefront of many peoples' minds. The ubiquity of Ovid as well as his continued popularity throughout the Renaissance we established above, presents the likelihood that Bernini was either directly exposed to the *Metamorphoses* in his education or in iconography

manuals, where this poem was considered an 'artist's bible' for depicting ancient mythological scenes.[95]

[95] Raphael Lyne, "Writing Back to Ovid in the 1560s and 1570s," *Translation and Literature* 13, no. 2 (2004): 147.

Chapter 4. Abduction Art: *Raptus* Imagery in Sixteenth Century Italy

Introduction

Succeeding the analysis of Ovid's enduring literary success in the medieval and Renaissance periods, it is also worth assessing his supposed influence over the artistic realm. Accompanying the numerous translations, adaptations, and commentaries of the *Metamorphoses* during this period, also appear to be a substantial number of artistic depictions of Ovidian stories. Christopher Allen credits Ovid as the greatest source of inspiration for late Renaissance and early Baroque artists working with mythological subject matter, while other scholars further this claim by considering the *Metamorphoses* to be "a painter's bible".[96] The reverence for Ovid's work that was seen in the literary realm, was also true in the artistic fields and these mythological stories provided new material for artists to allegorize or interpret contemporary ideas through an ancient vocabulary. Given how common Ovid was in education, in scholarly circles, and in general humanist study, it is not surprising that artists of the day, along with their many patrons, would draw upon the Metamorphoses for inspiration. It is within such a context that Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* would be created, at a time where the myths of Ovid and his tales of rape and abduction would meet the artistic traditions of the Renaissance and lead into the work of the baroque artists.

While a survey of *raptus* imagery throughout the Renaissance is too large a subject to conduct an in-depth analysis in this thesis, three case studies which predate Bernini's Pluto and Persephone will be assessed as possible forms of visual inspiration for the Baroque sculpture. These three pieces of note are Giambologna's *Rape of a Sabine*, Titian's *Rape of Europa,* and

[96] Christopher Allen, "Ovid and art" in *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid,* edited by Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 336. Allen relies on the scholarship of Svetlana Alpers, who uses this phrase as a way to demonstrate the popularity of Ovid's poem among artists. She goes on to discuss how the terms 'Ovidian' and 'mythological' are synonymous in the artistic realm. For further reading see, Alpers *the Decoration of the Torre de la Parada*, 1971.

Damiano Mazza's *Rape of Ganymede*. Each image was chosen for their close temporal relation to Bernini, their portrayal of Ovidian myths, and the further insight they divulge into how rape was presented in the late Renaissance through visual cues. Additionally, these three pieces display an overall typology of *raptus* in an emotive depiction of the subject matter, which is similar to the expressiveness of the baroque style in Bernini's sculpture. Moving in a reverse chronological order, this inquiry begins with Giambologna's sculpture *Rape of a Sabine*, offering insight into how rape was presented in a public context. The case study begins with this piece due to the close compositional and temporal elements it shares with Bernini's sculpture, while the succeeding two studies divulge further information into the early depictions of *raptus*. Retreating away from the public and into the private domain, Titian's *Rape of Europa* is not only indicative of *raptus* imagery in private contexts, but it also introduces the eroticization of these images. Concluding this exploration is a study of Damiano Mazza's *Rape of Ganymede*, which is a further indication of the erotic nature of rape scenes and contemporary gender expectations in private contexts with the portrayal of a same sex pairing. Although these last two works were created by prominent artists, these individual pieces were selected for their reflection of more personal tastes afforded by their limited viewership in private, rather than the broader visual culture evident in Giambologna's marble work. This consideration of both spheres of the artistic climate, within and outside of the home, is intended to demonstrate the overlapping visual cues of *raptus* imagery, while also revealing differences in interpretation based on display context, paralleling what will come in Bernini's instalment.

Throughout the following analyses of these particular pieces of art, it must be remembered that contemporary sixteenth and seventeenth century attitudes were different than a modern understanding which separates sex, a consensual act, from rape, an assault and violation. These separations between sex and rape, however, were not present in either Bernini

or Ovid's worlds, where a different concept of consent ensured a construction of rape as sex, and sex could take the form of rape. In order to combat against the biases of a modern society and the application of anachronistic theory when discussing rape in seventeenth century Rome, the aforementioned artistic pieces are employed, with the driving force of Ovid's text, to understand how Bernini would approach his subject matter. Similar to the previous chapter on Ovidian reception in the medieval and Renaissance literary tradition, the examination of artistic depictions commences with a brief overview of changes to visual culture in the Middle Ages, providing a glimpse into the transitions from medieval art styles into Renaissance humanism, and the Baroque.

4.1 Inspiring the Imagination: Ovidian Influence in the Artistic Realm & Classifying the *Raptus* Genre

Resulting from the aforementioned production of numerous translations, commentaries, and additions to the *Metamorphoses,* artists could now make connections to their cultural past more confidently, with an abundant range of exciting myths to render. Allen emphasizes the focus on human experience as the primary reason for Ovid's appeal. Commenting on the shift between medieval narrative painting styles and the less restrictive boundaries of humanistic approaches in the Renaissance, Allen effectively identifies a notable shift in visual culture. For example, in the medieval artistic tradition, public pieces were largely Biblical in nature and depended on a single image with carefully placed attributes to tell a complete story. Although artists were successful in rendering martyred saints and milestones in Christ's life, this narrative technique was seemingly quite restrictive in both its subject matter and composition. Not only did the majority of material come from a single source, but it also displayed pivotal moments in holy lives that the populace could not fully connect to.[97] Consequently, audiences in the late Middle Ages were somewhat removed from personally

[97] Allen, "Ovid and art," 337.

connecting to their artistic surroundings, despite possessing the ability to identify which spiritual figure was displayed. It was not until the late fourteenth century, where the possibility to explore human experiences allowed audiences to engage with sculpture or paintings more personally, was introduced into public compositions. Aspects of the secular human experience such as love, civic duties, and martial campaigns that were either absent or skewed by a religious lens in the medieval period were clearly able to flourish in mythological settings. Replacing a religious point of view with a secular human perspective appears to have allowed interpretations that resonated with viewers to increase in popularity.

Another contributing aspect to the interest in humanist depictions was their significant connections to ancient thinkers, whose material was in great circulation across the literary world at this time. As Michel Jeanneret outlines in his article discussing the influence of ancient thinkers on Renaissance humanism, he relies on excerpts from Montaigne's *Essais* to demonstrate the ancients' omnipresence in Renaissance intellectual spaces. With the aid of Montaigne's sixteenth century account, Jeanneret presents the notion that humanist artists were aware of the cultural language and tested forms necessary for depicting antiquarian images. An outcome of their inevitable dependence on ancient models was the knowledge that their visual representations of themes like rape would be perceived as a later variation on a classical paradigm.[98] This is not to imply that every work was completely bound to antiquity, but it reveals the innate connection which led classically themed paintings and sculptures to reference a cultural memory when presenting narratives from antiquity. Through these cultural references, Ovid is granted an unspecified degree of influence in the three portrayals below, and more importantly in Bernini's composition. Even though Jeanneret's observation suggests a compelling reference that ancient pieces of literature and statuary influenced artists in the

[98] Michel Jeanneret, "The Renaissance and Its Ancients: Dismembering and Devouring" *MLN* 110, no. 5 (1995): 1044.

Renaissance, there are also contemporary visual cues these creators may have pulled from.

Additional sources of inspiration combined the material and literary realms to create iconography manuals. Appearing as a pseudo guidebook for artists, the development of these manuals provided artists with visual and written references of ancient subjects, which could be technical, but more informative than a poet's passage. This assistive tool was largely catered to support the study of ancient artworks and permitted an artist to study pieces that may not have been available to them otherwise. A key element of these manuals was the incorporation of Aristotelian teachings on physiognomics, a method of uncovering psychological aspects of a figure from their physical expressions or forms.[99] Iconography manuals are seemingly vital sources for the successful replication of ancient statuary due to the incorporation of classical visual references and ancient philosophical thought.[100] One of the most influential manuals was Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, an addition to the genre that was praised for its usability by literary and artistic individuals. Such manuals were especially important when one had to try and depict mythological scenes with deep psychological or allegorical meaning – how else to illustrate inner states or social ideologies in visual media. This is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in the deeply emotional images of rape. As exhibited in the contorting forms and emphasized expressions of Giambologna, Titian, and Mazza's images, the importance of physiognomy in a humanistic depiction becomes apparent. Due to the insight these visual cues offer into the subject's - and more likely the artist's - psyche, an audience can infer from the depicted individual's body language an inner monologue of their circumstance. Additionally, using physiognomics in visual analysis discloses contemporary thought processes mirrored in the

[99] Avigdor W. G, Poseq, "On Physiognomic Communication in Bernini" *Artibus et Historiae* 27, no. 54 (2006): 161.

[100] From a spectator's standpoint, using physiognomics to analyse a piece can be problematic for gaining a complete understanding of an artistic piece. The most apparent weakness is the objective approach of the viewer. What they interpret about the piece can be easily manipulated by a descriptive sign or comment from another, which causes their perception to be skewed into a self-fulfilling prophecy. However, the application of physiognomics appears to be beneficial from a creator's standpoint as an artist can map out their own beliefs of their subject's psyche onto their medium

legal and literary worlds, thereby confirming art's reflections of society. However, applying physiognomy is a significantly fine line to walk as the subjective nature of art can present discrepancies in interpretation, especially when viewing a piece from a modern position. For the sake of understanding how a late Renaissance audience would interpret an image of rape, this chapter will also adhere to the societal perceptions of sexual violence indicated in legal and literary domains that were covered previously. By equipping these humanist, physiognomic, and cultural components, a well-structured analysis of *raptus* imagery in the baroque style can commence.

4.2 Roman Triumph or Terror? Giambologna's *Rape of a Sabine*

Appearing as the most similar *raptus* piece compositionally to Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* is the Flemish artist Giambologna's, *Rape of a Sabine* (Figure 3).[101] Giambologna initially began his career in France, before arriving to study sculpture in Italy, where he earned an enviable position as a court sculptor for the Medici family in Florence. Under the patronage of a prominent leader like Francesco de Medici, Giambologna designed a series of mythologically inspired commissions. His *Rape of a Sabine*, completed in 1583 for the Piazza della Signoria, seemingly stands apart from his other depictions of ancient Roman gods and deities through its elaborate composition. In an attempt to surpass the masterpieces of ancient artists, Timothy Wutrich recounts how Giambologna sculpted this group using a single block of marble.[102] Wutrich also identifies this piece as a Mannerist work, suggesting that Giambologna did not have a specific subject in mind when designing the *Rape of a Sabine*, and saw ancient forms as an antecedent or goal to surpass. Although Giambologna's presentation

[101] Other names the artist was referred to as were Jean de Boulogne and Giovanni da Bologna.
[102] Timothy Richard Wutrich, "Narrative and allegory in Giambologna's *Rape of a Sabine*" *Word & Image* 20, no. 4 (2004): 306. Although the use of a single block of marble for such an elaborate construction initially appears as a Plinian literary trope, Giambologna was able to achieve this feat. Ovid's account of the Sabines remains in his *Ars Amatoria*, while the most complete version was written by Livy.

of ideal beauty and asymmetrical composition offer further indications of the sculpture's mannerist classification, there is also clear evidence of humanistic influences at play. One example is a possible reference to the ancient sculptural and literary traditions, which emerge in the three fully nude forms of the group. The singular stone used in Giambologna's construction as well as the three intricately carved figures seem to have been inspired by both a description of the *Laocoon* statue in Pliny's *Natural History* and the actual sculpture group unearthed in 1506 (Figure 4). Crediting the elaborate sculpture of the Trojan priest and his sons to the Rhodian sculptors Agesander, Polydorus, and Athenodorus, Pliny incorrectly states that the sculpture was carved out of a single block of marble (*Nat.* 36.4:103). Thus, Giambologna's apparent efforts to surpass his ancient predecessors with his artistic abilities, seems to classify his work as both humanist and mannerist in nature due to his imitation of ancient sculptural forms.

Despite this error in his account, the *Laocoon* received an immense amount of attention and imitation upon its rediscovery at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Numerous artists, including Michelangelo, travelled to see this piece of first century Roman art, while efforts by sculptors like Bernini to restore the ancient work returned the piece to its initial construction. Its rehousing in the Vatican Belvedere collection two years after its discovery increased the accessibility of viewing the piece, which further enhanced its prestige within the Renaissance artistic community.[103] Considering the prominence and resulting imitations the *Laocoon* received throughout the sixteenth century, as well as Giambologna's single block construction, it is clear that the Flemish sculptor was inspired by this second century work. In an intriguing parallel, the vertically moving figures of Giambologna's intertwining piece mirror the

[103] Phyllos Pray Bober and Ruth Rubinstein, "The Trojan Legends," in *Renaissance Artists & Antique Sculpture* (London: Harvey Miller Limited, 2010), 165

entangled figures in the horizontally moving *Laocoon*.[104] This connection further situates Giambologna's *Rape of a Sabine* in the humanistic tradition, especially in the piece's recollection of an ancient myth explaining early instances of *raptus* to cement the foundations of Rome. Moreover, the similarities between Giambologna's composition and Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* not only signal a departure from medieval depictions of ancient stories, but also recall an artistic style that was contemporary to Ovid. Differing from medieval works of art where figures were clothed anachronistically in contemporary fashions or expertly draped with linen to maintain modest sensibilities, Giambologna's nude construction provides a more explicit and seemingly accurate visual reference to the Sabine story. This not only suggests a recollection of ancient Roman history, but it simultaneously exhibits the mingling humanism and mannerism of the Renaissance period with the artist's emulation of antique forms. Specifically, the artist's presumed use of the *Laocoon* as one possible source of inspiration for his serpentine composition constructs a bridge between late sixteenth and early second century art forms, with a glimpse into the broader cultural understandings an audience was expected to possess for identifying the piece. In addition to the proven influence of mannerist and humanist styles on Giambologna's *Rape of a Sabine*, a visual analysis of the sculptural group divulges important reflections from contemporary legal and literary advancements.

At the base of the statue, a fully bearded male figure is crouched in what appears to be submission between the legs of the assailant. The former figure's arm is bent and lifted above his head, almost as if he is blocking himself from the standing figure, who looms overhead. Giambologna beautifully constructs a sense of movement that flows upwards from the curved spine of the kneeling man to his troubled gaze, which continues the eye's ascent. As the bearded figure casts his gaze backwards to the abducted woman, it is possible to glimpse the horror-

[104] Wolfthal, ""Heroic" Rape Imagery," 24. A secondary aspect worth discussing briefly is how the interconnectedness of the figures allows viewers to "read" both sculptures. In the *Laocoon*, events unfold left to right while *The Rape of a Sabine* progresses from the sculpture's bottom to top.

stricken expression adorning his features. Recalling the importance of physiognomy in humanist interpretations, this figure's open mouth and downward sloping eyebrows exhibit the negative emotions he is experiencing. Due to the hand shielding his face, it is not possible to differentiate one specific psyche between the fear and grief his features imply, but the mirrored expression of the woman's face connects the two figures emotionally. Although it is not explicitly expressed by Giambologna, the facial expression, body language, and shared headbands of the crouched and lifted figures seem to imply that the kneeling man and abducted woman are both Sabines. The artist furthered this identification of "the other" with the man's full beard, which was frequently used in ancient art as a way to depict the uncivilized non-Romans.[105] This constructed link furthers the audience's comprehension of both Sabines' shared psyche and evokes an emotional response from the audience who witness a woman being forcefully carried away from her homeland. The female's helplessness is stressed further with the male Sabine's positioning beneath the standing attacker, as well as his defensive pose, which appear to make him subordinate to the abductor. In relation to Augustan legislation, Giambologna depicts the absence of *conubium* that Rome increased its population with, while a contemporary legal connection to Giambologna's piece indicates the excessive violence of Florence in the Counter Reformation.[106]

Moving upwards, the second male figure is depicted with groomed facial hair and shown mid-stride while he carries a struggling female in his arms. The initial ambiguity

[105] A small digression worth inserting at this point is the possibilities presented by the inclusion or rather manipulation of facial hair between the two male figures. While a full beard can be used as a marker of age or divinity in ancient Greek art, an unkempt beard may be used to depict a 'barbaric' man in the Roman tradition. Considering that Giambologna was attempting to outdo the work of ancient sculptors, it seems likely that he would have borrowed visual cues from antiquity, such as the bearded "other" to incorporate within his work. Therefore, the question of why one figure has groomed facial hair and the other sports a full beard arises. Did Giambologna use facial hair as a tool to juxtapose the two figures in age, culture, or role in Livy's account? Going beneath the stone surface, the well-maintained facial hair appears to associate the standing male with a sense of sophistication, while the abounding curls of the other man's beard make him appear shabbier. Although this is a personal musing, it is possible that Giambologna is incorporating (whether intentionally or not) ideas of 'the other' within his *Rape of a Sabine* to strategically differentiate between the Sabines and Romans.)

[106] Figliulo-Rosswurm, "Rural People and Public Justice in Fourteenth-Century Tuscany," 422.

associated with the crouched figure's role in the scene is absent when gazing at the standing individual. The latter's role as the Roman attacker is evident from his powerful stance and unyielding grip on his victim's left hip and shoulder. His rough hold on the struggling female is enhanced by the smooth plains and soft curves of the stone that make up her form, which also emphasizes the artist's presentation of an ideal form of beauty. The contrast between her delicacy and his violence reveals the forcefulness of the attacker's actions, which may reflect the unrest caused by contemporary additions made to Florentine law.[107] As noted in the legal chapter, acts of violence increased within the Italian city-states as the Counter Reformation lessened the Church's authority, creating a vacuum of power in which secular leaders could compete for supremacy. Although Giambologna presents a historical image, the subtle references to his own context are apparent in how the Roman imprisons the Sabine woman in his arms, while the mutual fear etched across both Sabines' features could suggest the fears of losing personal freedoms to religious and secular legal codes. This arises as a striking similarity to Ovid's context with the social discord introduced by Augustan marriage laws, adding another layer to the humanistic essence of this piece as it successfully associates present and ancient legal proceedings.

Another potential reference to Giambologna's use of the mannerist style and ancient Roman sculptural forms is the artist's application of ancient hair styling displayed in the Roman's facial features (Figure 5). The tightly curled hair seamlessly flowing into the well-maintained beard allows for textural play, while the penetrating gaze under a pinched brow, and the slightly parted mouth all appear reminiscent of portrait busts of the Severan emperor, Caracalla (Figure 6). Although the application of Caracalla's facial hair would be anachronistic to the Sabine story, Giambologna's visual references to this third century ruler strengthen the notion that he was working closely with, and improving upon, ancient forms. His inclusion of

[107] Figliulo-Rosswurm, "Rural People and Public Justice in Fourteenth-Century Tuscany," 433.

these visual components should not be interpreted as a sole study of third century forms, but rather as Giambologna's use of "all 'antica" or items from antiquity. Also, the almost expressionless features accompanying the male's fixed gaze contrast greatly with the distress etched on the faces of both the lifted and bent figures. His extended arm continues the piece's movement as he fights to maintain his hold on the soon to be Roman woman.

At the peak of Giambologna's sculpture is the climax of the Sabine story, the abducted female. Confined in the arms of her attacker, the female figure's form is beautifully contorted as she attempts to fight free. The pinched eyebrows and open mouth suggest her distress, while her outstretched arm seems to shoot upwards in desperation. It is the expertly sculpted S-shapes connecting the woman's curved arm, torso, and legs, however, that Wutrich identifies as Giambologna's surpassing skill.[108] The *serpentinata* or 'serpentine' composition Giambologna achieves appears to contribute greatly to the sculpture's sense of movement as the curving forms of the three figures engage the eye in an upward sweeping motion. Not only does this spiralling form recall the contortions of the *Laocoon,* but it also frequently appears in *raptus* imagery for its dynamic portrayal of a victim's resistance. Furthermore, the glance into the female's psyche that physiognomy provides amplifies the fear driving her actions, and the grief of her abduction. Audiences could sympathize with her pained expression and identify her hopelessness as she reaches out for help. Through the example Giambologna's *Rape of a Sabine* provides, it is possible to pinpoint visual components that are seemingly paramount to *raptus* imagery in the artistic genre. Certain elements such as the serpentine curves in the human form, distressed facial expressions, and most importantly a victim being forcefully carried off, are all compositional aspects that reside within contemporary paintings and succeeding sculptures of the genre.[109] However, it is not sufficient to merely pick out these

[108] Wutrich, "Narrative and allegory in Giambologna's *Rape of a Sabine,*" 308.
[109] A few near contemporary examples are also apparent in Nicolas Poussin's *Rape of the Sabine Women*, Ammanati's *Hercules and Antaeus*, and Peter Paul Rubens' *The Rape of the daughters of Leucippus*.

factors without considering how their presence in a given piece classifies the image as a *raptus*.

Beginning with the curvature of the figures, there appears to be a feeling of tension associated in the twisting forms of both the female victim and subdued male.[110] In both instances, the rotation of the spine seemingly contributes to the spiralling motion of the overall piece. Additionally, the aforementioned S-shapes constructing the female figure soften her form, while the smooth surface of the marble entices the viewer. In comparison to the two heavily muscled males, whose poses seem to serve the sculpture's movement, the female's slight form and greatly arched spine spotlight the anticipated emotional intensity in the face. While the victim attempts to writhe free from her attacker to no avail, her physical distress is clearly personified in her facial features, and much like the medium she is immortalized in, the viewer is petrified and unable to help.[111] A culmination of desperate emotion is indicated by the open mouth and upturned gaze beneath her furrowed brow. Through her pleading expression and forceful confinement, her situation and psyche become clear. It is through the contributions of these three elements united at the height of abduction, which exemplifies the *raptus* imagery in Giambologna's depiction. Moreover, it is also possible to observe these same artistic features in Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* almost twenty-five years later. Given the prominent placement of the piece in a public piazza, the close proximity both geographically as well as temporally, and the use of ancient subject matter, it is likely that Bernini was familiar with Giambologna's work. Kenseth identifies contemporary inspiration for Bernini's *Pluto and*

[110] Michael W. Cole, "Sculpture in the City" in *Ambitious Form: Giambologna, Ammanati, and Danti in Florence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 171. Another quick comment to introduce at this point is that the fully bearded male can also be considered as a victim of the attack. Although Giambologna does not show any direct violence towards this figure, the defensive posture he holds suggests that he is not safe from harm. Also, the abduction of the female figure will also affect the male populace significantly if we adhere to Livy's account. The subsidiary comment I wish to make here, however, was that the shared fear of the kneeling and elevated figures appears to parallel contemporary legal jurisdiction. As we discussed at multiple points throughout the thesis, rape was considered a slight against a household rather than just an individual. Thus, the mirrored expressions between the two Sabines emerge as a potential reflection for the direct and indirect consequences of sexual violence in sixteenth century Florence.

[111] Paul Barolsky, "Ovid, Bernini, and the Art of Petrification." *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 13, no. 2 (2005): 152.

Persephone, crediting Giovanni Bologna's *Rape of the Sabine* in both relief and as a freestanding sculpture as vital sources for the young sculptor.[112] The direct influence between Giambologna's sculptural group and Bernini's similarly themed work survives in a sketch by the latter, who visited Florence and drew a rough image of Giambologna's statue. Therefore, an appraisal of Giambologna's work may illuminate compositional elements that are evident in depictions of rape, along with potential visual cues Bernini was inspired by.

A final, yet pertinent, note on Giambologna's *Rape of a Sabine* concerns his intentions - or rather lack thereof - prior to sculpting. According to art historian Diane Wolfthal, Giambologna did not carve his masterpiece with a specific individual or literary subject in mind, but rather to display his skills.[113] It was upon the piece's completion that Giambologna considered calling the sculpture *Andromeda*, before he was ultimately persuaded by a Florentine intellectual that Livy's account of the Sabines seemed more suitable to the artistic configuration.[114] This scholastic input from Raffaello Borhini also led to the inclusion of four relief sculptures depicting Livy's narrative on the statue's base. Each of these panels exhibits similar *serpentinata* female forms hoisted in the air by male aggressors, further establishing the key components within depictions of *raptus*. A benefit of seeing multiple abduction images in a single work is the varied, yet similar, poses of the victims. The spiralling forms of the females' bodies and their tossed back heads crying out, appear analogous whether they are abducted on horseback or on foot. While the later addition of these four relief panels offers

[112] Joy Kenseth, "Bernini's Borghese Sculptures: Another View" *The Art Bulletin* 63, no. 2 (1981): 192.
[113] Diane Wolfthal, ""Heroic" Rape Imagery," in *Images of Rape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 8.
[114] An account of the Andromeda myth is recorded in Book IV of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In this version, Perseus rescues Andromeda from being sacrificed to Neptune, and lists his heroic deeds as testimony for his suitability as a husband. Perseus' request for Andromeda's hand does not classify Ovid's account as a rape, which lessens the possibility that Giambologna was directly influenced by Ovid. However, a violent description of Andromeda's narrative survives in a contemporary first century CE version by Gaius Julius Hyginus. In his *Fabulae*, Hyginus heightens the plot's drama by describing Perseus and Andromeda's marriage as non-consensual. Marrying without her parents' permission leads Andromeda's uncle and father to conspire against Perseus. The opportunity for either Perseus' abduction of Andromeda or her family's efforts to bring her home appear as much more feasible candidates of inspiration for Giambologna's sculpture.

further clarification on the statue's narrative, it is important to remember that showing the allegedly historical conflict between the Romans and Sabines was not present at the piece's conception (Figure 7). However, the end result utilizes *raptus* motifs frequently that Giambologna could have selected from a number of ancient mythological accounts featuring abduction for a title. Accompanying this acquired knowledge, is a potential shift in viewpoint. Instead of a story driving the sculptor's inspiration, the title '*Rape of a Sabine'* can be interpreted as the final adornment placed on what is initially a *raptus* scene. Finally, the accessibility of Giambologna's sculpture to citizens and artists is evident in its public display context, which incorporated recognizable forms from the ancient world alongside references to contemporary society. Displayed in a central part of Florence, the readability of a depiction through its employment of visual culture and easily identifiable forms reveals the potential success of Giambologna's sculpture. Although references to contemporary visual culture are also present in privately commissioned pieces like Titian's painting of Europa, the artist's parameters are more dictated by their patron's personal taste rather than the populace's knowledge. Hence, an investigation into a work that was not intended to be accessible to the public can reveal any differences in depicting *raptus* publicly and privately.

4.3 Private Paintings: Erotic Symbolism in Titian's *Rape of Europa*

Changing mediums in artistic images of rape, and travelling North on the peninsula, an earlier portrayal of abduction emerges on the painter's canvas. In this mid-sixteenth century example, Europa's abduction by Jupiter is brought to life by the Venetian painter Tiziano Vecelli, better known as Titian. Completed around 1560 as one piece in a series of works inspired by ancient Roman mythology, Titian's *Rape of Europa* (Figure 8) introduces another noteworthy depiction of rape for its overt eroticization of the female subject. Considering the

prominence Titian gained as an artist in Venice, especially under the patronage of King Philip II of Spain, his depiction of Europa and Jupiter seems to possess substantial dual influence for portraying rape scenes to later artists like Bernini.[115] Although there are numerous contemporary depictions of this specific myth across the European continent, Titian's piece possesses the same artistic motifs in his depiction of rape that are identifiable in Giambologna's later work. Also, the prestigious patronage Titian received illustrates the wide receival and demand of his work amongst the nobility, which may further suggest the extent of influence he held in the artistic community.

As noted previously, the Venetian painter completed his *Rape of Europa* as one of several scenes depicting the "Loves of the Gods" for his royal patron's private collection. Despite the limited audience who were privileged enough to view this work in its original display context, Titian masterfully integrates visual cues evident in other images of rape. Compositional elements such as the artist's use of light sources, pictorial symbolism, and arrangement of figures narrate the ancient myth in a way which appears to eliminate any possible confusion introduced by the bestial pairing.

Reading the painting left to right, reveals the timeline of Europa's abduction. In the background on the painting's left side, several female figures stand on the shore with a lone bull, all seemingly calling out for their captured friend. Following these individuals' line of sight, the focal point of the piece is transfixed in the foreground on the canvas' right side. Here, Europa is shown splayed open and precariously holding onto her abductor's zoomorphic form, "*dextra cornum tenet*/holding fast a horn with one hand" (*Met.* 2.874) as she is forcefully swept away from her home. Her attacker, the god Jupiter in disguise, looks out at the viewer, engaging them in the act, while winged cherubs fly around the couple. Beginning with the light source,

[115] Wolfthal, ""Heroic" Rape Imagery," 18. Wolfthal also discusses the variety of erotic poses Titian planned for each myth he depicted in letters sent to King Philip II, effectively confirming the eroticized nature of these images. For further reading on Titian's sexualization of rape in these depictions see Wolfthal 18-20.

it is possible to identify a defining factor of Titian's work through his use of colour play. The transition from bright cool tones to dull muted shades parallels the myth's narrative progression, with the figures represented in mid-flight at the climax of events. The rich blue skies and bronze clouds gracing the shoreline rapidly shift to brooding storm clouds over the victim and her animal attacker. A.W. Eaton identifies this swift transition of peaceful to tempestuous skies as an indication of Europa's impending forceful coupling, while the painter's vigorous brushstrokes contribute to the speed of their departure. The ominous atmosphere created by Titian's paintbrush emotes sympathy for Europa and her unhappy circumstance.[116] Also, the colour palette in the background is commented upon by Wolfthal who considers the exaggerated drama the storm clouds provide to be almost Baroque in design.[117] However, the humanistic component of referencing a myth from the Ovidian corpus and the realistic physiognomic features of Europa contend that Titian's painting is Renaissance in nature, with some minor Baroque elements to assist in articulating the narrative's drama.

These empathetic emotions are seemingly enhanced by both Titian's employment of symbolism throughout the composition and the visual references to Ovid's poem. In particular, the inclusion of two winged cherubs equipped with bows and arrows, the floating drapery encompassing Europa, and the large sea creatures neighbouring the fleeing pair may hold deeper meaning. Appearing at both the top and bottom of the piece, each cherub directs focus to the pair either through their gaze or extended arms. More specifically, it is the two figures in flight which appear reminiscent of the Roman god, Cupid. Although no arrow is knocked to their bowstrings or shown piercing the maiden's flesh, their presence suggests a divine interference that led to the depicted events. In Ovid's account of the Europa myth, divine

[116] A.W. Eaton, "Where Ethics and Aesthetics Meet: Titian's Rape of Europa" *Hypatia* 18, no. 4 (2003), 161. One additional comment on the use of storm clouds is the secondary use as a means of identifying the disguised god. Earlier portrayals of Jupiter with an unrequited lover in mythology, such as Correggio's *Jupiter and Io* depict the ancient deity completely in cloud form.
[117] Wolfthal, ""Heroic" Rape Imagery," 29-30.

intervention is not brought about by Cupid, but by Mercury, who Jupiter urges to herd the king's cattle towards Europa and her companions. Although this manipulation of events leads to Jupiter's successful abduction of Europa, it is unlikely that Titian could incorporate Mercury herding the cattle and opted for cherubs to symbolize the god's actions. If this symbolism is applied to Ovid's Proserpina myth, obvious parallels between the poem and painting are evident with the meddling of the gods in mortal affairs. Similar to Venus' divine encouragement of Pluto in the abduction of Proserpina, the Cupid-like cherubs possibly persuaded Europa through mystical methods. Therefore, the insinuated interference created by the cherubs implies that Europa was to some extent coerced, leading to her abduction. This is an intriguing aspect of the piece since it recalls another component of *conubium*. Under this practice Europa's coerced or freely given consent would not alter the illegal nature of Jupiter's actions against the maiden and her family. Without an outside influence in both Proserpina's account in Ovid and Europa's portrayal in Titian's painting, it could be interpreted that both maidens would have remained safe with their companions, and their families' reputations were left unsullied. Identifying this overlapping thematic component in two distinct mediums indicates the transformative nature of Ovid's work into a visual medium and the close association of rape victims within his material. Therefore, the painter's depiction of Europa centuries later is humanistic in its almost identical narrative progression through its artistic variation of the ancient poem. A result of this established connection is the ability to draw additional correlations between the symbolism in the depiction of Europa and Proserpina's narrative.

Another important visual cue exhibited with rich colour and texture is the sweeping red fabric the maiden clutches aloft in her right hand. Titian's rendering of Europa's billowing garments appears as a distinct reference to the poem, as Ovid concludes his account of Europa in Book II with "*tremulae sinuantur flamine vestes/*And her fluttering garments stream behind

her in the wind" (*Met*. 2. 875). While the twists and folds of the garment imply the swift movement she is being carried off by, its soft rosy colour alludes to her impending loss of virginity. Also, her splayed legs and the cherubs' gaze draws the viewer's eyes directly to her covered pubis. This visual implication of the looming sexual acts is also enhanced by the foaming waves at the bull's abdomen, possibly mimicking seminal fluid or referring to the goddess Venus' birth.[118] Through this imagery, Titian artistically reinforces sexual undertones of the transpiring events, and introduces the viewer as a voyeur who gazes on the scene but does not help. The garment is also an almost ironic incorporation due to the triumphant nature it possessed in ancient depictions, and its contradictory use in this instance. Perhaps the looming presence of the thunderous clouds over the maiden and her flowing fabric represent the sexual triumph of Jupiter over the maiden. In fact, Titian's ability to openly narrate the sexual intentions of the bull towards Europa effectively emphasizes his own skill as an artist.

One remaining, yet prominent, indication of rape imagery visible in the painting is Europa's precarious position as she is carried away from her homeland. Instead of sitting astride Jupiter, Europa looks as if she was thrown on the bull's back and swept away without warning. The panic stricken look on her face and grasp on the bull's left horn, which prevents her slipping into the waters, provide further evidence of her coercion. Also, the placement of her legs implies movement, as if she is scrambling away from either the cherubs who seemingly instigated her abduction or her captor. Ian Bonfante draws attention to the partial nudity as a visual reference to Europa's vulnerability and tantalizing depiction. Referring to ancient depictions of *raptus* in mythological scenes, Bonfante notes the strategic use of exposing a breast or thigh to symbolize a maiden's position in great danger.[119] Europa's bunched and semi-sheer robes in this image provide a thin layer of coverage, which appear to further her

[118] Eaton, "Where Ethics and Aesthetics Meet," 163.
[119] Ian Bonfante, "Nudity as a Costume in Classical Art" *American Journal of Archaeology*, 93 (1989): 560.

eroticization with the suggestion of what lies beneath. Although the painted maiden is not laid bare to the viewer, the gathering of her garment, opened legs, and cherubs' gaze all eroticize her abduction. This sexualization of Europa is an interesting aspect of Titian's work, due to the classical imagery it brings to mind, and the apparent sensuality provoked by the resisting woman.

A final element highlighting the eroticization of Europa's seizure is the direct gaze Jupiter casts towards the viewer. The calm expression on the bull's face not only contrasts the fear in Europa's features, implying the mammal is in control of the painting's proceedings, but it also provides another direct link to Ovid's poem, as Titian illustrates that Jupiter's "*pacem vultus habet*/whole expression was peaceful," (*Met.* 2. 858). Despite appearing as if she is almost falling from the bull's back, Titian maintains the soft serpentine shapes throughout her form. The female's raised arm, slightly twisted torso, and splayed legs imply her non-consensual participation in the flight, while her backward glance to the shore and her open mouth illustrate the roles of victim and aggressor transparently. Also, the aspect of voyeurism is enhanced with the bull's gaze, which appears invitational and somewhat jarring to the viewer upon realizing they were caught leering at the god's prize. The suggestive glance shared between audience and animal is potentially informative for the painter's knowledge of the piece's sexual nature. However, it is not sufficient to merely list these elements without providing an analysis of how each component contributes to the final depiction of abduction, along with its undertones of sexual violence.

By using Giambologna's *Rape of a Sabine* as a frame of reference, it may be possible to detect overlapping components in depictions of rape, while also uncovering additional elements Titian incorporates into his piece. Apart from the different mediums used between Giambologna and Titian, the most intriguing aspect of the painter's image is the eroticization of Europa's abduction. Both Eaton and Wolfthal critique previous scholarship, which they

conclude appears to sanitize the true depravity of Titian's subject matter.[120] Addressing adverse interpretations from art historians like Erwin Panofsky and Harold E. Wethey, who maintain that Europa's narrative ends happily regardless of her assault, introduces an important - albeit unsettling - reception of rape scenes.[121] As addressed in the previous literary analysis of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, describing sexual pursuits in the same manner as a hunter stalking its prey was a common *topos* of ancient writing. In this literary trope, the frightened flight of the target seems to enhance the hunter's excitement, rather than dissuade it, in the physical contest. Consequently, the female victim's efforts to prevent her assault are presented as encouragement for her sexual domination. This is arguably most apparent in Europa's positioning on Jupiter's back and her sprawled legs. The notion that a victim's struggle against their attacker enhances their attractiveness is not a new interpretation, but rather a perspective that existed in descriptions of rape from first century Rome and reappeared in late Renaissance and early Baroque painting.

Turning away from literary themes towards artistic depictions, it is possible to identify how rape continued to be overly sexualized in the safety of private spaces. In a letter to his patron, Titian discusses the preliminary sketches of his depiction for the "Loves of the Gods" and the variety of poses he will use to enhance their erotic appeal, which included sensual views from the victim's front and rear. Sending preliminary sketches to his royal patron with clear plans for portraying the work's sensuality not only confirms the use of rape imagery as erotica, but it also ensured that the king's personal tastes were satiated in the final product. While the earlier discussion on Europa's curving form and precarious position appears to adhere to the

[120] See Wolfthal, ""Heroic" Rape Imagery," 31-33, and Eaton, "Where Ethics Meet Aesthetics," 163-164. Since both Wolfthal and Eaton's discussions on earlier this painting include earlier interpretations by art historians as well as their own contemporary views, I have selected these pieces for their cohesive presentation of shifting views within the field. The following comments on early scholars such as Panofsky and Wethey are not intended to discredit their efforts, but rather to track the changing interpretations of Titian's piece.

[121] For earlier interpretations of Titian's *Rape of Europa* see Erwin Panofsky, *Problems in Titian* (New York: New York University Press, 1969), and Harold E. Wethey, *Titian and His Drawings: With Reference to Giorgione and Some Close Contemporaries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

image of an unwilling participant, the painter includes some contradictory romanticizing elements to excite the male viewer. Wolfthal demonstrates how artists were able to blur the lines between erotic imagery and rape by portraying the events as a seduction. The application of soft tones in the woman's flesh, a hazy atmosphere, and rich colour play are contributing factors in creating erotic images of rape to decorate the inner chambers of the elites.[122] Evidence of these eroticizing elements are detectable in Titian's *Rape of Europa*, which reimagines Ovid's violent account as a seduction. For instance, the cherubs flying above and riding a large fish alongside Jupiter and his victim, seemingly allude to the amorous environment their meddling has created. Also, her separated legs and the bunched cloth draped across her soft body seem to barely offer the woman a sense of protection from the viewer's excited gaze. Europa is almost laid bare to the viewer, and this openness of her lower body appears to directly pull one's gaze towards her pubis, reinforcing the sexual appeal of the abducted female's partially nude form. This vulnerable position is clearly presented and envisioned as a sexual offer against the dreamlike landscape of Titian's colourful yet cloudy background. By softening the more violent aspects of *raptus* imagery with these artistic elements, Titian manifests his patron's sexual preferences and reveals the erotic element of rape as it appeared in a private context.

In contrast to Giambologna's more emotive sculpture, Titian's composition almost completely reimagines how rape can be interpreted in a personal collection. Serving as an aphrodisiac for the viewer, the overt sexualization of a victim and the erotic nature of his "Loves of the Gods" series would not be considered morally acceptable for the Christian public, leading to its discreet consumption in the private sector. While the incorporation of artistic motifs such as serpentine forms, emotive facial expressions, and the forceful flight of the victim and captor may be employed to clearly depict abductions in public works, their presence in a

[122] Wolfthal, ""Heroic" Rape Imagery," 18. For a deeper analysis of rape as erotica see Wolfthal pages 18-21.

private setting in this instance shifts the interpretation towards the eroticization of sexual violence. Although Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* was also given a private viewing context, it does not outwardly possess these deeply erotic associations. Revealing the importance of display context, Titian's *Rape of Europa* exhibits how the same visual motifs and mythological themes can be perceived differently through their artistic execution. Furthermore, this painting reveals an important interpretation of *raptus* imagery also present in ancient hunting motifs with their mutual emphasis on resistance as a form of arousal. The portrayal of rape scenes in commissioned erotica is not limited to the Spanish king's individual taste, but also exists in a near contemporary depiction of Ganymede and Jupiter.

4.4 Alternate Forms of Abduction: Homoerotic Undertones in Damiano Mazza's *Rape of Ganymede*

One final piece worth discussing in the exploration of sixteenth century *raptus* scenes is Damiano Mazza's *Rape of Ganymede* (Figure 9). Completed around 1573, this painting illustrates the ancient myth of the young Phrygian prince, Ganymede, who was abducted by Jupiter in the guise of an eagle and brought to Olympus to be the god's cupbearer and lover. Mazza's depiction displays the moments following rapture with the nude male hoisted aloft by the god's aerial form. This painting not only displays key elements evident in both Giambologna's and Titian's portrayals, but it also appears to expand the types of rape imagery further by introducing a same-sex pairing. Appearing as an example of this piece's humanist nature, Mazza depicts a subject matter that was frequently omitted from Book X of the *Metamorphoses* in the commentary tradition for its perceived 'immorality.' Although 'homosexuality' was not considered to be a taboo subject in the ancient world, the numerous portrayals of an Ovidian same-sex couple during the Renaissance is particularly intriguing. Moreover, the narrative of Ganymede appears as an engaging parallel to Persephone's myth, since the depiction of a male *raptus* could reveal discrepancies between the presentation and

interpretation of male and female victims.[123] Through the examination of Mazza's depiction it may be possible to uncover similar receptions between Jupiter's cupbearer and Persephone, and by extension how these perspectives may relate to Bernini's later composition.

Despite the almost minuscule presence of the Ganymede myth in the ancient literary tradition, Ganymede as a figure was extraordinarily popular among Renaissance artists. Stephen Orgel diagnoses this positive interest in the Phrygian prince as the result of Neoplatonic allegorical interpretations. Through this Neoplatonic lens, Ganymede does not merely represent a rape victim, but instead his ascension symbolizes the intellectual and spiritual achievements of the mind.[124] A pitfall with adopting this perspective is how it seemingly eliminates the sexual component of Ganymede's forceful abduction.

Following a familiar path to Titian's work, Mazza also appears to eroticize the abduction while incorporating the serpentine curves, expressive face, and competition between the aggressor and youth, which are reminiscent of other rapturous scenes. Although he initially appears to be slipping, Jupiter's talons firmly hold the prince aloft with their predatory grip on Ganymede's left thigh and right flank. While the flowing drapery and seemingly hazardous hold Ganymede has on his animal abductor are reminiscent of Europa's precarious positioning on the bull's back, the relentless grasp of the eagle's talons in the flesh is mirrored in Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone*. In collaboration, all these compositional elements indicate Ganymede's resistance to his captor. However, as Titian's *Rape of Europa* demonstrates, physical resistance to sexual advances and the sexualization of this resistance can coexist within a single artwork, especially when it is intended for a limited viewership. Despite the limited amount of surviving material regarding the creation of Mazza's *Rape of Ganymede*, remaining evidence reveals that

[123] Stephen Orgel, "Ganymede Agonistes" *GLQ* 10, no. 3 (2004), 490. Orgel identifies Ganymede's eternal position at Jupiter's side as the largest difference between the prince and other rape victims. Ganymede's status as a cupbearer and lover to Zeus is enviable in comparison to either the disbarment or physical transformations of his counterparts.
[124] Orgel, "Ganymede Agonistes," 491.

it was privately commissioned for the Casa Assonica.[125] Taking into account the restricted viewership of this work, due to its private context, the existing eroticizing elements may indicate the unidentified commissioner's personal taste for same sex relations.

Originally in an octagonal construction, Mazza's configuration ensures all attention is directed towards the retreating male pair. The simplistic cloudy background may maintain ominous indications of Ganymede's fate, but it also contrasts with the detail in the intertwining forms, naturally pulling focus to the foreground. At the centre of the piece, Ganymede's nude form almost glows against the dark feathers of the eagle, while his highlighted buttocks serve as the painting's focal point. Hart and Stevenson draw attention to Mazza's heavy use of shading, which in an explicit manner emphasizes the prince's anus. The sexual implications of Ganymede's protruding buttocks and shaded entrance seemingly heighten the homoerotic undertones of the piece. Another contributing factor to Ganymede's sexualization is the notion that many sixteenth century artists considered the Phrygian youth to be an ideal model for ancient adolescent male beauty.[126] Consequently, as James Saslow notes, Ganymede's idealized image also made the adolescent synonymous with the ancient sexual practices associated with male youths. Thus, Mazza's composition is considerably forthright in its sexualization of same-sex relations through the emphasis on Ganymede's form. However, the painting's eroticization of rape is not limited to this one factor.

It is also important to consider how Jupiter's zoomorphic form reinforces hunting imagery with its clear play on the power dynamics between predator and prey. Evidence of the hunting trope arises in Ganymede's broken bow in the upper right-hand side. Although the weapon is partially covered by Jupiter's outstretched wings, the broken bowstring spirals

[125] Clive Hart and Kay Gilliland Stevenson, "The woman on top-Christ, Endymion, Ganymede" in *Heaven and the flesh: Imagery of desire from the renaissance to the rococo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 65.
[126] James M. Saslow, "Parmigianino and Giulio Romano" in *Ganymede in the Renaissance: Homosexuality in Art and Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 127.

around the wooden frame, apparently indicating his defencelessness. If these perceived roles of the essentially unarmed victim and divine predator are observed under an intimate lens, they seemingly represent sexual assignments of the dominant and submissive partner.[127] Additionally, there appears to be a clear shift in Ganymede's dominant role as a male in a heterosexual pairing and his implied passivity in a homosexual context. In the former case, Ganymede may appear as the hunter equipped with his bow, however the broken string in Mazza's portrayal leaves him vulnerable in the latter instance.[128] Therefore, Mazza demonstrates how Ganymede experiences a reversal of sexual roles in this divine pairing.

Much like Titian's depiction of Europa, Ganymede is shown resisting his attacker, which makes him more desirable to his antagonist and arguably the viewer. While the eroticization of a homosexual abduction would likely not be deemed appropriate for the Renaissance populace, Mazza's piece indicates how inversions of societal expectations existed in the sanctity of private consumer ship.

Conclusions

Redirecting focus towards the artistic sphere as a whole, surviving depictions of rape from the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries present potential visual cues Bernini may have used as inspiration. These selected works were chosen consciously due to their Ovidian subject matter and inclusion of Ovidian like sensibilities towards rape through allusions to the legal and literary traditions. Even if Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was not used directly in the creation process, all these images depict ancient myths of *raptus* that were well-known in a post-

[127] Mazza's inclusion of these elements supposedly recalls the male-male relationships of the active *erastes* and passive *eronomous* from ancient Greece. In his depiction, Jupiter adopts the experienced role of the dominant lover, while Ganymede's youth places him in a submissive position.

[128] Saslow, *Ganymede in the Renaissance*, 129. Saslow also examines the conflation of Ganymede with Cupid throughout the Renaissance. Arguing that both figures share similar iconography with their bows and aerial associations. For further reading on Ganymede as a Cupid figure in the artistic tradition, see Saslow 129-137.

Renaissance society and could be interpreted on an allegorical, social, or sensual level. Depictions of ancient Roman myths like the rape of the Sabines, Jupiter and Ganymede, and Europa and Jupiter simultaneously breathe life into Rome's cultural past, while also contemplating sexual violence in a close geographical and temporal proximity to Bernini. The application of serpentine forms, emotive facial features, and the underlying sexual implications of two figures in conflict are visual cues that are not only present in these, and Bernini's, depictions of *raptus*, but would also be identifiable to a sixteenth century audience. In addition to the compositional components of contemporary works, analysing mythological rapes in both painting and sculpture offers vital context for a comprehensive understanding of how abduction imagery was received. By briefly returning to Giambologna and Titian, it is possible to identify underlying references to ancient legal practice and contemporary violence in the city-states. Although the average sixteenth century viewer would not instantly think of the ancient practice of *conubium*, the symbolism offered in these images likely resonated with viewers who witnessed the unrest in the streets and could sympathize with the theft of individual freedoms by lawmakers. This response to Giambologna's sculpture marks a visceral reaction, which likely mimicked the nature of the populace's reactions to actual rapes and civil conflict that an instability in political power created. Also, the placement of sixteenth century social commentary against an Ovidian backdrop assimilates the two period's perceptions of rape and demonstrates the similarities in perspective with the incorporation of legal aspects and literary motifs of hunting imagery. In each of the previously discussed pieces, rape is associated with violence and crime, which Florentine, Venetian and Roman audiences could all readily understand. In the *Rape of a Sabine* and *Rape of Europa* the social ramifications on a victim's family are also evident with the inclusion of the Sabine's father and Europa's companions. Intriguingly, the absence of any familial connections or companions in the *Rape of Ganymede* could imply a contemporary viewpoint that shame or a loss of reputation were only present in

a female's rape, not a male's. These reflections of both ancient and contemporary legislation and literature indicate an overlap in reception enhanced by incorporating motifs from the Augustan past. Having acquired a solid foundation of mythological rape scenes in Renaissance and early Baroque art, a proper analysis of Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* can be undertaken.

Chapter 5. In the Artist's Studio: Gian Lorenzo Bernini and His *Pluto and Persephone*

Introduction

Over the last four chapters, rape and abduction have been assessed across multiple disciplines and time periods. Contextualizing *raptus* as it appears in the legal, literary, and artistic realms from the first to the seventeenth century Roman worlds established a stable base for an analysis of Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* to be erected upon. Beginning with the artist's early education, followed by an appraisal of his patronage, assists in situating Bernini within the post-Renaissance artistic community, and the potential influence he held within it. After documenting Bernini's credentials, a visual analysis of his *Pluto and Persephone* can be confidently undertaken. This examination of the sculpture's composition and details may demonstrate how this specific depiction of mythological rape references ancient art forms and rape scenes as exemplified by Giambologna, Titian, and Mazza. Furthermore, the statue's mythological subject matter invites a discussion on the strong possibility of an Ovidian influence. Establishing a clear connection between Ovid and Bernini traces how depictions of rape were perceived in each individual's historical context. Determining potential shifts in attitudes towards rape from the first century to the seventeenth century is evident through Ovid's literary account of the Proserpina myth and Bernini's artistic depiction. Using the evidence compiled throughout this study, it is possible to determine how Bernini's sculpture can be viewed as a reflection of contemporary attitudes towards rape, and more importantly, as a piece of Ovidian reception, which conveys ancient perspectives of *raptus* recorded in the *Metamorphoses*.

5.1 The Man Behind the Masterpiece: Background and Early Receptions of Gian Lorenzo Bernini

Starting with Bernini's formative years and early education is enlightening for ascertaining what materials - and possible influences - were available to him. In his near contemporary biography, *The Life of Gian Lorenzo Bernini*, the artist's youngest son, Domenico, records his father's early achievements in academia. Domenico summarizes how Bernini began learning how to read and write from his parents, which revealed the great promise of his potential. Allowing the young Bernini to freely explore all areas of education was a unique practice in the sixteenth century, which afforded the artist a diverse range of careers to delve into. Despite these broad possibilities, Bernini favoured the same profession of his father Pietro, and pursued sculpture. From the early age of nine, Pietro allowed Bernini to accompany him as he worked on commissions for prominent papal leaders like Cardinal Scipione Borghese and Pope Paul V. It was in this environment that Bernini was introduced to his first patrons, the Borghese family, who readily supported the aspiring sculptor by sending him to the intellectual Cardinal Maffeo Barberini in order to enhance his education. Under Barberini's tutelage, Bernini expanded his already substantial knowledge and deepened his understanding of the fine arts, antique artistic forms as well as both classical and contemporary literature.[129] These academic endeavours within Barberini's intellectual circles, along with Bernini's daily visits to the Vatican collection of antiquities, not only constituted a rich environment filled with discussion of classical works and models, but also increased Bernini's potential exposure to Ovidian material. Although Domenico does not divulge the specific works of classical literature Bernini studied, Barberini's enthusiasm for ancient poetry as well as the continued influence of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the Renaissance literary world suggests Bernini's exposure to Ovid's poem. Moreover, the inclusion of three myths in the Ovidian

[129] Domenico Bernini, "Gian Lorenzo's First Entrance into the Papal Palace" in *The Life of Gian Lorenzo Bernini* edited by Franco Mormando (Pennsylvania: Penn State Press, 2011), 101.

corpus, namely the *Aeneas and Anchises*, *Apollo and Daphne* and *Pluto and Persephone*, in his commissions for the Borghese Villa reinforce this connection between the ancient poet and Baroque artist. Therefore, even if Bernini did not solely use Ovid when designing his depiction of the Proserpina myth, his educational background, study of antiquities, and the influential patronage of the Barberini and the Borghese indicate Bernini was aware of the *Metamorphoses'* significance.[130]

Another feature of Bernini's artistic training was his "restorations" of damaged pieces such as the *Barberini Faun*, *Borghese Hermaphrodite*, and *Laocoon*. Differing from modern practices, seventeenth century collectors preferred to display a complete piece rather than what was initially found in partial form. This preference for restored works implies an interest in the ideal, so partially surviving forms - although valuable - were less enticing for a collector to display. As a result of collector's interests, artists could earn additional income by interpreting the composition of a piece and repairing what was lost to time or 'borrowed' for *spolia*. Bernini's devoted study of antiquities in the Vatican galleries is recorded in Domenico Bernini's biography of his father, when he recounts how the artist remained in the galleries "until sunset, drawing, one by one, those marvellous statues that antiquity has conveyed to us."[131] The sculptor's devoted study of ancient Roman sculpture appears to be a remarkable asset for developing an expansive knowledge on the forms, key components, and structure of ancient statuary. Additionally, under Barberini's patronage, it is likely that Bernini was familiar with the intellectual background of the stories and myths that inspired these ancient depictions. Equipping himself with this precious knowledge of ancient literature and sculptural forms, Bernini embarked on capturing the stories of Rome's mythological past for the enjoyment of his patrons.

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[130] Ann Thomas Wilkins, "Bernini and Ovid: Expanding the Concept of Metamorphosis" *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 6, no.3 (2000): 394.
[131] Bernini "Gian Lorenzo's First Entrance into the Papal Palace," 101.

Throughout his entire life, Bernini was included in social and academic circles of incredibly influential individuals. The familial connection Bernini had to his craft allotted him an early introduction to the artistic realm of seventeenth century Rome. Moreover, his position as his father's apprentice provided the necessary exposure needed to obtain a wealthy benefactor. The most prominent patrons Bernini worked for during his early career were Maffeo Barberini, who later became Pope Urban VIII, and Cardinal Scipione Borghese. Both benefactors seemingly furthered the success of Bernini's career due to the access their positions afforded, which granted the artist coveted sources of inspiration in the Vatican archives.[132] Also, Barberini and Borghese were collectors of antiquities and members of the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome, providing further evidence for Bernini's likely exposure to Ovid's presence in art and literature. This combination of a patron's immense social standing, wealth, and intellect effectively immersed Bernini in a world of stimulating discussions for inspiration, while simultaneously providing access to expensive building materials and surviving statues for reference. Not only was he fortunate enough to receive the patronage of multiple officials from both the religious and lay realms, but his remarkable talents ensured additional patronage from European royalty later on in his career. Under the employment of Queen Christina of Sweden and the French King Louis XIV, Bernini crafted a number of pieces that ranged from pagan mythology and portraiture to Christian themes.[133] Coinciding with the expansive consumption of the *Metamorphoses* in the literary world, the large demand for depicting ancient subject matter on the European continent represents the nobility's tastes at this time as well as the widespread recognition Bernini's work received throughout his career.

[132] Bernini "Gian Lorenzo's First Entrance into the Papal Palace," 100.
[133] John D. Lyons, "Plotting Bernini: A Triumph Over Time" in *Bernini's Biographies: Critical Essays* edited by Maarten Delbeke, Evonne Levy, and Steven F. Ostrow (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 155.

5.2 A Conflict of Artistic Interest: Pagan Subject Matter Commissioned by Papal Pontiffs

Given the commission of the *Pluto and Persephone* by a high-ranking Cardinal, and his intentions to gift the piece to another papal official, Scipione Borghese, it is interesting to think of the Pluto and Persephone not only in an intellectual sense, but within the context of a pagan and Christian dichotomy. As a fundamental component of Christian moral teachings, it is puzzling that the close family of the current pope would wish to own an image contradictory to their own religious beliefs, since coveting another's belongings - or in this instance an individual - would break one of the Ten Commandments. It is apparent that the answer lies much further beyond the matter of an individual's artistic tastes or sacred beliefs. While personal aesthetics do play a minor role, the most likely cause for the commission and completion of Bernini's mythologically inspired pieces is a combination of intellectual, cultural, and religious factors.

The resurgence of interest in classical motifs across literature and art was an active component within these groups of gathered artists and poets. In particular, the successful transmission of ancient authors such as Ovid into the Renaissance world and beyond permitted the continuation of the mythological tradition by allowing later generations to engage with these preserved materials. Thus, the metamorphosing myths were a familiar topic for Barberini and Cardinal Borghese as a result of their shared intellectual circle, and by extension Bernini who contributed to the academic discussion with his sculptures.[134]

Secondly, legal components are recalled when considering the cultural aspect of why a piece depicting rape was a desirable commission. Through the analysis of papal and secular legislation conducted in chapter one, indications of cultural attitudes towards abduction and rape were revealed.[135] Due to the increasing introduction of new laws to prevent sex crimes during this period, as well as the stagnant number of cases brought to court, suggests there was

[134] Bernini, *The Life of Gian Lorenzo Bernini*, 105.
[135] See Chapter 1, pages 28-39.

an ongoing concern related to this type of offence. The almost unchanging number of reported cases in official courts, however, reveals the perceived slight against one's family, along with the supposed ineptitude of the legal system. The absence of claims made through the court at the same time as laws were being steadily implemented, suggests rape was perceived as a slight against the prestige and honour of one's household, making sexual violence an offence against the family rather than an individual. In both the attacker's and victim's cases, their family was negatively affected by the occurrence of this crime. As a result of the familial impact, retribution was often achieved through acts of vengeance by a male relative on the female victim's - and also the family's - behalf. In the midst of the Counter Reformation, sexual violence in Rome was a frequent issue that both papal and secular courts sought to eliminate through laws with which Barberini, Borghese, and by association Bernini were quite familiar with. Considering the similar legal environments of Bernini and Giambologna, the possibility of the *Pluto and Persephone* and *Rape of a Sabine* possessing an overlapping interpretation is presented. The composition of both works is easily comparable as each sculpture depicts three figures at varying levels, and the moment of *raptus* where the maiden is violently seized by a powerful male.[136] In chapter four, we deduced that Giambologna's sculptural group could symbolize the theft of the people's freedoms through the laws or alternatively it signified the Medici's taking political control where the Church had lost some. With the Roman male's capture of the Sabine and Pluto's abduction of Persephone marking how new legislation presented restrictions to the populace's freedoms, it is possible that Bernini was also alluding to his contemporary political climate and increasing legal jurisdiction. Beyond the display of Ovidian myth, additional connections to the classical world arise from this potential political commentary. Briefly returning to Augustan legislation, the overbearing nature of newly

[136] Frits Scholten, "Painterly Sculpture," in *Caravaggio Bernini: Early Baroque in Rome* (Munich: Prestel Publishing, 2019), 36.

implemented secular and canon law appears reminiscent of the displeasure Ovid indicates the ancient populace felt towards the *leges Iuliae*. This reference to contemporary attitudes in his work not only situates Bernini's sculpture in the political environment of the early seventeenth century, but it also displays analogous attitudes towards overbearing legislation that Ovid included in his Proserpina account. Therefore, this legal interpretation of Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* possesses dual significance since it ties the piece to contemporary proceedings and artworks like the *Rape of a Sabine*, while also reflecting on Ovid's texts and the social commentary he includes within Proserpina's myth. While the lethal combination of personal revenge as an effective means of justice and the increasing preventative laws demonstrates the cultural climate in which Bernini practiced his craft, it is also important to consider how a Christian influence offers alternative interpretations.

Two additional questions revolve around this religious issue. Why would a sculptor and patron produce such an image and how would a Christian audience perceive it? Fortunately, both questions are possible to explain if the statue was intended to be exemplary in nature. This theory recalls allegorical readings of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* from earlier medieval readings and contemporary Renaissance literature. Applying an allegorical lens to Bernini's piece appears to emphasize these moral themes and allude to Christ's life. Supporting evidence for the idea of Bernini's mythical commissions being exemplary resides in a poetic critique by Fulvio Testi on the companion piece of *Apollo and Daphne*. His appraisal of the statue follows contemporary critics' writings when he emphasizes the lifelike quality of the stone, marking a visual metamorphosis from stone to reality. Departing from Domenico's commentary on his father's works, the realistic depiction of the forms is identified not as an asset, but rather as a possible hindrance to its reception. For example, Testi casts his own reception of the piece in a mournful tone when he laments that Bernini's creation marks Rome's fall into immorality

due to the statue's vivaciousness.[137] Therefore, the authenticity of Daphne's nude form and Apollo's lustful pursuit apparently embody the corruption within seventeenth century Rome. This is of particular importance in the context of the disruption caused by the Counter Reformation. In an ironic subversion of expectations, the overt sensuality of the *Pluto and Persephone* could indicate the immediate immorality in Rome, which was even present amongst high-ranking members of the papacy. Despite the allegorical interpretations connected to the Resurrection, the sculpture's nude forms, sexual undertones, and portrayal of abduction as a seduction represent the erotic experience a viewer could enjoy when gazing at the enticingly smooth stone. Also, Bernini's sensual depiction of Persephone's abduction represents a real threat to Rome's spiritual morality. Considering how religious leaders and lawmakers decorated their homes with highly erotic images that opposed legislation in canon law, it is possible to pinpoint one area of corruption within the papacy.[138] If officials who publicly damned pre- and extramarital affairs for their violation of Church doctrine were consuming contradictory material in their homes, how could Rome's spiritual morality be restored? While Testi's comments on Rome 'breathing in living stone' support the interpretation of the piece's exemplary nature, and the immoral desires of religious officials imply the internal corruption of the papacy, there is another potential explanation for this commission.[139]

An alternative theory for the depiction of mythological rape scenes in the Villa Borghese is presented by Genevieve Warwick. Given the shared themes of abduction, Ovidian ancient Roman mythological figures, and most importantly the overlapping display context of the statues permits both the *Pluto and Persephone* and the *Apollo and Daphne* to be assessed

[137] Joris J. van Gastel, "Bernini's metamorphosis: sculpture, poetry, and the embodied beholder," *Word & Image* 28, no. 2 (2012):200. Van Gastel elaborates further, accusing corruption, luxury, and lasciviousness as the culprits of Rome's moral downfall.
[138] Robert C. Figueira, "Papal corporality and the papacy's immorality," *The Catholic Historical Review* 89, no. 4 (2003): 744.
[139] Van Gastel, "Bernini's metamorphosis," 201.

as companion pieces under the same lens. Therefore, a majority of conclusions that could be made about the *Apollo and Daphne* after it replaced the *Pluto and Persephone* are seemingly applicable to the earlier statue as a result of their shared Ovidian origins, subject matter, and contemporary artistic depictions. In comparing the relationship between text and image, Warwick proposes the possibility of an open-ended rather than a fixed meaning for Bernini's *Apollo and Daphne*, which is also applicable to his *Pluto and Persephone*.[140] This speculation illuminates the extent of Borghese's intellectual circle, which extended beyond the academy into his own household. Commissioning a piece depicting ancient mythological figures, with a violent theme like rape, could not only be compared to recent events in the legal, literary, and artistic realms of Rome, but could also be discussed in relation to ancient topics such as law.[141] Acting as an impressive conversation starter, the installation of Bernini's statuary within the Borghese home offered an expressive medium to encourage a diverse range of engaging discussion. Moreover, these interpretations were not restricted to secular discussion, but could also reflect Christian elements. The most widely accepted Christian reading of the *Pluto and Persephone* emphasizes the maiden's embodiment of resurrection and the presence of an afterlife. Her forceful descent into the Underworld and subsequent return to the surface signalled a change in seasons, life cycles, and most importantly the resurrection of Christ. This allegorical perspective is reminiscent of earlier Renaissance readings of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and their omission of text in order to align with religious teachings. From a Christian vantage point, the sexual implications of rape would be left unaddressed in order to focus on the moral symbolism and parallels to the return of the saviour, reinforcing the

[140] Genevieve Warwick, "Pastorals" in *Bernini* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 79.

[141] An interesting aside concerns the commission for the *Pluto and Persephone* and Scipione's voluntarily leave from the political world. Coinciding closely in time, one may believe that this piece conveyed a reference to the 'death' of Scipione's political career. The powerful image of the Lord of the Underworld forcibly dragging a weeping maiden into his realm could be read allegorically in relation to this personal aspect of Scipione's life. However, the emotional depiction of Persephone's abduction appears as an unlikely subject to commemorate one's retirement, which strengthens the likelihood of Warwick's theory.

connection between the sculpture and earlier textual readings of Ovid.[142] Furthermore, this moralized interpretation of Bernini's statue is important for contextualizing the depiction of pagan subject matter in the private homes of the papacy. A benefit of casting Persephone's abduction as a reflection of Christ's resurrection, however, is that there is the possibility for both Christian allegorical interpretations as well as contemporary cultural, legal, and literary connections to be made.

5.3 Bernini's Baroque Sculptures: Seventeenth Century Receptions

Travelling forward to 1620, surviving accounts from papal records report the positive reception of Bernini's completed *Pluto and Persephone*. Agostino Mascardi was a court historian in Pope Urban VIII's employment during Bernini's patronage under the former Maffeo Barberini, who was now the head of the papacy. Within his early career, Bernini was commissioned by the Borghese family to complete a number of sculptures inspired by ancient mythology, including *Aeneas and Anchises*, *Apollo and Daphne,* and *Pluto and Persephone.* Mascardi offers an interesting source for the young sculptor, documenting a poem written by Urban VIII's poet, Bruni. Through Mascardi's diligent recording, Bernini's talents are discussed as Bruni likens him to the mythical Amphion, writing "Bernini… albeit in his youth, knows to give the sensation of life to stone with his chisel, better than the fabulous Amphion did with his song."[143] This considerably high praise for the sculptor is significant for two reasons. The first area of importance is the concept of *paragone,* or the contest between

[142] Andrea Bolland,"Desiderio and Diletto: Vision, Touch, and the Poetics of Bernini's Apollo and Daphne." *The Art Bulletin* 82, no. 2 (2000): 311. Bolland introduces an interesting aside in her article on the *Apollo and Daphne*, when she discusses how the *Pluto and Persephone* was gifted to the new pope's nephew. Her interpretation of the former statue suggests a brevity associated with holding political power that Scipione was facing after his status decreased following his uncle's, the previous pope's, death. While the short-lived power Scipione held is exhibited in the *Apollo and Daphne*, the themes of death and rebirth in the *Pluto and Persephone* appear fitting for Scipione's papal replacement, Ludovico Ludovisi. Therefore, as Scipione's papal power met its end, Ludovico's was beginning.

[143] Van Gastel, "Bernini's metamorphosis," 194.

literature and the arts, which dominated seventeenth century intellectual circles. Bruni's complimentary verse, highlighting the talents of Bernini's statuary, marks a victory of the visual over the textual sphere.[144] Secondly, this revelation makes it possible to engage more readily with contemporary discussions about the sculptor's work. Acting as a magnifying glass for modern scholars, Bruni's poem enlarges the discourse on the reception of Bernini's commissioned works during the early seventeenth century. Additionally, the comparison to the ancient narrative of Amphion demonstrates the intellectual climate of Barberini's court. Bruni's allusion to this mythological figure indicates another possible instance of Ovidian influence, which would be readily understood by Bernini and those in Barberini's circle. Not only does this poem identify the overlapping realms of the written and artistic worlds, but the flattering praises also solidify Bernini's talents as a sculptor and student of the classics through the glance it offers into his initial reception.

Further celebratory reception of Bernini's works survives in a poem, written by Tomaso Stigliani, who dedicated his collection of poems to Cardinal Borghese. In his *Canzoniero*, Stigliani compliments Bernini's ability to petrify the audience with his artistry, remarking:

> "For every single one of your statues is so lifelike,
> And I remain so stupefied in beholding [*mirare*] them,
> That they seem the animated, I the petrified.
> They seem alive, I seem sculpted."[145]

This perfected technique of moulding marble into flesh was also echoed in Domenico's biography of his father. The biographer comments specifically on how the realistic nature of the *Apollo and Daphne* "could accordingly offend the chaste eye" with the explicit presentation of a female nude.[146] Another interesting point arises as a result of Domenico's writings,

[144] Stefano Pierguidi, "Gian Lorenzo Bernini tra teoria e prassi artistica: la "speaking likeness", il "bel composto", e il "paragone"," *Artibus et Historiae* 32, no. 63 (2011): 152.
[145] Van Gastel does not provide the original passage but offers his own translation of Stigliani's poem to support his argument. For further discussion on poetic critiques of Bernini's statuary see van Gastel, pages 198-201.
[146] Van Gastel, "Bernini's metamorphosis," 199.

revealing further receptions towards the statue. Despite the immoral intentions of Apollo towards the fleeing nymph, Domenico identifies the nude female form as what audiences may take offense to and not the attempted rape. This, coupled with the legal environment at Rome that points to few cases of rape being brought before the courts, illustrates how the audiences of the statue were largely desensitized to the subject.

5.4 The Metamorphosing Borghese Sculptures and Their Inspiration

One of the most remarkable depictions of rape in the baroque style, and one of Bernini's earliest works, was the highly dramatized *Pluto and Persephone*. Although there are two potential sources from Ovid that Bernini could have chosen from - in addition to later literary editions - an iconographic assessment of his rendition appears to favour the account of the *Metamorphoses* over that of the *Fasti.* The main distinction between the two Proserpina myths, however, is the mode of abduction. In the *Fasti,* Pluto carries Persephone off in his chariot, while the *Metamorphoses* has the Lord of the Underworld travel on foot at the moment of abduction. Due to the visual references Bernini incorporates, one can begin to dissect the status of the victim and attacker as well as their mythological origins before fully identifying the figures. For example, the crown encircling Pluto's head implies his high-ranking status as a ruler, while his full beard is initially reminiscent of ancient depictions of river deities, leading to a possible misidentification of the god as his brother, Neptune. It is the presence of the god's two-pronged bident laying between his striding feet and his loyal hound seated at his master's heel, which eliminates this confusion and clearly identifies the aggressor.[147] The presence of the bident is particularly intriguing since it recalls Ovid's description of Pluto striking and penetrating Cyane's waters (*Met.* 5. 420-423). This weapon also contributes to the piece's overall violence - but more specifically to the display of sexual violence - with its visual

[147] Rudolf Wittkower, "Early Works and the Borghese Patronage," in *Bernini: The Sculptor of the Roman Baroque* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1965), 14.

implication of Pluto penetrating Persephone. The bident's penetrative symbolism is furthered through its use as an agricultural tool in ancient farming. Designed as an instrument for tilling the fields, the bident's presence in Bernini's piece references the violence done to the earth and symbolizes the sexual violence its owner inflicts on an earth deity like Persephone. Interestingly, Persephone's divine status is seemingly revealed after Pluto's identification is confirmed and Barberini's inscription is read. The absence of any ancient icons that were associated with the goddess such as pomegranate seeds or a sheath of wheat, seemingly causes her identification to rely on her relationship to her attacker and an inscribed reference to the flower-picking motif in Ovid's popular account. An additional reference to the figures' ancient origins is present in the maiden's hairstyle, which Wittkower comments is reminiscent of the arranged tendrils of the Niobids.[148] These symbolic representations and incorporation of some ancient sculptural forms like female hairstyles plays a pivotal role in situating the sculpture's subject matter in the Ovidian mythological tradition. One compositional element that does not appear in either one of Ovid's accounts, but was a clever addition on Bernini's part, is the structural support provided by Cerberus. Despite the three-headed hound's absence in the *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses*, his presence in this piece likely holds a joint purpose. The first function is the symbolic aspect Cerberus contributes, which not only reinforces hunting motifs by showing Pluto as the hunter and Persephone as his prey, but the loyal hound also allows audiences to clearly mark Persephone's forceful descent into the Underworld. The second purpose is more practical, however, since it provides structural support for the group. Through his use of iconography, Bernini presents an erotic image of a politically and physically powered man abducting a virgin of an almost equal social rank, which reinforces power dynamics in society and sexual practices.

[148] Wittkower, "Early Works and the Borghese Patronage," 14.

The overall sensuality of this piece is an asset to understanding both Bernini's and his contemporary society's perspectives on rape imagery. Beginning with the physical force present in Pluto's capture of his prize and Persephone's resistance to her abduction, ideas of a dominant male and a submissive female participant in sex begin to surface. Pluto's crown, weaponry, and exaggerated musculature all contribute to his implied social and physical superiority over the supple curves of the almost fully nude and unprotected female. Also, Persephone's elevated confinement in her attacker's arms could symbolize how a woman's agency in marriage dealings was restricted to a male relative's decision. Bernini reflects this broader imbalance between genders in the limited movements Persephone is able to make within the constraints of her soon to be husband and a male-governed society. Despite her limited control of movement and forced submission, Ceres' daughter attempts to free herself by pushing Pluto's head back. The expression on the latter's face appears as a combination of slight amusement at Persephone's underwhelming use of force and his own sexual excitement at her resistance. In a parallel to ancient hunting motifs, the slight smile on Pluto's face suggests his arousal at the enhanced beauty created by his victim's refusal. As Persephone struggles to break free, the viewer objectifies her curving form and eroticizes her submission to Pluto as his well-deserved prize. The contrast between Pluto's somewhat eager expression and Persephone's distressed features suggests an intentional portrayal of a male's sexual preferences. Bernini's explicit use of violence and erotic undertones could illuminate the preferred tastes of Cardinal Borghese, who requested such a sensual depiction. One contributing factor to Persephone's eroticization is her overall form with its pinched features and thrown back head that leads to further exposure of her breasts, which all mirror the physical throws of a woman in orgasm.[149] Catering to the male viewer's excitement, this interpretation of the maiden's features as an expression of her sexual enjoyment contributes to her

[149] Jed Perl, "Ecstasy," *The New Republic* 220, no. 8 (1999): 32.

eroticization and the piece's sensuality. Even though the goddess is displayed in the middle of a violent abduction, Bernini's construction of her form lends itself to the enjoyment of the male viewer. The anticipated excitement one would have at seeing the passion in the victim's face, increases the viewer's desire, thereby revealing Bernini's potential perspective that *raptus*, although violent was quite erotic. Further evidence of hunting themes also appears in Cerberus' presence. In this motif, the Underworld's canine is reimagined as a ferocious hunting dog, who assists their master in trapping the desired prey. Bernini's earlier study of antiquities is ever-present here, since images of dogs are present in the emotional drama of antique depictions of hunting scenes. By using a combination of ancient sculptural forms, iconography, and the realism of contemporary paintings, Bernini seemingly provides his own attitudes towards rape in this sculpture. The sexually charged presentation of Persephone's abduction suggests Bernini's view that women held a subordinate position to males both in and outside of the bedchamber. More specifically, Pluto's use of violence in his depiction of rape is not considered to be a taboo image but implies the heightened sexual enjoyment of the male with a female's resistance.

Another divergence from text to stone that Robert T. Peterson has noted is the absence of flowers in Bernini's rendition.[150] In both rape accounts from the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, Persephone is abducted in a meadow and the blooming flowers she has collected are scattered chaotically, acting as a symbol for her impending loss of innocence as well as her virginal delicacy. Given the prominence placed on the flowers within Ovid's accounts - and the lack of them in Bernini's sculpture - it is apparent that the artist relied on further inspiration than an ancient text. Arguably, the most intriguing aspect of the visual absence of flowers is the

[150] Robert T. Petersson, "Bernini's New Rome" in *Bernini and the Excesses of Art* (Pisa: Maschietto & Ditore, 2002), 32.

inclusion of an inscriptional reference by Maffeo Barberini on the Statue's base. This inscription reads:

> "*quisquis humi pronus flores legis, inspice saevi /*
> *me Ditis ad domum rapi* / you, who leaning near
> the ground pick flowers, look on me being carried
> away to the home of savage Dis"[151]

As well-established symbols of purity and youth, Bernini defies expectations with his omission of foliage, seemingly relying on his skills, Barberini's inscription, and other visual cues to depict Persephone's abduction. Barberini's engraving on the statue's base reiterates the connections between text and art as well as symbolizes the union of ancient and contemporary Renaissance Rome. Applying an epigrammatic formula to his Latin inscription, Barberini clarifies the figures shown in conflict and indicates the myth being portrayed. This description in poetic couplets not only applies the same language the *Metamorphoses* was composed in, but it is also structured in the ancient epigrammatic formula. The two couplets beginning with a brief description of the implied setting and concluding with an unexpected twist in the second couplet reflect the brief, but surprising composition that was typical of the ancient epigram. In an application of ancient imagery, Barberini uses the idyllic image of picking flowers to foreshadow Pluto's abduction of Persephone.[152] Additionally, further insight about the intellectual climate of the Borghese court is offered by the employment of the epigram. The use of Latin, an ancient poetic formula, and the image of flower picking reflect the classical based study in Bernini's environment as well as the higher education prominent among the nobility that was required to understand Barberini's inscription. This conceivably enhanced the

[151] Wilkins, "Bernini and Ovid," 398.This translation was provided by Ann Thomas Wilkins, who sourced the quote from Pietro da Barga's *Bernini Sculptore*. In order to properly assess Wilkins' argument, I have opted to include her own translation in this instance to prevent any inconsistencies in interpreting the translation.
[152] Evina Sistakou, "The Dynamics of Space in Moschus' *Europa*," *Aitia* 6 (2016): 18. Sistakou draws particular attention to the dangers associated with the classical image of flower-picking in Moschus' *Europa*, referencing its appearance in the *Hymn to Demeter* prior to Persephone's abduction. Its presence on the base of Bernini's sculpture assists in establishing the setting of Ovid's account, where Pluto spies Proserpina in the meadow.

opportunity for engaging academic discussions and interdisciplinary interpretations of the *Pluto and Persephone* to occur as one engaged with both the literary and artistic components. Although the impressive visuals Bernini achieves throughout the sculpture are more than sufficient for narrating Persephone's tale, the addition of Barberini's inscription solidifies the connection between ancient forms of poetry and the figures depicted in a Baroque artwork.[153]

Further comments on the relationship between text and art in Borghese's academic discussions surface when contemplating if Bernini's piece is indicative of the intellectual debate of *paragone*.[154] In its most basic form, this scholarly contest was concerned with determining which field was superior between art and literature. The *paragone* extended further within each realm to distinguish whether painting or sculpture was the more subtly 'poetic', and therefore superior, art form. Viewing Bernini's work through this lens of competition and in comparison, to poetry provides an important point regarding its composition as well as original viewing context. When considering the display context, it is possible to see how Bernini presents a formidable companion to Ovid's account. Through the first glimpse one would have of the sculpture, the myth seamlessly unfolds before the viewer's eyes. Closely following Ovid's narration, the statue's placement grants one with a rear view of Pluto (Figure 10) that afterwards reveals Persephone, whose obvious dismay is expressed in her body language and features (Figure 11). Completing the statue's narrative, and subsequently Ovid's account, is the snarling Cerberus, whose sculpted presence symbolizes the pair's descent into the Underworld (Figure 12). Thus, the physical experience of viewing the *Pluto and*

[153]Charles Avery, "Giambologna, Sculptor to the Medici (1529-1608): His Style and Its Sources," *Apollo* 199 (1978): 174.

[154] Pierguidi, "Gian Lorenzo Bernini tra teoria e prassi artistica: la "speaking likeness", il "bel composto", e il "paragone"," 154. Pierguidi comments on Bernini's sculptural contributions to the *paragone* discussion within Borghese's circle. Although he does not clearly state if Bernini participated directly in the Borghese discourse or in a separate intellectual circle, Pierguidi mentions the artist's thoughts on the comparison of the "sister arts," in reference to the superior form of sculpture or painting. Although it is a seemingly outdated discussion in modern scholarship, *paragone* was an engaging debate in the seventeenth century. Bernini's construction of the *Pluto and Persephone* was completed for a patron who engaged in this discussion and by an artist who participated to some extent and also contributed pieces to further the debate.

Persephone coincides with the progression of written events, currently placing both media on an even plane. An interesting addition to the debate between painting and sculpture is the similar way one would view Titian's *Rape of Europa*. In this earlier piece, Titian also follows Ovid's narration by showing the progression of Europa's abduction from left to right. Just as in the *Pluto and Persephone*, the educated viewer can "read" each myth sequentially and fill in the gaps of the story from the elements present in the artist's depiction. In a competition to determine the superior work between text and Bernini's sculpture, the richly carved imagery appears to inch the marble group into a superior position, as Bernini simultaneously narrates Persephone's abduction, and the three dimensionality captures the varying emotions amongst each figure. Also, the elevated position of Bernini's piece would enhance the drama for the audience, who were viewing the group under its towering forms. Finally, Bernini seems to include a metamorphic illusion through his realistic depiction, which is apparent in the image of Pluto's hand sinking into Persephone's soft thigh, thereby transforming marble into flesh. Although the dichotomy of art and literature has shifted to a more correlated perspective in modern scholarship, the contest between these disciplines was a central component of academic discussions in Bernini's time. His *Pluto and Persephone* is significant to these discourses as it opens the possibility for post-Renaissance intellectuals to make numerous interpretations, ranging from comments on ancient and contemporary legal practices, to Ovidian literature, and *raptus* scenes in art. Furthermore, the conclusions or continued debates that developed as a result of this sculpture reveal its potential use as a piece of classical reception. Since the Ovidian subject matter of the myth, and Bernini's visual portrayals of Persephone closely relate to the poet's descriptions in the text, it is difficult to sever the ties linking Ovid's poem to this work. As a result, the *Pluto and Persephone* can be considered a frontrunner in the *paragone* discussion, especially when tracing Ovidian rape motifs to the seventeenth century as well as a conversation piece that allowed post-Renaissance intellectuals to engage with the genius of

ancients.[155] Due to its numerous connections to multiple disciplines and its cultural reflections of two distinct time periods, Bernini's sculptural contribution to the ongoing *paragone* effectively associates the artist with contemporary academics.

5.5 *Pluto and Persephone*: The Importance of Display Context

Given the dense poetic environment Bernini worked in, it is understandable that many of his commissioned pieces possessed figures, themes, and an undeniable influence from ancient poetic sources.[156] Scholars such as Wilkins and van Gastel propose the poetic qualities and Bernini's ability to successfully morph text into stone. Crucial elements for this theory include the spectator's viewpoint as well as artistic composition. As van Gastel discusses, the original display context for the *Pluto and Persephone* was situated against a wall.[157] This positioning within the Villa Borghese meant that spectators would view the piece from one of three entrances, but interestingly never directly from the front. From each vantage point, the statue was approached from a three-quarter view, beginning at Pluto's back. As the audience continues forward to view the piece in full, the narrative of Ovid's myth unravels before one's eyes. Through his use of movement throughout the work, Bernini successfully captures the progression of time and the events of the *raptus*.[158] The relatively short amount of time it would take to view the piece, identify the characters, and their actions mirror the swiftness of Pluto's attack. Textually this is reminiscent of the brevity in Ovid's description that Pluto "*visa est, dilectaque raptaque*/(saw) and love(d) and carr(ied) her away" (*Met*. 5.395), while artistically Pluto's head is shoved away by his victim to show the violence associated with rape. Also, the eye's journey from master to loyal hound is a reflection of the core components in Ovid's

[155] Viccy Coltman, "'The lecture on Venus's arse': Richard Cosway's *Charles Townley with a Group of Connoisseurs, c.*1771-5," in *Classical Sculpture and the Culture of Collecting in Britain since 1760* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 166.
[156] Scholten, "Painterly Sculpture," 37.
[157] Giacomo Manilli, *Villa Borghese Fuori di Porta Pinciana* (Rome: Lodovico Grigani, 1650), 45.
[158] Van Gastel, "Bernini's metamorphosis," 197.

account of the myth: beginning with the Lord of the Underworld, the seizure of Persephone, and their forced retreat to Pluto's realm. Aside from the substantial stripping of the myth down to its bare bones in the marble depiction, Bernini seemingly manages to capture the height of the myth's drama along with the brief beginning, middle, and end of Persephone's tale at the same time. Thus, the progression of mythical events in the poem, accompanied by Barberini's inscription, beautifully follows the audience's experience of approaching the statue and reading the inscription, which places the viewer in the meadow. Van Gastel emphasizes the experience of the spectator as they progress through the visual narrative Bernini presents, vouching for the expertise of the sculptor in composing a flowing piece.[159]

A further comment on the experience of the spectator is Bernini's introduction of yet another potential metamorphosis. Not only do his sculptural groups depict the transformations of an ancient mythical being from text to stone, but they also introduce the metamorphosis of the Ovidian tradition. Even though Bernini's influences and inspirations likely extend beyond the ancient poet, Wilkins identifies the sculptor as one of the artists who was most heavily influenced by Ovid.[160] As a result, when an audience casts their eyes on Bernini's creations, they would recall a previous rendition of the depicted myth, whether it appeared in literature or art from a contemporary or previous century. Furthermore, this recollection of myth brings elements of the past to the forefront of one's mind. Therefore, it appears as if audiences are unassumingly engaging in an intellectual and visual experience when viewing Bernini works.

As one of four mythologically commissioned works, the statue of *Pluto and Persephone* was originally placed in the Villa Borghese until it was replaced by the *Apollo and Daphne* group. Differing from the modern display context, which allows audiences to view the statue in the round, two seventeenth century guidebooks reveal the intended placement against a wall.

[159] Van Gastel, "Bernini's metamorphosis," 196.
[160] Wilkins, "Ovid and Bernini," 383.

Kenseth comments on this discrepancy between original and current placement of the statue in her article. Using evidence from both Giacomo Manilli and Domenico Montelatici's seventeenth century guides of the Villa Borghese, it is revealed that the first glimpse a visitor would have of the sculpture was from the back of the statue, "*passata la porta*/just past the door".[161] Therefore, as Manilli records, the subject matter of the piece could not be identified or appreciated fully until the viewer entered the room. As the *paragone* discussion above illuminated, the rapid movement Bernini was able to craft in this Baroque piece beautifully mirrors the dramatic intensity of the climax from Ovidian myth. Bernini's statue can be examined "spirally", as well as all at once, from bottom to top to bring the dramatic plot points of the myth to life. Depicting both Pluto's power and Persephone's sorrow, Bernini appears to directly reference Ovid with his portrayal of "*dea territa maestro et matrem et comites, sed matrem saepius, ore clamat, et ut summa vestem laniarat ab ora*/the terrified girl call[ing] plaintively on her mother and her companions, but more often upon her mother" (*Met.* 5.396-398).[162] This connection is enhanced further with Bernini's inclusion of Persephone's exposed breast, which Ovid writes how the god's actions led to the maiden's garment being "*et ut summa vestem laniarat ab ora*/torn at its upper edge" (*Met.* 5.398). The artist's potential mimicking of the text in regard to both its viewing context and portrayal of Persephone not only places Bernini's sculpture in the greater Ovidian tradition but introduces the possibility of reading first century attitudes towards rape in this work. Another interesting observation about the original display context of the *Pluto and Persephone* is its location in the furthest room from the villa's front entrance (Figure 13). Residing in the north-eastern corner room, Bernini's

[161] Manilli, *Villa Borghese Fuori di Porta Pinciana*, 45. Due to the publication of Manilli's guidebook roughly twenty-five years after the *Pluto and Persephone's* completion, this description is referencing the *Apollo and Daphne*, which held the same placement of the former statue. For an additional account of the Villa Borghese's description see Domenico Montelatici, *Villa Borghese Fuori di Porta Pinciana* (Rome: Gio. Francesco Buagni, 1700).

[162] Miller, Frank Justus "Book V" in *The Loeb Classical Library's Ovid's Metamorphoses* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), 265-266.

work likely would have been one of the last pieces a visitor would encounter on a tour. Considering the allegorical readings of death and implied resurrection in the myth, this placement is quite fitting as a final piece for visitors in the private sphere.

Bernini's ability to manipulate an unyielding stone to his will is evident in the contorted form of Persephone as well as the implied movement shown in the goddess' flowing locks. The dramatic contest between Pluto's vice grip on Persephone's thigh and her forward-reaching form elevates the piece's intensity, while also displaying the sculptor's expertise in stonework. In his article, "Bernini's Light", Frank Fehrenbach discusses contemporary critiques of Bernini's work, which did not adhere to ancient sculptural rules. In particular, the softening of stone to imitate folded fabric was a specific example of where the sculptor achieved a detailed flowing design undocumented in the ancient world. Due to the intricacy the artist conveyed in his work, which was likely inspired by both ancient writings and material culture, his carving techniques stand as a clear indication that Bernini had surpassed his ancient predecessors in their craft.[163] Fehrenbach also notes the core reason Bernini was able to advance further than sculptors from antiquity was the result of his passion. He goes on to compare the stone to a lover who melted upon the artist's arrival, thereby allowing Bernini to shape the stone in any manner he decided. Although Fehrenbach's interpretation of both Domenico Bernini and Filippo Baldinucci's biographies of the artist is poetic, his crediting of Bernini's superior sculptural technique to passion alone is far too simple of a statement. Many other factors played a defining role in the advancement of sculpture, such as the improvements to one's tools, the *spolia* or reusing of a previously carved stone, and the artistic environment an artist participated in.

Another characteristic that sets Bernini apart from his contemporaries and predecessors is the significance he placed on using natural light. His dedicated efforts to achieve the

[163] Frank Fehrenbach, "Bernini's Light" *Art History* 28, no. 1 (2005): 6.

interaction of stone and 'real light' is a baroque element, which assists the sculpture's interpretation in the ongoing *paragone* between painting and sculpture at this time. This contest to determine the superior artistic medium pushed Bernini to incorporate natural light into his sculptures, unlike paintings, which often relied on the light painted into the scene.[164] The play of light off stone not only transformed the heaviness of his building material to appear weightless and animated, but it also heightens the sensuality of the work with its manipulation of the senses. The resulting highlights and shadows from the sun mingling with stone enhances the dramatic style and furthers the dynamic depiction with the natural incorporation of *chiaroscuro*. As Fehrenbach discusses, the most striking instances of natural light and carved figures survive in Bernini's religious pieces like his renditions of the saints. A possible explanation for the successful relationship between sun and stone in a Church setting is the contrast between shadow and light that apses, naves, and vaulting provided. Bernini's foresight to consider how light manoeuvres through existing architecture to illuminate his work presents additional evidence of his skill set. One crucial component to consider when relying on natural light is the gradual movement of the organic medium. As the light source shifts throughout the day, the effect it has on a statue change as well. Thus, the period that a statue would be at its primal viewing is significantly reduced. However, that is not to say that the statue is lacking outside of this allotted time. In order to combat the fluctuation of light, Bernini utilized exaggerated *serpentinata* compositions, expressive faces, and a contest of figures to maintain the animated quality of his pieces.

When considering his *Pluto and Persephone*, the incorporation of light may also offer a rich allegory for mythological events. Due to its original placement on the western wall in the north-eastern corner of the Villa Borghese, the strongest illumination would likely occur earlier in the day. If the peak lighting occurred towards midday, one could interpret this timing

[164] Fehrenbach, "Bernini's Light," 11.

as a parallel to Persephone's age. Similar to the rising sun, which is just about to reach its summit at this point, the young goddess is snatched from the meadow in her prime. Simultaneously, the drama of her skyward glance and rotating form, paired with the ascending sunlight, suggest her plea for divine assistance. Whether her cry for help is intended for her mother, Ceres, or the Christian God, is ambiguous even though her distress is apparent. Continuing later into the day with the setting sun, Bernini's light naturally softens and recedes, reflecting the group's descent into the Underworld and Persephone's loss of innocence.[165] These natural effects would also be enhanced by the positioning of the room's five windows along the northern, eastern, and southern facing walls. Therefore, Bernini's sculptural narration of Ovid's account is further enhanced through the sun's symbolic progression across the day. In the greater spectrum of this study, this unification of organic material and carved stone not only naturally mimics the Ovidian account of Proserpina, which reinforces the relationship between art and text, but it also heightens the drama of this Baroque depiction with the *chiaroscuro* effect and similar composition to near contemporary Renaissance pieces.

Although light appears to play a pivotal role in Bernini's works, the sculptures are not solely reliant on it. While the illumination provided by natural light at the proper time enhances one's viewing experience, the permanent artistic expressions Bernini includes execute a lifelike quality. Furthermore, his consideration of enhancing his work with an organic source indicates a critical emphasis on display context. If a piece was repositioned or relocated, not only would the light source be altered, but his use of naturally created light would threaten his victory over the artificially depicted light in painting and the imageless accounts of literature.

[165] Without extensive research into the precise location of the sun as well as the challenges proposed by the transitioning of seasons it is impossible to state this claim with certainty. Therefore, this description is strictly a theory at this point.

Conclusions

From an early age, Bernini demonstrated a promising talent for both academics and artistry. His time as an apprentice for his father honed his sculptural skills and introduced the aspiring artist to a bounty of potential benefactors. Upon his acceptance into the court of Scipione Borghese and Maffeo Barberini, Bernini's educational environment was expanded significantly, which permitted him direct access to antiquities in the Vatican archives, as well as a potent intellectual climate to engage in compelling discussions of both ancient and current materials. As a result of his generous patronage, Bernini not only acquired the necessary background of ancient literature and sculptural forms apparent in his *Pluto and Persephone*, but his influence was seemingly able to extend amongst European nobility on the continent as well. The amalgamation of his extensive education, intellectual networks, and extended artistic influence professes his capability in confidently bringing aspects of the ancient and post-Renaissance world into a single sculpture. Living harmoniously in stone, Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* recalls a prominent first century myth and ancient sculptural compositions, which are complimented by seventeenth century scholasticism and an apparently open interpretation. This peaceful union of first and early seventeenth century components in a dramatic depiction also symbolizes perceptions of rape between Rome's cultural past and Bernini's present. With the artist's use of iconography, ancient subject matter, and an expressive portrayal in the baroque style, the *Pluto and Persephone* conveys ideas of male power, female helplessness, and familial, rather than personal legal power. Considering the attitudes towards rape as shown in the inclusion of legal, literary, and artistic components, Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* can be distinguished as a piece of classical reception for understanding rape as a dialogue across time.

Conclusion

Across the span of the last five chapters, both first and seventeenth century attitudes towards rape have been explored in multiple disciplines to determine if the reception of sexual violence shifted or remained the same in Rome between these two periods. With an emphasis on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* leading the discourse, investigations were launched into the legal, literary, and artistic spheres of Augustan and post-Renaissance Rome. In order to construct our conclusions clearly and with confidence, a brief summary of each chapter's findings and how they contribute to the overall study will be presented before finalizing the outcome of this endeavour. Although each aforementioned discipline represents a unique approach to the material, the summary of outcomes for each chapter reveals the interdisciplinary nature of contextualizing sexual violence in these closely related fields of study. The connections between legislation, literature, and art, will also display the contributing factors of how rape was perceived by the composer and received by their audience.

Beginning with the legal world, there appears to be a minimal shift in how *raptus* cases were classified and tried from the ancient to secular and even papal courts. As an analysis of the *leges Iuliae* and Venetian law revealed, rape was considered as a crime of "*vis*/violence" but was rarely reported in an official court setting. In the instances where a case was reported, however, many people opted for the more discreet pursuit of charging the aggressor with "*iniuria*/damages." This course of legal action indicates how women were considered as property, and also how *raptus* could affect the victim's family in "*dignitas*/honour" and social standing. The desire to remain discreet about pursuing legal action in this event reinforces the notion that rape was not seen as a crime against an individual, but as a slight against the family, where violence was frequently used as a more effective punishment than the ancient and secular court systems. In addition to the similar perspectives from the Venetian law courts and

Augustan legislation, there is a shared emphasis on morality evident in Augustus' marriage and adultery laws as well as canon law. In both legal codes the lawmakers stress the importance of "*mores*/morals" for restoring a proper - and in canon law's case, a Christian - lifestyle. Although both laws targeted extra marital affairs, they were also introduced at times of instability, which reveal the lawmakers attempts to assert their power through over governance. The resulting unrest within the populace is recorded in contemporary literature, which subtly comments on the population's attitudes towards overbearing laws.

In the second chapter, an investigation into the literary techniques and social commentary offered in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* demonstrated the connection between literature and contemporary society, while also introducing imbalances in power dynamics between males and females. Addressing the former finding first, the poet's allusion between Rome's *princeps* and the goddess Venus cast Augustus in a tyrannical role as he was compared to his power-hungry ancestor, who attempts to gain influence over all realms. In the context of ancient Roman society, the parallels between Venus' actions in the Proserpina myth and Augustus' oppressive legislation are not only readily made, but also situate the *Metamorphoses* in the thought processes of Augustan Rome. These literary references to contemporary politics and legal proceedings solidify the interdisciplinary connection between legislation and Ovid's poetry, which also implies a shared perspective on understanding rape. Further indications of how *raptus* was perceived by an ancient audience in the literary sphere arise in Ovid's employment of the hunting motif in his descriptions of abduction. Within the roughly three hundred lines of his Proserpina account, Ovid includes three instances of *raptus*. Beginning with Proserpina, Ovid reveals how *raptus* can refer to abduction, while Pluto's penetration of Cyane indicates the act of sexual violence as another aspect of it. The third occurrence is the attempted rape of the wood nymph, Arethusa, which applies the hunting motif to describe the flight from her attacker. While Arethusa flees from Alpheus, Ovid presents how a woman's

refusal heightens the thrill of the male's pursuit. Accompanying this idea that refusal can act as encouragement are the dynamics of dominance associated with the male predator and the forced submission of the female prey. The poetic descriptions of powerful males hunting down beautiful females simultaneously highlights the victimization of women in rape cases and displays the imbalance in position between genders. This presentation of a gendered hierarchy, especially in relation to the hunting motif, was not isolated to the literary realm, but also became a great influence on later humanist, Renaissance and Baroque artistic depictions of *raptus*. As a result of these findings, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is shown to reveal specific references to the politics of Augustan Rome, with instances of rape in the myth that reflect *vis*, *iniuria* and *dignitas*, and also broader ideas of women as submissive beings to dominant males.

Moving forward into the medieval and Renaissance periods, Ovid's *carmen perpetuum* was eagerly translated, studied, and reproduced across the European continent. The greatest changes from the original text appear in the allegorical readings of the poem, which sought to apply Christian teachings to a pagan text by means of heavy editing. Omitting 'sinful' material such as homosexuality from the work provided a glimpse into the influence of studying classical material in a now Christian context, where ideas could be selected or disregarded according to their adherence with Church doctrine. Not all later editions underwent the same rigorous editing as the allegorical approach, in fact, almost the entirety of the text remains in the humanistic method of reading Ovid. This approach emphasized the importance of the original material due to the significance humanists placed on antiquity as a period of immense inspiration. Consequently, the preservation of Ovid's writings through humanist efforts also ensured ancient ideas of rape were preserved for later audiences to engage with in their writings and artistry. It is within this predominantly humanistic method that depictions of *raptus* from Ovidian myth appear in both the public and private spheres of late Renaissance society. Additionally, it is through the preservation of ancient perceptions on sexual violence and

specifically the prominent study of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* that these perspectives could be transferred to Bernini in an academic context and in the creations of near contemporary artists.

In the fourth chapter, focus was redirected away from literary interpretations and towards artistic representations of rape. The three pieces predating Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* were selected for their emotive style, their Ovidian subject matter, and their presentation of Ovidian like sensibilities with the use of hunting imagery. Findings for these three case studies include interdisciplinary connections between art, literature, and politics, as well as the continuation of Ovidian themes in representing rape. Similar to the parallels between Augustan legislation and the poet's text, one interpretation of Giambologna's *Rape of a Sabine* is how it mirrors the violence in Florence brought about by the instability from the Counter Reformation. Due to the Church's declining power both secular and papal officials sought to assert their influence through new laws, introducing a second interpretation of the sculpture as depicting the theft of Florence's freedoms. Although the most well-known account of this foundational tale of ancient Rome is credited to Livy and not Ovid, there is a clear connection between Giambologna's visual reference to contemporary events and Ovid's written references to contemporary reactions to Augustan legislation. In the analysis of both Titian's *Rape of Europa* and Mazza's *Rape of Ganymede*, additional insight into the eroticization of rape was uncovered. Through the depiction of powerful predators like the bull and eagle, contrasted against the soft curving forms of the victims, hunting imagery was brought to the fore. Both paintings' use of the aggressor in bestial form not only links these works to Ovid's descriptions in the *Metamorphoses*, but also emphasize the continued perspective of dominant males and submissive females. Another piece of evidence from this section, is the connection between the excitement flight adds to the hunter's chase, and the eroticization of the captured victim. This is most apparent in Europa's sprawled pose on the bull's back, and the gaze the cherubs direct towards her pubis. Even though the maiden is

depicted with a fearful expression mid-abduction, Titian incorporates sexual implications in the ominous clouds to imply Europa's pending sexual assault. By including a sensual stimulant to the sixteenth century viewer with Europa's beauty in her abduction, Titian successfully mirrors the eroticization applied to rape victims when using hunting imagery. This perception of rape possessing a sensual nature is also suggestive of the male-centred perspective used in the creation and broader reception of works discussing or depicting sexual violence that emphasize the predominant male position. The idea that a woman's resistance and tears made her more beautiful or sexually enticing to her rapist is identifiable in both Ovid's writing and sixteenth century art; two of the greatest influences on Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone*. Apart from the evidence regarding cultural perceptions of rape in this chapter, an additional discovery of artistic forms that Bernini likely drew from was made. The presence of curving serpentine forms, emotive facial expressions, and figures in physical conflict all reside in Giambologna, Titian, and Mazza's works, presenting visual cues used for *raptus* imagery. Finally, the expressiveness conveyed in these three works appear as forerunners for the intense emotion indicative of the baroque style, thereby enhancing their stylistic connection to and probable influence on Bernini's sculpture.

Reaching the summit of this study, a culmination of the ways in which rape was discussed, depicted, and viewed from Augustan Rome to Bernini's Italic Rome are embodied in the evaluation of the *Pluto and Persephone* in chapter five. While there is no definitive proof that Bernini directly read Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the Proserpina account within, his significant education, the ways in which the *Metamorphoses* was referred to as an 'artists bible' by modern scholars and how it is generally recognized that it was read by a number of contemporary artists makes this supposition quite likely. Additionally, the findings from the previous four chapters established a clear path for tracing Ovidian *raptus* motifs to Bernini's sculpture. As the legal chapter revealed, violence within the city states erupted as the result of

political instability. Bernini's powerful display of Pluto forcefully taking Persephone is not only visually reminiscent of Giambologna's construction, and may signify social comments of contemporary violence, but is also reflective of an ancient crime of marrying without "*conubium*/familial consent." This connection between first century Rome and the events depicted in the sculpture is evident later in Ovid's account of Proserpina, when Cyane berates Pluto and Ceres seeks Jupiter's judgement in her daughter's abduction. Further evidence for an Ovidian influence arises in Bernini's composition, in which its display context allowed it to be "read" from left to right by a viewer. The events of Proserpina's *raptus* are exhibited in a single piece as the viewer travels from Pluto to the raised Persephone, and down to the seated Cerberus, whose presence could symbolize her loss of freedom, maidenhood, or Christ's death and resurrection. Cerberus' symbolic presence emerges as an effective addition by Bernini that completes the visual journey of the Proserpina myth and demonstrates a Christian influenced allegorical reading. Moreover, specific visual cues such as Persephone's open mouth, appearing as if she is calling out for her mother, and the torn garment exposing her breast are recorded in the *Metamorphoses*. These marble depictions of Ovid's poetic descriptions strengthen the affiliations of the *Metamorphoses*' influence on Bernini's work, while the application of serpentine forms, Persephone's expression, and the figures in conflict are reminiscent of near contemporary portrayals of *raptus*. Finally, the artist's access to the Vatican and Borghese collections of antiquities during his early education familiarized Bernini with the sculptural forms and styles of the Roman past. Through scholarly discourses in his patron's court as well as Bernini's study of antiquities, his portrayal of Proserpina's rape incorporates both ancient and contemporary themes of Roman perceptions of sexual violence towards women. Considering the accumulation of the previously listed legal, literary, and artistic disciplines within Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone*, this single work of Baroque art not only

exemplifies thought processes from contemporary seventeenth century Roman society, but also stands as a piece of classical reception for Ovidian rape motifs.

With each chapter acting as a stepping-stone towards this end point, it is possible to identify the remarkably similar conceptualizations of rape in first century and seventeenth century Rome, and how they differ from a modern perspective. These similarities initially stem from Augustan, secular, and canon laws, which include the shared view that women were seen as property and rape was a crime against a household instead of an individual. Regardless of a woman's innocence or guilt in these proceedings, a female's status - and that of their family - was often negatively affected by the apparent loss of virtue. Further insight into the layered views of rape remain in the lines of Ovid and the humanist additions to his canon that were produced and consumed at large. Within these pages, the sexualization of female rape victims persists cross temporally through the hunting motif, which even pervades artistic depictions of *raptus*. Ovid's tension building descriptions of maidens being hunted down by their attackers are also portrayed in later paintings and sculptures, revealing a light-hearted idea that pursuing a woman is akin to a leisurely, albeit violent, pastime. Furthermore, the expressive renditions of Ovidian rape scenes in art parallel the written excitement of the hunter, offering a visual stimulant with varying textures for the viewer. This hunting imagery in literature and art demonstrates how sexual violence primarily targeted a female, objectified her by highlighting her beauty when struggling, and eroticized her sexual domination. The open interpretation of Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* that Warwick proposes, not only demonstrates the possible interpretations in legal, literary, and artistic disciplines from the ancient and post-Renaissance societies, but it also reflects the minimal changes to the reception of rape in both contexts.

The analogous perceptions of *raptus* from Ovid's to Bernini's Rome do not align with those of a modern society, where influences of gender theory, cultural changes, and women's movements have positively affected our understanding of sexual violence. Instead of

accrediting blame to a victim, or seeing rape as a sexual stimulant, modern depictions of sexual violence in media are utilized for an opposite effect. Even though our interpretation of Bernini's sculpture may warrant a more sympathetic reading than those before it, this study can be used as a piece of classical reception to discover the almost identical perspectives of sexual violence from both first and seventeenth century Rome, and how Bernini was able to immortalize Ovidian *raptus* motifs in stone.

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Appendix

Figure 1. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Pluto and Persephone* (1621-1622). Galleria Borghese, Rome. Image from Artstor Slide Gallery.

Figure 2. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Apollo and Daphne* (1622-24). Galleria Borghese, Rome. Image from Artstor Slide Gallery.

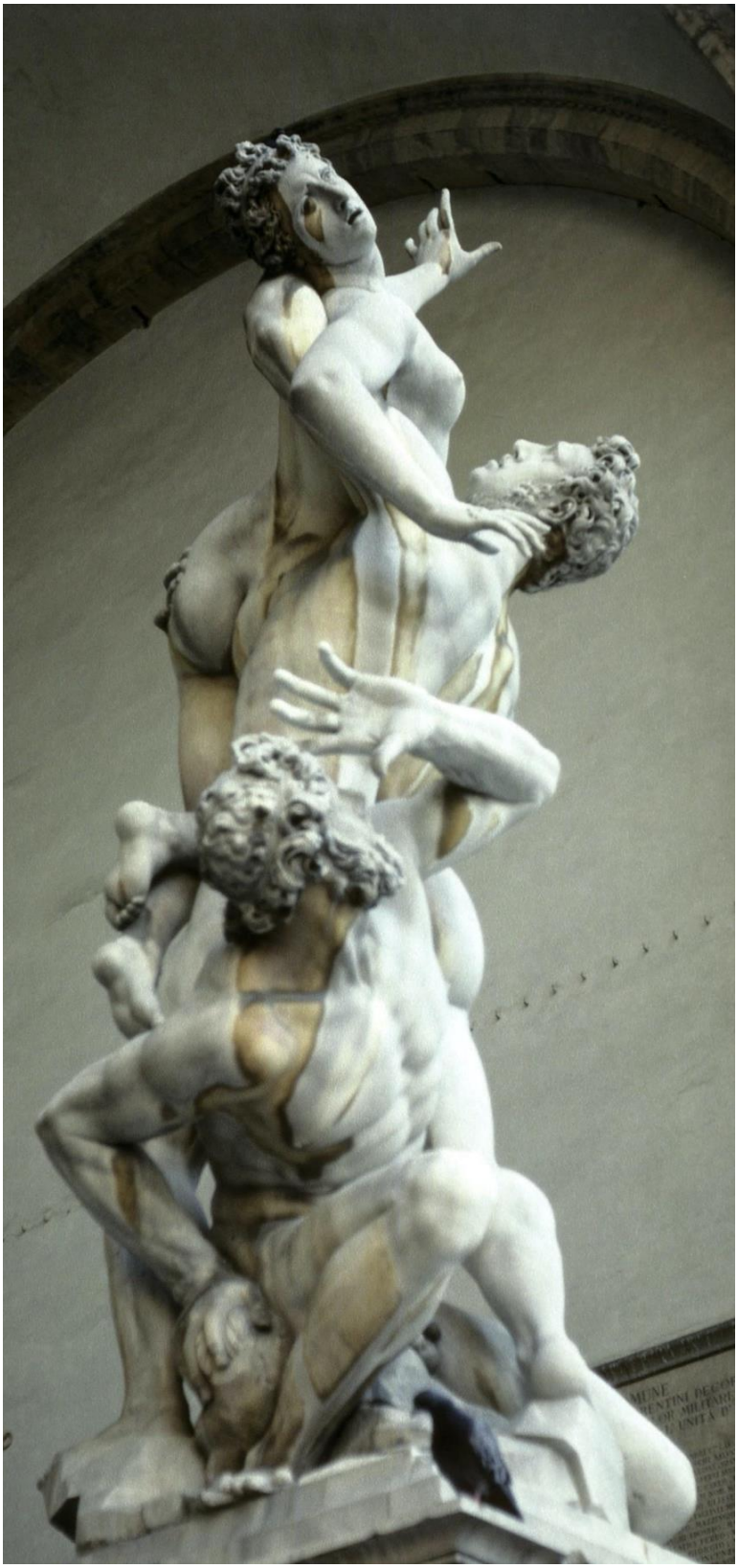

Figure 3. Giambologna, *Rape of a Sabine* (1579-1583). Piazza della Signoria, Florence. Image by UC Berkeley: Visual Resources.

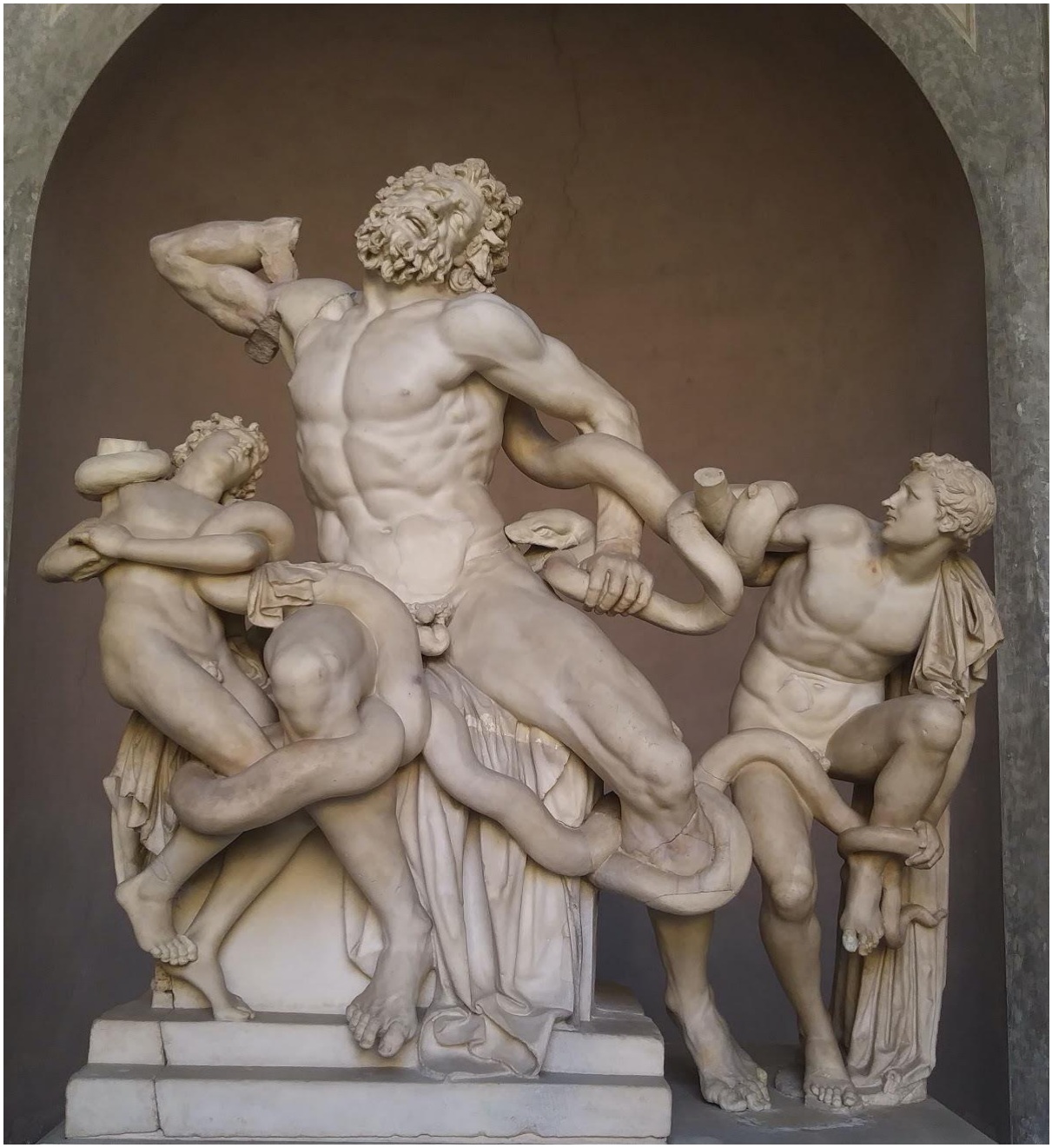

Figure 4. Agesander, Polydorus, and Athenodorus, *Laocoon* (1st century BCE or CE). Vatican, Belvedere Collection. Image by Moira Scully.

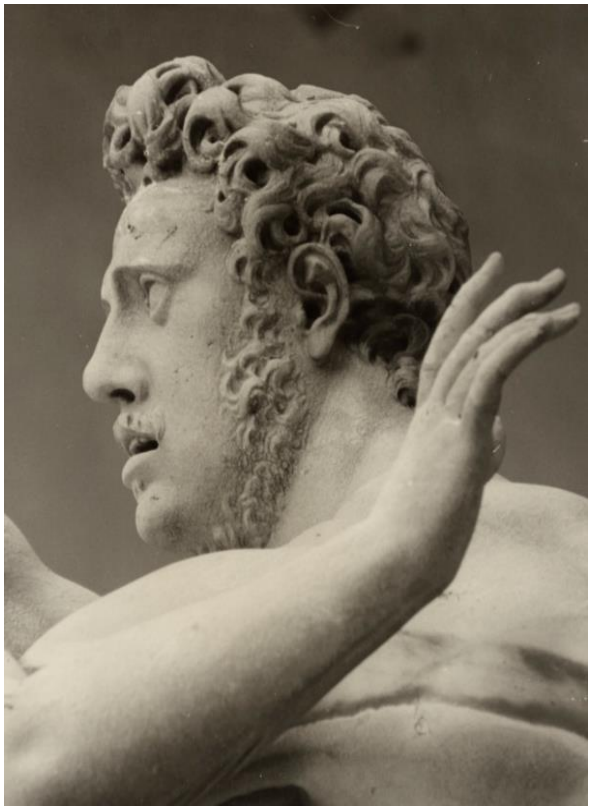

Figure 5. Giambologna, *Rape of a Sabine* (1579-1583). Detail. Piazza della Signoria, Florence. Image by Scala Archives.

Figure 6. *Bust of Emperor Caracalla* (212-217 CE). Berlin State Museums, Berlin. Image by Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

Figure 7. Giambologna, bronze plaque on pedestal of *Rape of a Sabine* (1579-1583). Piazza della Signoria, Florence. Image by Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 8. Titian, *Rape of Europa* (1559-62). Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston. Image by Art History Survey Collection.

Figure 9. Damiano Mazza, *Rape of Ganymede* (1575). National Gallery of London, London. Image by Artstor Slide Gallery.

Figure 10. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Pluto and Persephone* (1621-22). Galleria Borghese, Rome. Image by Creative Commons.

Figure 11. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Pluto and Persephone* (1621-22). Three Quarter View. Galleria Borghese, Rome. Image by Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 12. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Pluto and Persephone* (1621-22). Persephone View. Galleria Borghese, Rome. Image by Galleria Borghese.

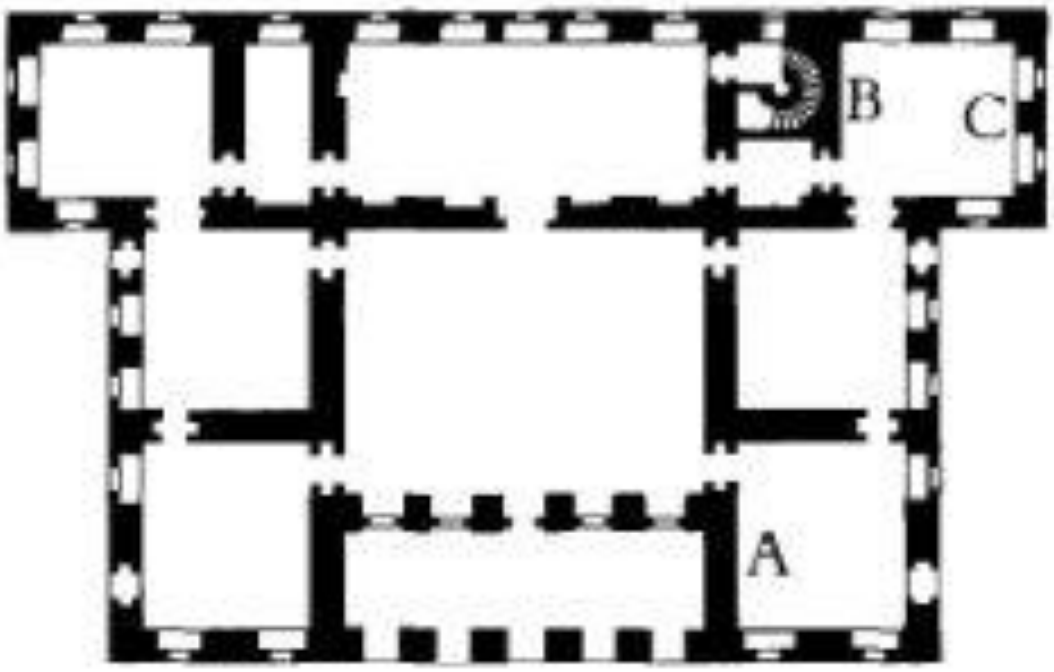

Figure 13. *Floor plan of the Villa Borghese*. The label B, beside the spiralling staircase, indicates where Bernini's *Pluto and Persephone* was originally displayed. Image by Joy Kenseth.