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ADDRESSING ASH:
RITUALS OF TRANSLATION AND GRIEF IN ANNE CARSON'S *NOX*

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the World Literature Program
DePauw University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the
Degree of the Bachelor of Arts

by
Peper Langhout

December 2018

*All my deepest thanks to Professor Keith Nightenhelser for the opportunity to share this
obsession for nearly a full calendar year.
This paper would be altogether unsavory without his assistance.*

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ANNE CARSON'S WORKS AND THEIR NICKNAMES

Not an exhaustive list of her works, but the primary works which exhausted me in the creation of this paper. For purposes of in-line citation, they will be referred to by the following shortening.

Eros the Bittersweet (1986)	E
Glass, Irony, and God (1995)	GIG
Men in the Off Hours (2001)	M
Grief Lessons: Four Plays by Euripides (2006)	GL
An Oresteia (2009)	O
Nox (2010)	N

This project investigates the activities of translation and mourning as ritual acts in Anne Carson's *Nox*, a multimedia poem including a translation and reception of Catullus's poem 101. Carson, as a literary critic and poet, as well as a classicist and translator, uses multimodal strategies of addressing the tensions between social rituals of mourning and intimate grief by making translation an allegory for the grieving process. Through *Nox*, I inspect a number of interrelated tensions between emotional interior and expressed exterior as finely controlled in both form and content. By using a culturally embedded, referential elegiac form to put a very particular "frame around" unbounded personal grief, Carson demonstrates that grieving is "akin" to history and translation, as they are motivated by the same rituals. *Nox* began, almost a decade before its publication, as a personal scrapbook that reconstructs Carson's brother Michael. Its pages are an uncanny reproduction—a Xerox—of that original book, ink bleed and all. It is an intensely personal document serving a quite public purpose—to share, to engage, and to openly grieve a person lost. The tensions between what one feels and how one can share it are introduced by the act of its publication. This paper describes *those ways in which* Carson chose to represent and enact these tensions and induces the reader to perform this grieving. The turn to classical precedent is a poetic tool that implicates the ways in which humans deal with the irrational, the painful, the traumatic and the irreducible. Translating 101, an elegy to someone else's brother, tears at our understandings of personal grief and classical translation at their seams.

1691

The overtakelessness of those
Who have accomplished Death
Majestic is to me beyond
The majesties of Earth.

The soul her "Not at Home"
Inscribes upon the flesh—
And takes her fair aerial gait
Beyond the hope of touch.

Emily Dickinson

“Grief and rage—you need to contain that, to put a frame around it, where it can play itself out without you or your kin having to die.” (GL 7)

Anne Carson’s preface to her translation of three of Euripides’s tragedies, entitled *Grief Lessons* (2006), examines a particular function of certain literary forms to address the tenacity of unbounded emotion. Drama is used, Carson contends, to set acceptable and coherent bounds around human conflict in order to present and imply resolution. In the simulation of action, we can allow emotion to “play itself out.” The irony of this statement about exegesis in tragic-dramatic form will frame our discussion of Carson’s use of elegy in *Nox* (2010). Through an elegy, Carson works with a structure where one’s kin *does* have to die, or did in fact die; elegy, then, is an attempt to “put a frame around” personal grief and suffering with a method equally as controlled as the tragic-dramatic form.

Nox began, almost before its publication, as a personal scrapbook that reconstructs Carson’s late brother Michael. Its pages are an uncanny reproduction—a Xerox—of that original book, ink bleed and all. It is an intensely personal document serving a quite public purpose—to share, to engage, and to openly grieve a person lost. The tensions between what one feels and how one can share it are introduced by the act of its publication. This paper describes *those ways in which* Carson chose to represent and enact these tensions, and induces the reader to perform this grieving.

Nox is a postmodern, multimodal search for form, utilizing classical precedent that problematizes the relationship between accepted expression and inexplicable grieving. Specifically, *Nox* addresses tensions between the affective reality of subjects and their social, structured methods of coping with grief. As a classicist and a translator, Carson works extensively in the field of embedded cultural and linguistic interaction and production; much of *Nox* examines how grief serves to bridge these gaps across time and space, across history and culture, and across the self and society. Through *Nox*, I will inspect a number of interrelated tensions between emotional interior and expressed exterior as finely controlled in both form and content. In using a culturally embedded, referential elegiac form to put a very particular “frame around” unbounded personal grief, Carson demonstrates that grieving is “akin” (N 13) to history and translation, as they are motivated by the same rituals.

I: NOTE ON METHODOLOGY; HOW DO WE CONJURE A RITUAL?

How do we put words to the things beyond us? The methods humans have used throughout history to negotiate great emotion remain heavily codified, socially maintained, and fervently expressive. *Nox* inspects loss through selective form and content and attempts to find commonality between ancient ritual and modern methods of coping. A sense of loss, or incompleteness, pervades this work, from the series of fragments and questions left unanswered to the pages simply left blank. As readers, we have to make sense of why and how Carson deals with loss on paper through content and gaps, as the overriding narrative refers to a particular distance between the mourner and the mourned even before death; Michael lived abroad with limited contact for the majority of his adult life, shrouding his life in deep shadows. There's a deeper question at play, how do we mourn someone we love but may not know? *Nox* mourns a loss more permanent than memory, one with substantial epistemological gaps as well as emotional ones. This sort of grief is "irremediable" (N 33), so what is a classicist to do? A first step may be to look back.

In Roman times, women's voices were restricted in public, and their expressions of grief were even further constrained to specific tones and pitches. Carson writes in her 1995 essay "The Gender of Sound" of the social threat of unrestrained female grieving, referring to a Greek lawgiver Charondas's regulation of women's funerary laments in 600 BCE. Laws were passed specifying the "location, time, duration, personnel, choreography, musical content and verbal content" (GIG 121) of these funerary laments;

public utterances of disorder, terror and grief have long been enclosed within cultural institutions for the sake of maintaining social order. Walter Burkert, in his primer on the mutually constitutive forms of Ancient Greek myth and ritual in *Greek Religion* (1985), writes that in antiquity, ritual was considered “in its outward aspect...a programme of demonstrative acts to be performed in set sequence and often at a set time and place—sacred insofar as every omission or deviation arouses deep anxiety” (Burkert 5). Control is evoked by a set of steps within prescribed circumstances, replicated later in poetic form as particular structure, meter, poetic diction, and syntactic norms, so when poetry was read aloud, its delivery would maintain the essence of that original “demonstrative act.” The purpose of the crosspollination of Greek poetry and religious ritual was to give individual myths—myths within a dense, evolving, oral web of constantly-changing contemporary culture—a fixed and memorable form, the recitation of these poems “became, in turn, an essential part of every festival” even preceding written culture and history (Burkert 6). Carson writes in the preface of her translation of Euripides’ *Herakles* that mythology is a ritual way of “reckoning with both cliché and paradox encountered in real life” (GL 13); rituals were media in which the tensions between personal emotion and collective belief could be negotiated. The constraining form and circumstance of the ritual, evoked in times of chaos, need and joy, is embedded deeply in the early purposes and forms of ancient poetry. Ritual practices straddle the transition from oral to written, prehistorical to historical, magical to mythological realities; in essence, the ritual is a kind of language in itself, just as culturally embedded and contested as the ancient Greek and Latin that Carson seeks to translate.

As *Nox* reminds us, it is “Always comforting to assume there is a secret behind what torments you” (N 95). So what would constitute a modern ritual, in a secular age devoid of the complicated web of Greek and Roman superstition, mythology, and magic in which poem 101 was initially written? Burkert reminds us that, at its most basic, “ritual is an action divorced from its primary practical context which bears a semiotic character...it signals and creates situations of anxiety in order to overcome them...in this way it helps to overcome real situations of crisis by substituting diverted activity” for the circumstances in which it is evoked (Burkert 54). Ritual is the *going through the motions*, the acts that provide solace without tangible change of the provoking crisis, for the assuagement of the participant(s). The ritual provides a space where anxiety and emotion can be acted out in a structured fashion in order to both establish socially acceptable responses to crisis as well as perform a semiotic function for the individual participant in the wake of affective disturbance.

A note, before we move on, about bereavement. Joan Didion is one of the most famous recent American writers on the grief of losing a loved one; *The Year of Magical Thinking* (2005) describes the loss of a husband as an experience that shakes even one’s sense of identity: “We might expect if the death is sudden to feel shock. We do not expect this shock to be oblitative, dislocating to both body and mind” (Didion 188). This shattering emotive state that follows a death is what provokes that “magical thinking,” in which our very understanding of perception is confronted with absurd mortality. There’s a misconception, Didion explains, about grieving, “We might expect that we will be

prostrate, inconsolable, crazy with loss. We do not expect to be literally crazy, cool customers who believe their husband is about to return and need his shoes” (Didion 188);¹ facing the irreducible, all sense breaks down and the rituals of closure become ever more present. Turning to grief specifically, the modern mourning ritual of our time is the funeral-burial (or cremation) with a grave and a headstone. We are told very soon across the span of *Nox* that Carson, like Catullus, was absent for the formal rituals for the brother. As described near the midpoint of the book, the rituals of burial held significance for the writer; unlike her parents, whom she cremated and “then buried [their] ashes under a stone cut with their names,” Michael’s widow has his body “cast in the sea... There is no stone and as I say he had changed his name” (N 105). This lack of ceremony, and assignation of identity, is what initially commands a ritual response, and where the initial parallel to Catullus and the delayed speaking over the grave begins. The lack of ritual over the brother’s death calls for proper burial, despite the lack of a grave over which to speak and a definite understanding of the identity of the brother lost.

Let’s set the basic boundaries of *Nox*’s ritual, then. The translation of poem 101 begins in coughs and bursts: we are presented first with the text of poem 101 as a whole (N 7), and then across the book, we receive simulated lexical entries working through the poem one word at a time. This interrupting dictionary is a purposeful, typographical

¹ *The Year of Magical Thinking*, interestingly, also reports on socially prescriptive grieving rituals. Didion reports from a 1922 book of etiquette, about specific steps and patterns one must take in the period of mourning: “The tone, one of unflinching specificity, never flags. The emphasis remains on the practical. The bereaved must be urged to ‘sit in a sunny room,’ preferably one with an open fire. Food, but ‘very little food,’ may be offered on a tray, tea, coffee, bouillon, a little thin toast, a poached egg. Milk, but only heated milk: ‘Cold milk is bad for someone who is already over-chilled.’ [...] When someone dies, I was taught growing up in California, you bake a ham. You drop it by the house. If the family is Catholic you also go to the rosary but you do not wail or keen in any other way demand the attention of the family.” (Didion 58, 61).

deception; these lexical entries are doctored in part, and while they are only sometimes reliable Latin, they almost always contain some declension of *nox* in poetic terms in their sample usages.² We're working from left to right, as if we're reading a bilingual edition of poetry with the foreign nonsense on one side and the English revelation on the other, facing back to back for reference. To open the ritual, Carson gives us poem 101 as a whole, in the original Latin; then, the first word *multas* introduces the circumstance and the prompt: "*multa nox*: late in the night, perhaps too late" and in our right hand, "I wanted to fill my elegy with light of all kinds. But death makes us stingy. There is nothing more to be expended on that, we think, he's dead. Love cannot alter it. Words cannot add to it." (N 8, 9). The book proceeds from here, with each word of poem 101 methodically exploded into a variety of both nonsense and meaning with each fabricated lexical entry—making a coherent translation of poem 101 seem increasingly impossible—and the commentary struggling to reject its initial claim that filling an elegy no longer requires words to be expended on it. The tension between the left and right hand provides an ongoing, dramatic process of assemblage as the translation comes in and out of focus. The spatial composition of the book constitutes a specific interaction and exposure to its fragments, using photographs, paintings, and scrapbooked verse to guide the eye in a surprisingly ordered manner through poem 101. Though at first glimpse it seems erratic, the sequence is equally controlled; the dictionary entries are not on every left-hand page, instead only intervening at particular points in the reader's procedure through the right-hand narrative, which is numbered despite its chronological

² More on the appearances of *nox* in Appendix B.

disorder.³ The reader encounters poem 101 at an intentional pace, with blank pages and white and black paint providing either “muteness” or pause, likening a sort of meter. Carson has written on the effect of muteness both in poetic form as well as in the translation process in her essay for the literary magazine *A Public Space* entitled “Variations on the Right to Remain Silent,” in which she approaches “silences” found in translation. She writes about untranslatable words in reference to a section of the *Odyssey* in which Homer refers to gods’ language:

...the word stops itself. Almost as if you were presented with a portrait of some person—not a famous person but someone you might recognize if you put your mind to it—and as you peer closely you see, in the place where the face should be, a splash of white paint. Homer has splashed white paint not on the faces of his gods but on their word.
(Variations)

Literal paint and considerable white space are used for purposes of composition and pacing in *Nox*, providing sparsity and pause. If for no other reason, these mutenesses help control the reader’s pace and meter of the reading process, along with directing attention to facing pages by way of composition.

It’s also important to note that this set sequence is meant to be seen through as a discrete project by the reader; the physical form of *Nox* is printed on a single piece of paper that simultaneously is folded into individual steps while composed of a full, ordered sequence to be completed from beginning to end. In this way, Carson simulates the poem’s fine meter and structure through control over the reader’s encounter with the project of translating poem 101 *as a process*, situating the reader as a constitutive actor alongside herself in the evocation of the “starry lad he was” (N 9). Carson sets *Nox* in

³ See Appendix A for a coded layout of the sequence and pacing of these elements, distinguished by typography.

motion with collage as her mourning ritual and translational praxis. As a cultural practice, ritual allows the subject to exact control over the uncontrollable or unexplainable: *Nox* engages *as* ritual mourning via its elegiac form as well as *in the study of* ritual as described in its passages on history and translation. *Nox* contains and commands a process of assemblage, as the book resembles a codex and replicates the collaged innards of a real scrapbook; the act of reading this book implies a physical and literary project of making sense of a collection of artifacts. This conscious process allows the reader to take active part in the ritual of translating poem 101 as a reflection on the past while situated firmly in the present, a “Single motion which departed, leading itself by the hand” (N 65). The use of fragmentation and accumulation, text and imagery, physical form and composition, are methods of control in Carson’s poetic mode in real space. By addressing the content of grief using all the rhetorical and real tools at her disposal, Carson structurally fashions *Nox* as a facsimiled ritual rather than a simple watershed of mourning.

Within this structure, the content of *Nox* directly interacts with the processes of ritual. The ritual of translating poem 101 involves a larger conversation in which Carson has been continually engaged across her career as a poet and classicist. Over the course of Carson’s corpus, from her first book *Eros the Bittersweet* (1986) to her most recent translation of Euripides’ *The Bacchae* (2017), the problems of translation have framed her methodological and affective approaches to modern reception of Greek and Latin

poetry and prose. Carson is undoubtedly much more familiar with Roman funerary rites than she was when she first encountered poem 101 in her high school Latin class – her corpus engages with the significance of cultural context on whether translation is accomplished well or poorly. This may explain the dynamic imparted by her claim halfway through *Nox* that, “I came to think of translating as a room, not exactly an unknown room, where one gropes at a light switch. I guess it never ends” before continuing that similarly, “A brother never ends. I prowl him” (N 113) in her slowly condensing version of poem 101 (note: we are only at *indigne*, barely halfway into the sixth line of ten). Both the formation of a tentative translation and a tentative memory of her brother, Michael, follow similar processes of “groping,” an assembly process she both examines and performs across *Nox*.

Carson refers solidly to her field when she presents translation as a search for form and sense. Inherent in any translation is the knowledge that, as Steiner writes, “words are not the embodiments of invariant mental operations and fixed meanings” (Steiner 97), but exist within cultural and linguistic contexts that are in constant flux. To assign each word of *Nox* a dictionary entry provides a window into her subjective translational praxis, but also makes clear reference to readers’ expectation that the meaning of poem 101, or any oft-translated work, is fixed or altogether objective. After all, to take poem 101 word-by-word is *not* Carson’s translational process; *Nox* requires the fragments and personal/cultural contexts provided by the photographs, handwritten notes and letters, paintings, and other poetic tools employed in both form and content. Carson writes in her *Eros the Bittersweet* about the limitation of written letters, for

example, “Letters stand oblique to the action and unfold a three-cornered relation: A writes to C about B, or B reads a letter from C in the presence of A, and so on” (E 91). The incorporation of the letters from Michael invokes this intertextual dialogue, between the “characters” of *Nox* as well as the readers ourselves. The incorporation, for example, of the collage of foreign stamps (N 31) and the fragment, “In an ordinary envelope (it was written).” in reference to the only letter Michael wrote to their mother (N 41), serve to dramatize the tolling emotional and epistemological gap involved in mourning Michael. The reader is intimately involved in the correspondence between Michael, who is mourning the death of his own lover in the distant past (N 55), the emotional exigence of their mother’s reply, who simply wants a reply address to “mail a box for Christmas” (N 67) and ends up taking his muteness as a sign that he has died, Carson’s retrieval of the letters at the time of the *mother*’s death (N 27), and the final presentation on the page in exposition. The reader encounters this exposition only in its final form: it bears the reminder that the construction of this “three-cornered dialogue” was only revealed retrospectively in the publication of *Nox*. Interspersed, mind you, with photographs of the estranged mother and son, as well as the dialogue of a barren phone conversation in which Carson reveals to her brother that their mother has passed, the assemblage presented is carefully constructed to reveal the relationship of each family member to the other and to evoke the strangeness, the distance of their connections. Their conversations really were no more than fragments, and are presented to us as such in order to assemble and judge as we will. She reminds us, “there is a triangular circuit running from the writer to the reader to the characters in the story; when its circuit-points connect, the difficult

pleasure of the paradox can be felt like an electrification” (E 91); building off of this foundational, evocative connection of the voyeurism of watching private dialogue, the personal context of the events surrounding her translation of 101 is poetically revealed. In a similar manner to that which Carson underwent to reconstruct Michael from fragments, we are engaged in this process as well.

As much as any ritual involves both cultural and personal context, contemporary thought on translation corroborates the inevitable intimate involvement of the subjective context of the translator in the production of a translated work. George Steiner’s *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (1975) serves as a suitable primer on the relevance of intercultural communication and fluidity in the art of translation; *After Babel* maps out un/translatability as a perennial “motion and debate.” According to Steiner, the limits of objectivity inherent in language have been considered an imposition of translation, as the intervention of a second voice—that of the language and pen of the translator—has been perceived as an invasion upon the voice of the original work. Attempts at controlling the intervention of the translator’s voice, through containing personal and cultural subjectivity, have led translation theorists to seek “three universals within the phonological, the grammatical, and the semantic—but even in setting bounds, we are making prescriptive rules of description” (Steiner 99). Deep in the realm of literary theory, we see echoes of the issue of “I make a guess, I make a guess” (N 29) for the original writer’s meaning often becomes a matter of style. Walter Benjamin explains in his *The Task of the Translator* that translation ultimately serves the purpose of expressing the innermost relationship of language to time and space—that translation is

only possible because of common resonance across human experience, but not necessarily across those phonological, grammatical and semantic divisions. Finding resonance in translation requires the intense and intimate process of acting within and across the changes that language undergoes across time and space (Benjamin). The task of the translator, and the gauntlet Carson grasps with typography, photography, paint and pen, is to find an appropriate form by which to produce in English an “echo of the original” rather than “superficial...imitation” (Benjamin). Instead of wholesale rejection of a translation of poem 101 that can perfectly imitate the Latin, then, Carson hopes to present an entirely different process altogether. By way of its intimacy and subjectivity, this process of translation is a ritual the reader is set to undergo alongside Carson with the conscious understanding that the work should be in cultural and semantic “harmony” with the original. Carson refers to the fact that “Human words have no main switch” (N 115) at many points across the poetic narrative; rather, the project of *Nox* is to show the ritual catharsis of finding resonance and perhaps harmony with the other’s grief. As the English poem 101 materializes, we encounter “Few circles, other lesser circles, but yet circles” as we circumambulate a more intimate sense of the original loss (N 27); Carson simulates the feeling of pacing in that darkened room, in endless circles of grief and not-knowing. The literal and linguistic unfolding of poem 101 points to both the intention and the process undergone by a translator in a process of assemblage. The metaphor of the room of translation is evoked by the lack of cathartic product beyond the process, Carson remarks, “In one sense it is a room I can never leave, perhaps dreadful for that. At the same time, a place composed entirely of entries...It is not astonishing, entry” (N 121); the

play on the word “entry” to mean both “the word ‘entry’ as used of the arrangement of the contents of a lexicon” (N 117) in reference to the left-hand pages as well as an entry into that darkened room of translation pervades the inner dialogue of the book. For the assemblage is fundamentally a translatory dialogue, from left to right and back again, performing a “luminous, big, shivering, discandied, unrepentant, barking web of them that hangs in your mind when you turn back to the page you were trying to translate” (N 115). The word “discandied” remains the most evocative descriptor of this web; a word from Shakespeare’s *Antony and Cleopatra*, “discandied” is dynamic and affective. Susan Stewart hangs onto this word as a metonym for the larger goals of modern elegy, writing:

When Carson uses “discandied,” a word Shakespeare turns to in *Antony and Cleopatra* to express the dissolution of sweetness that accompanies disillusionment, the reader feels a certain *frisson* of recognition comparable to the insights Carson seems to have had by tracing, in retrospect, the revealing postures and shadows in family photographs. Discandied: the word persists, like the proper name of her brother, Michael, a messenger without a message. (Stewart)

I’ll extend that claim—“discandied” implies more than the past postures of people, but rather their present attitudes on mourning. There is a “dissolution of sweetness” in *Nox* wrapped up in its project of mourning, and its incomplete project of poem 101’s translation.

The multi-vaulted *Nox* provides an experience of the ritual-translation as shared with the reader. The further step is to present a metaphor on the ways translation has been a ritual undergone by our culture in order to assemble and make sense of the past.

Inherent in any modern classical reception is the language of reference and reverence.

Steiner writes of the turn to classical precedent as a ritual act, practiced by Western culture since at least Catullus’s time. In *After Babel*, he writes of classical reception:

As every generation retranslates the classics, out of a vital compulsion for immediacy and precise echo, so every generation uses language to build its own resonant past. At moments of historical stress, mythologies of the ‘true past’ follow on each other at such speed that entirely different perspectives coexist and blur at the edges. (Steiner 30)

While the products of translating classics are replaced by newer editions as the needs and desires of contemporary readers change, the constant act of *reaching back* persists. The “resonant past” is made resonant by virtue of its constant resurrection, so in effect the desire for resonance is a cultural ritual made significant by its process rather than its product. *Nox* implicates this dynamic of ritual—a process more necessary than its product—to provide structure and meaning in chaos. Carson reflects on the limits of translating the deeply affective, “Prowling the meanings of a word, prowling the history of a person, no use expecting a flood of light” or final, conclusive “true past” or true translation of poem 101. Steiner writes that this is a feature inherent in translation but also in speech: that no statement at all is repeatable because time, and therefore cultural context however minutely, has passed. Therefore, translation is “to command unrepeatability at the second and third hand” (Steiner 256), never assuming full control or definitive product. *Nox*’s poem 101, then, is no more than a critical reading, and a depiction of the process of accepting that this may be the only possible product of such an endeavor.

The speaker as well as the reader of *Nox* quickly finds that absolute coherence is not entirely possible in the reconstruction of Michael through poem 101. The book describes a process, not a single result, and to describe the ritual of *Nox* as a closed system would be inaccurate. The speaker recognizes this, too, in the “muteness” of her

brother: in her efforts to understand him, he “refuses to be ‘cooked’ (a modern historian might say) in my transactional order. To put this another way, there is something that facts lack” (N 23) and there are intangible limits to her reconstruction. Accordingly, in all ritual, the performer requires a faith despite the “overtakelessness” inherent in their actions, as to dance for rain is to ignore the drought. “Overtakelessness” admits impossibility, the cannot-be-got-round. The speaker recognizes she is engaged in talking with the mute, a joint endeavor made stubbornly impossible; as her brother refused to share his life, he will surely continue in death. Carson includes the etymology of “mute,” positing that it is onomatopoeically referring to, “a certain fundamental opacity of human being, which likes to show the truth by allowing it to be seen hiding” as Michael does (N 23). His muteness “resists” the speaker’s attempts to be understood directly, both in life and death. This muteness is the thing which “cannot be got round,” or the overtakelessness which remains beyond facts and cannot be known. As the sacred phoenix of Hekataios’s myth is aware of the “mechanism in which he is caught,” but continues in the burial ritual (N 15), the speaker must carry her myth of Michael despite the fact that she recognizes it as an endeavor without true closure.

Carson admits, “There is no possibility I can think my way into his muteness. God wanted to make nonsense of ‘overtakelessness’ itself” (N 157), expressing doubt at the utility of *Nox* as a whole. This passage 8.5 is almost illegibly smeared with black marks; at this point, the speaker cannot decide whether “overtakelessness” is reason alone to reject the mourning ritual. Charles Stang writes on “overtakelessness” in *Nox* as a pointer to the emotional distance between Carson and her brother that remains unresolved. Stang

characterizes the mentions of “overtakelessness” as an additional commentary on muteness, writing, “Carson never really delivers a translation of 101, but offers a literal—we could say ‘dumb’ or ‘mute’—rendition... She has no more luck with her history of Michael than with her translation of Catullus” (Stang). Stang contends that the literal translation only serves to prove the impossibility of reaching out to Michael, that his contact remains “as opaque as Catullus’s Latin” (Stang). I argue that the expectation that the mourning ritual will bear a more complete understanding of Michael would be equivalent to assuming that Carson could produce a most definitive or accurate translation of poem 101; it is the endeavor to overtake that is meaningful.

If the translation is never truly finished, or as Carson reminds us, “I guess it never ends” (N 113), what does the ritual bear? The room of translation “composed entirely of entries,” the “groping in the dark” simulated across *Nox*, could bear significant doubt in the utility of rituals. The climax of the book, in fact, occurs far after the full translation of poem 101 is revealed, but not before the lexical entries end. Section 9.1 of the narrative stream introduces the first explicit mention of the word “ritual.” The pace of the dialogue quickens considerably in the final pages, with the photographic fragments becoming smaller and more scattered, with more condensed typology and the triplicate of *atque* on the left-hand pages, hastening the reader to leap forward. 9.1 begins,

Light and shadows fall past us now we are racing along, now it is evening [approaching *nox*], we pass the school, pass the lake, pass the graveyard and Bald Rock rising behind—like people sailing somewhere and there were rituals to perform at fixed places, certain times, but it broke off, we couldn’t get anything to work, again and again we gave up frustrated, threw the victims in the sea. Kept sailing. (N 163) [Bracketed comment mine.]

Mourning and translation fuse into the rituals that “broke off,” but the metaphor holds. The rituals we perform are not for their product, but the resonance we find in the process itself; likewise, the process of translating poem 101 allows the reader to share the act of mourning in a way that a lone presentation of the final product would never replicate. Full catharsis is never fully reached, as mourning never properly ends, but its practice is necessary. The following segment 10.1 replies, “When Herodotus has got as far as he can go in explaining an historical event or situation he will stop with a remark like this: . . . So much for what is said by the Egyptians: let anyone who finds such things credible make use of them” (N 167, 169). The reader, now at the caution of Herodotus, may make use of this ritual if *they* find it credible; the baton is handed off. The interrupting entry, tellingly, is *fletu*, “weeping, lamentation; *nemo funera fletu faxit* no one makes a funeral with wailing” alone (N 168). Rituals are often not sufficient to carry oneself through mourning, but they are necessary to make a funeral; Michael’s actual funeral closes the book. Didion writes of the breaking down of ritual; she remembers a dinner conversation with a theologian about the ritual being a form of faith, recalling, “My reaction was unexpressed but negative, vehement, excessive even to me. Later I realized that my immediate thought had been: *But I did the ritual. I did it all... And it still didn’t bring him back*” (Didion 43). Just as the decision to bury, burn, or eat one’s dead is a constructed ritual by which we cope with loss, the speaker and reader must participate in the ritual of putting Michael and a translation of poem 101 to rest. *Nox* is the history, the elegy, and the epitaph; the physical volume as a whole resembles the “stone” Michael was not buried by (N 105) as Carson attempts to properly represent her memory of him in an

English 101. Finally, though the nominal rites of *saekken* have been said and his body has been put to rest, “he refuses, he is in the stairwell, he disappears” (N 187) into “overtakelessness” and will never allow himself to be known. The ritual of *Nox* ends acknowledging the necessity and limitations of grief and translation in the exculpation of meaning as a ritual for the participant, not a final product or resurrection.

II: ELEGY AS CONTAINER;

ASKING, ASKING “HOW CAN IT BE?”

Through this translation of 101, Carson presents *Nox* as an elegy along the way. The reader is introduced to the multiple functions of *Nox* in stepwise fashion. Upon opening the casing, it is immediately clear that the product we hold is a Xerox of something. The secondary title page does not bear the formal title, *Nox*, but rather the overlay of typed “NOX FRATER NOX” upon handwritten “MICHAEL MICHAEL MICHAEL...” (N 5) to introduce the work, with the adjoining page with the MICHAELs bled through (N 6) to signal its original form as a book. The scrapbook itself was a simpler construction, not the folded codex but rather a handmade collection of artifacts (Wachtel); this transformation took place at the time of publication, as its entry into the sphere of public reception—a meaningful change in venue as I’ll discuss soon—bears *Nox* a different structure. The third page presents 101 (N 7), soaked in tea to evoke the weathered pages of an old Latin dictionary,⁴ and the translation is set in motion with *multas* (N 8). Next in the sequence is the declaration that *Nox* is an attempt at, “my elegy” (N 9). Recall that the primary project of *Nox*, at least superficially, is to translate an elegy under intimate circumstances: “I wanted to fill my elegy with light of all kinds. But death makes us stingy” (N 9). We can take this declaration one of two ways: that “my elegy” refers to

⁴ “Wachtel: You even soaked some of the typescript in tea to make it look like parchment.

Carson: I did.

Wachtel: Why? You made the book in the year 2000. Why did you want it to look ancient?

Carson: It was a fancy of mine to make the left-hand pages, the Catullus pages, look like an old dictionary because when I was learning these languages I always had very old, faded dictionaries with yellowed pages. The experience of reading Latin, to me, is an old dusty page you could hardly make out. So I thought, Well, I’ll just stain them with tea and it’ll look magical. And they did look magical for about twenty-four hours, and then the tea dried and it all turned white again.” (Wachtel)

Carson's personal translation of poem 101, or more broadly to present *Nox* as an elegy altogether. I believe there's use in examining both possibilities as valid readings, and a further inspection of the text reveals both the internal project of translation and the larger framework of *Nox* as serving an elegiac mode. J. Kates points out that even poem 101 is not, by label, an elegy; rather, "An elegy seems too public a word for the words at hand, ten lines, catalogued as *carmen*—a song" (Kates). So the decision made in 1.0 that this, whatever *this* is, could be an "elegy with light of all kinds," is a declaration of intent to some degree (N 9).

As for the choice of poem 101 specifically, Carson reflects, "I have loved this poem [101] since the first time I read it in high school Latin class and I have tried to translate it a number of times. Nothing in English can capture the passionate, slow surface of a Roman elegy...I never arrived at the translation I would have liked to do of poem 101" (N 113). For her, the description of poem 101 as a fairly authoritative example of the Roman elegy form is a clear issue for translation. Carson has published interpretations of Catullus before, and has not always focused on dialogue with the original form. In her *Men in the Off Hours* (2000),

"Catullus buries his brother."

Multitudes brushed past me oceans I don't know.

Brother wine milk honey flowers.

Flowers milk honey brother wine.

How long does it take the sound to die away?

I a brother.

Cut out carefully the words for wine milk honey flowers.

Drop them into a bag.

Mix carefully.

Pour onto your dirty skeleton.

what sound? (M 45)

The emotional exigence of this rendition is tempered with a focus on the ritualistic aspect of poem 101, directing the reader to mix certain ingredients, including wine, honey, and flowers, in certain orders. Carson refers to these specific ingredients of funeral ritual explicitly, again in *Nox*, in “*inferias*: ...offerings (of wine, honey, flowers, night, etc.) made to a dead person’s *manes*...; rites in honour of the dead” (N 56). This entry is curiously curt, in comparison to the previous *ad* which spans two full pages to describe a preposition close in meaning to “at” (N 50, 52). Further discussion of the rites themselves, it seems, must be inspected across or as *Nox*. But this initial reception of poem 101 in *Men in the Off Hours*, as resonant as it remains (particularly after reading *Nox*), distinguishes yet another view on ritual. Published in 2000, it is entirely possible that this rendition was also a watershed of her brother’s death that year, but ultimately assumes a different purpose by its choice of structure. Far from an imitation or even a formal reception of the original (you’d have to recognize the content to see it as a commentary on poem 101, it is not labelled), the poem from *Men in the Off Hours* does not take on the burden of formal *translation* because of its rejection of 101’s original form. Kates remarks on the difficulty and intimacy of translating a classical work, particularly one with potent emotional content, as a motivation for flexibility, writing,

“The translator of a work with such rich history and resonance has a different responsibility from the translator of a new writer... The new translator can feel free to lose what may be lost without fear that it is lost forever—somebody else’s version has picked up that stitch in dropping another” (Kates). But I contend that *Nox* is an interaction with formal elegy on its face. It is an “epitaph” reproduced “as close as we could get” (N back cover) and an engagement with 101’s elegy beyond discussion of a brother’s death; rather, its elegiac form converses with Benjamin’s claim that “to comprehend [translation] as a form, one must go back to the original, for the laws governing the translation lie within the original” (Benjamin). Beyond those dictionary entries which provide superficial understanding of the light and the weight of poem 101 there is the idea of “translating as a room, not exactly and unknown room, where one gropes for the light switch” (N 113) which has much more to do with the darkness of the room than the possibility of a light switch.

With the semantic content of poem 101 relayed by lexical entries, the translator is tasked with the higher order formalism of Latin poetry and the search for form. Elegy was a highly specific verse form, particularly in Catullus’s time, in which metrical structure was regularized in reference to the demands of funerary ritual. In order to fully grasp the translation project that Carson presents in *Nox*, we must address the constraints placed by this specific poetic container. “Putting a frame around” (GL 7) grief is both a practical and semantic undergoing, and *Nox* proposes the modern elegy as a form that can be used to examine grief.

While any ritual provokes us to engage with crisis in controlled and artificial circumstances in order to cope with the uncontrollable and real, *Nox* simultaneously engages in elegiac form. Karin Weisman, in her *Handbook of Elegy* (2010) defines elegy as “the framing of loss” despite formulaic distinction across time and culture (Weisman 1). In the transition from the use of codified religious ritual to codified poetic structure to handle grief, elegy has provided a container that negotiates the personal and social aspects of expression. For Catullus, after traveling to his brother’s burial place in Asia Minor, the elegy is both *vocative* and *evocative*; 101 can be broken up into declarative sentences and addresses to *frater*, beginning with an announcement of his arrival at the grave and ending with a traditional wish of farewell. Between those points, there is a line of questioning about the use of questioning in vain, or “*nequiquam*,” at the works of fortune or fate for the loss. Weisman cites this as the language of “how can it be?”, a self-questioning mode of elegiac tradition which establishes a space for “reflection on cultural continuity” (Weisman 4-5). The desire to evoke what has been lost, address what has been lost, neither without answer, haunts both poem 101 and *Nox*. *Prisco quae more parentum*,⁵ rites must be administered in the following fashion and form; all this sorrow in spite of the ongoing rituals must be addressed across poem 101. In the face of the crisis of a loved one’s death, we turn to forms that allow us a way of parsing massive and intimate emotional upheaval.

Roman elegy, writes Weisman, assumed a split subjectivity in order to reconcile the tensions between the demands of public and the private (2); this differed from

⁵ If this interests the reader, *prisco quae more parentum* is translated in the relatively authoritative Loeb edition as “which by the custom of our fathers” (Loeb) and results in Carson’s translation as “what a distant mood of parents” (N 131).

contemporary poetic mourning modes such as the dirge, which performed a consolation to public hurt, or a requiem, which would be performed as a part of religious services by a clergy member rather than by a direct relative (Archer 41). To Romans, grief was a paradoxical process to be reconciled in both private and public spheres, and elegy was similarly a space of dialectic, whereby “an inassimilable remainder” is revealed in the breach between the ideological categories of traditional Roman life and the speaking subject (Weisman 2). The structure and cultural continuity of ritual and formulaic standbys in moments of irremediable loss is a common subject of *Nox*. Carson reflects on this grappling in her initial discussion of Michael’s reconstruction, writing, “We want other people to have a centre, a history, an account that makes sense. We want to be able to say This is what he did and Here’s why. It forms a lock against oblivion. Does it?” (N 49). Embarking on an elegy “with light of all kinds” (N 9), particularly one that addresses those questions of the use of that “distant mood of parents” (N 131) in poem 101, provokes and replicates both vocative and evocative functions.

In her choice of 101, Carson notes, “Catullus appears to have travelled from Verona to Asia Minor to stand at the grave. Perhaps he recited the elegy there” (N 113); Fordyce corroborates that evidence points to the fact that Catullus visited the tomb in the Troad in 57 BCE (Fordyce 388). The distance travelled, or the gap between selves, gives the content of the first line of the poem; these distances traveled is the evocative referent of the present tense of 1.3, where Carson reflects on her arrival in Copenhagen to visit Michael’s widow (N 23). Poem 101, as mentioned, has a particular place and time, as the

speaker arrives⁶ at the place of the grave in order to present the rites with the brother as a grammatical interlocutor. The vocative function of elegy is referential to Roman funerary tradition, in which ritual serves both religious and cultural needs. In his commentary on Catullus's corpus, D. F. S. Thompson describes poem 101 as a short elegy: highly personal, with expressive language within it which expands and develops in a way that goes "far beyond the conventions of the highly-stylized funerary epigram" (Thompson 536). The triple repetition of "*frater*" in the vocative case across the poem is described as evoking "a literary version of the ritual known as *conclamatio*, by which the relatives of the deceased called his name loudly, three times" as a precaution in the case of a spark of recognition from the corpse (Thompson 537). In terms of emotional content, poem 101 is simultaneously a proof of care, a questioning of fate, an apology, an expression of frustration at the circumstances of ritual, an existential musing on the finality of death, but is most vividly a personal farewell, closing with "*frater, ave atque vale.*" The subject of speech is invoked repeatedly across the structure of the original poem, providing both vocative and evocative functions according to the setting and purpose of the verse.

That's the catch. The content of poem 101 addresses the brother to confirm his arrival at the burial site and provide final offerings, but clearly and in the case of most occasions of elegy, the interlocutor has already died. The interlocutor, therefore, is that which is leftover; in elegy we fervently "talk (why?) with mute ash" (N 131). The practice of addressing ash is a terrifying and momentous activity on the page. Elegy is a matter of speaking at a grave, a desperate attempt at communication with the growing

⁶ 101 states the speaker *advenio* (present indicative, first person, roughly "I come, I am coming, I arrive"); this independent clause is interrupted by the vocative *frater* assigning an interlocutor. This is repeated in line 6, and the final line 10.

understanding that a response will never come. It is that confrontation of mortality, of the other's and our own, that motivates elegy; as Didion muses on the matter of writing in grief, "We are imperfect mortal beings, aware of that mortality even as we push it away, failed by our very complication, so wired that when we mourn our losses we also mourn, for better or for worse, ourselves" (Didion 198). The grieving process is an existential one and thus even more difficult to "put a frame around" by virtue of that fact. The act of speaking at a grave, and gradually expecting muteness, is doubtlessly a complicated dynamic to frame, on paper and in action. Carson says of arriving at the death-place in Copenhagen, "I am looking a long time into the muteness of my brother. It resists me" (N 23) *Nox*'s form evokes the attempt at closing indeterminable gaps. This resistance is the "overtakelessness" confronted in the ritual; the "I make a guess, I make a guess" (N 29) pervades both the entirety of *Nox* and the elegiac form. Both poem 101 and *Nox* are begot of the fact that "elegy pushes against the limits of our expressive resources precisely at the very moment in which we confront our mortality... throwing into relief the inefficacy of language precisely when we need it most" (Weisman 1). In attempt to speak to the dead, to breach indeterminable barriers, to assign words as entries, we serve instead to evoke a mode of confrontational grief.

The vocative function of *Nox* is a particularly affecting aspect for the reader. To experience the endless questioning of bereavement, we assemble artifacts such as the frantic graphite drawing which frames 2.1, which begs, "WHO WERE YOU" in gasping response to that single letter her mother requests on her own deathbed (N 27). The mode of questioning to which Weisman refers is present as a direct attempt of communication

with the dead as well as the living in the past. Much of the angst in *Nox* is about communication, or lack of communication, between different parties before Michael's death. Possibly the most crushing and revelatory description of "overtakelessness" comes from sections 4.1-4.2 in description of the emotional distance struck between mother and son, with Carson as the observer. It echoes in us, as readers, having formed a family narrative in the juxtaposition of the childhood photos and sparseness of this section. We are made to feel, ourselves, the frustration and desperation of trying to "evoke that starry lad" (N 9) despite these gaps in the story we want the author to fill. 4.1-4.2 frames a vocative yearning, and presents the only explicit mention of the word "night" in the book on the right-hand side. The mother's letter to her son, in which she describes "For five years four months and seven days I've prayed for you last thing at night amda [sic] good many odd times during the day" (N 67) strikes us as a letter-never-read, made particularly dramatic after the previous statement that the mother "would glance up every time a car come spinning along the road" at his absence (N 63). Notions of physical and emotional distance combined, even while Michael was still living; this emotional state is absolutely crucial to understanding the existential toll of distance after death. The communication with Michael ends with the mother offering to "mail a box for Christmas" as the facing page, *donarem*, replies, "*ego te quid donarem?* what would I give you? *nox nihil donat* nothing is night's gift" (N 66). This is the visually centered question of poem 101, "what would I give you?" is that emotional grasping we experience in mourning. The "overtakelessness" supersedes opportunity for mourning, and brings it all to a halt, Carson writes that after years without contact her mother prematurely decides that

Michael has died, she reports, “Eventually she began to say he was dead. How do you know? I said and she said When I pray for him nothing comes back” (N 69). His muteness creates a communicative and emotional barrier that is never overcome, permanently so in death.

Both in the writing and translation process within *Nox*, there is a critical point of realization of “overtakelessness” of ritual. As Carson writes of “overtakelessness” in the translation process in her *Variations on the Right to Remain Silent*, “Metaphysical silence happens inside words themselves. And its intentions are harder to define. Every translator knows the point where one language cannot be translated into another” (*Variations*). Is this the contentious point at which reconstructing Michael is impossible? Is this intentional or categorical muteness? How do we deal with the point at which, in ritual, the participants realize that “it broke off, we couldn’t get anything to work, again and again we gave up frustrated, threw the victims in the sea. Kept sailing” (N 163)? There are limitations in the craft, in the attempts, in the motions. Stang fumbles over the last explicit mention of “overtakelessness,” “What does it mean for God ‘to make nonsense of “overtakelessness,””⁷ the beyond embedded in every person, event, fact, or word?” (Stang). This is a question that is not answered, at least explicitly, in *Nox*, nor do I believe it is in *Nox*’s scope. After this comment of “overtakelessness,” we are presented with a copy of her English poem 101 that appears shattered, torn into strips and made unintelligible (N 161). The limits of the elegy, of the forms that parse emotional and epistemological gaps, are inherent in their usage. But the act of assemblage can serve to reveal, at least that “inassimilable remainder” (Weisman 2), as the reader is made to

⁷ This section refers to, according to my numbering, N 157.

produce across *Nox*. The process of signifying or rectifying mutenesses, or gaps, may reach closer to exegesis than expectation of a final product out of translating 101.

III: AFTERWORD

SALVAGE

“By far the greatest mass of the past as we experience it is a verbal construct. History is a speech-act, a selective use of the past tense.. We remember culturally, as we do individually, by conventions of emphasis, foreshortening, and omission. The landscape composed by the past tense, the semantic organization of remembrance, is stylized and differently coded by different cultures.” (Steiner 30)

Nox questions the ways we communicate with the past in its performance of grief. Reconstructing Michael, and constructing a modern English poem 101, requires bridging gaps and rectifying mutenesses that involve the intimate emotions of both the writer and the reader. The past tense is ever-present as a theme in *Nox*, and the first line of prose clues us in, “So I began to think about history” (N 9). *Nox* is primarily concerned with the construction of a personal history, of Michael and his relationship with his family, but tends to bear parallels to a larger view of history as well. Carson’s inclusion of the writings of Herodotus seems to cast a wide net (Herodotus being named the father of history itself and all). She knits in, across the right-hand pages, a somewhat removed discussion of the nature of history-writing to prove a point, I think, about the worlds we inhabit when we translate. As much as *Nox* pulls us into a dramatic process of poetic ritual and assemblage, the translator must simulate these sort of processes in evoking the

world in which original works were written. Ismail Kadare muses of Aeschylus, another subject of Carson's, and of the distance between ourselves and our classics:

It is natural to want to know how a writer works. What hours does he keep? Where does he write? In the case of ancient writers, whose entire lives have been enveloped in oblivion, this desire turns into an agonizing dream. Everything feels unreachable, nonexistent. (Kadare 3).

Maybe the tension between the public and the private in times of great strife is not so far from the practice of translation after all. The entire world of language and meaning around that distance speaker must be evoked, of course, but perhaps it's the very most intimate, idiosyncratic content of the original that is even more intractable to imitate. Through *Nox* we may not know the hours Carson kept, let alone the ones Catullus kept, but the form of the piece as a whole maintains quite a bit of personal control over a translation of poem 101. In making *Nox*'s translation a process for the reader by ritual means, how are we as readers holders of grief? It's somewhere in the "asking, searching, collecting, doubting, striving, testing, blaming and above all standing amazed at the strange things humans do" (N 21). In making *Nox* a process the reader undergoes alongside/as Carson, we ourselves are historians, translators, holders of grief, sisters, brothers, a storydog "that roams around Asia Minor collecting bits of muteness like burrs in its hide" (N 23).

APPENDIX A

“THE PAGES AND WHAT THEY SAID”

The following are the pages of *Nox* and a catalogue of what they loosely contain for purposes of identification. Categories are distinguished by typography; left-hand, even numbered pages typically contain lexical entries which are highlighted in this guide, “artifacts” refer to anything that appears to be pasted in the scrapbook yet are not clearly photographs, “fragments” refer to text that is of distinct typology to not signal a direct quotation or lexical entry, and “blank” may mean completely blank or blank with the images from the previous page imprinted through (but no clearly intentional, new content). Numbered passages are noted as in the original.

- 1: Cover.
- 2: Back of cover.
- 3: Title.
- 4: Copyright.
- 5: Title II: Michael Michael Michael; Nox frater nox.
- 6: Bleeding of reverse.
- 7: Full text of 101 (CI)
- 8: *multas*
- 9: 1.0
- 10: Blank
- 11: Photograph
- 12: *per*
- 13: 1.1
- 14: *gentes*
- 15: 1.1 cont.
- 16: *et*
- 17: Graphite drawing
- 18: Photograph
- 19: 1.2
- 20: *multa*
- 21: 1.3
- 22: *per*
- 23: 1.3 cont.
- 24: *aequora*
- 25: Fragment
- 26: *vectus*
- 27: Fragment, 2.1, Graphite drawing
- 28: *advenio*
- 29: Photograph, fragment

- 30: Artifact
- 31: Artifact
- 32: Blank
- 33-39: Artifact, 2.2
- 40: Blank
- 41: Fragment, artifact
- 42: *has*
- 43: 3.1
- 44: *has*, cont.
- 45: 3.2
- 44: Blank
- 45: Photograph
- 46: *miseras*
- 47: Fragment
- 48: *frater*
- 49: 3.3
- 50: *ad*
- 51: Fragment
- 52: *ad* cont.
- 53: Artifact
- 54: Artifact
- 55: Fragment
- 56: *inferias*
- 57: Photograph, fragment
- 58: *ut*
- 59: Artifact, fragment
- 60: *te*
- 61: Artifact, fragment
- 62: *postremo*
- 63: 4.1, photograph
- 64: Blank
- 65: Photograph, fragment
- 66: *donarem*
- 67: Artifact
- 68: *munere*
- 69: Photograph, 4.2
- 70: *mortis*
- 71: Photograph, fragment
- 72: *et*
- 73: 4.3
- 74: *mutam*
- 75: 5.1
- 76: *nequiquam*
- 77: Photograph
- 78: *alloquerer*
- 79: Recorded conversation
- 80: Blank
- 81: Fragment, artifact
- 82: Blank
- 83: Photograph
- 84: *cinerem*
- 85: Photograph, 5.2
- 86: Blank
- 87: Photograph, fragment
- 88: *quandoquidem*
- 89: 5.3, Graphite drawing

90: *fortuna*
91: Fragment
92: *mihi*
93: Photograph, 5.4
94: *tete*
95: Photograph, fragment
96: Blank
97: Painting
98: *abstulit*
99: 5.5
100: *ipsum*
101: Photograph
102: Blank
103: Fragment
104: *heu*
105: 5.6
106: Blank
107: Fragment
108: *miser*
109: 6.1, fragment
110: Blank
111: Photograph
112: *indigne*
113: 7.1
114: *frater*
115: 7.1 cont.
116: *adempte*
117: Photograph, fragment
118: *mihi*
119: 7.1 cont.
120: *nunc*
121: 7.1 cont., fragment
122: *tamen*
123: fragment, painting
124: *interea*
125: 7.2
126: *haec*
127: Photograph
128: Blank
129: Artifact, fragment
130: *prisco*
131: English of 101 (CI)
132: *quae*
133: Fragment
134: *more*
135: Photograph, 8.1
136: Blank
137: Printed dialogue
138: *parentum*
139: Graphite drawing
140: *tradita*
141: Fragment
142: Blank
143: Photograph
144: *sunt*
145: 8.2
146: *tristi*
147: 8.2 cont.
148: *munere*
149: Painting, 8.3
150: Blank
151: Painting
152: *ad*
153: 8.4
154: Painting
155: Painting, fragment
156: *inferias*
157: 8.5
158: *accipe*
159: Photograph, fragment
160: *fraterno*
161: Artifact
162: *multum*
163: Photograph, 9.1
164: Blank
165: Photograph
166: *manantia*
167: 10.1
168: *fletu*
169: 10.1 cont.
170: *atque*
171: Artifact, 10.1
172: *atque*
173: 10.1 cont.
174: *atque*
175: Artifact
176: *in*
177: 10.1 cont.
178: *perpetuum*
179: Photograph
180: *frater*
181: 10.2
182: *ave*
183: Fragment
184: Blank
185: Photograph
186: *atque*
187: 10.3
188: *vale*
189: Fragment
190: Blank
191: Photograph
192: Blank
193: English of 101 (CI)
194: Back page

APPENDIX B

“THE VOCATIVE OF *NOX* IS *NOX*”

The following is every instance of the word *nox* or one of its declensions, in the book. I highly encourage the reader to check the usage of each word with its corresponding right-hand page for contextual reasons.

Right-hand side:

Secondary title page, 5, “NOX FRATER NOX”

Mother’s letter, 67, “For five years four months and seven days I’ve prayed for you last thing at night amda [sic] good many odd times during the day.”

Fragment, mostly concealed with graphite, 133, “I am curious about the season of coldness you have there. The days being small, the night long.”

Left-hand side:

multas, 8, “*multa nox*: late in the night, perhaps too late.”

per, 12, “*stellae per noctem visae*, stars visible at night”

gentes, 14, “*noctis gentes*, nightpeople”

et, 16, “(*et nocte*) (you know it was night)”

aequora, 24, “*inmensumne noctis aequor confecimus?* have we made it across the vast plain of night?”

vectus, 26, “*per noctem in nihilo vehi*: to vanish by night into nothing”

advenio, 28, “*advenientes ad angulos noctis* reaching to the very corners of the night”

has, 44, “(with impersonal verb) *noctescit hoc iam*: lo! how it grows dark as night! (of a person or thing just mentioned, resumptive, explanatory, elaborating) that is”

miseras, 46, “(with ablative of cause) *nocte fratris quam ipso fratre miserior*: made sadder by the brother’s night than by the brother himself”

***frater*, 48, does not contain *nox*.**

ad, 50, 52, “*ad noctem*: to the very end;...*ad noctem*: ready for night;...*ad noctem trader*: to consign to night;... *ad noctem*: in time with the night;”

inferias, 56, does not contain *nox*, but does contain “night,” “offerings (of wine, honey, flowers, night, etc.)”

ut, 58, “in indignant questions, rejecting an idea as preposterous, *ut nox!*”

***te*, 60, does not contain *nox*.**

***postremo*, 62, does not contain *nox*.**

donarem, 66, “*nox nihil donat* nothing is night’s gift”

munere, 68, “*debita nocti munera* gifts owed to night”

mortis, 70, “*patiens noctis* liable to endure death, mortal; death as a personified agent or deity, Death; death as a state (usually in the phrase *in nocte* when dead)”

et, 72, “*et dubitas quin sensus in nocte nullus sit?* and do you still doubt that consciousness vanishes at night?”

mutam, 74, “*silentia muta noctis* deep speechlessness of night”

***nequiquam*, 76, does not contain *nox*.**

***alloquerer*, 78, does not contain *nox*.**

cinerem, 84, “*Troia virum et noctium acerba cinis* Troy, bitter ash of men and nights”

***quandoquidem*, 88, does not contain *nox*.**

fortuna, 90, “fortune’s darling (opposite of *noctis filius*)”

***mihi*, 92, does not contain *nox*.**

tete, 94, refers to *te*, 60, so does not contain *nox*.

abstulit, 98, “*quidquid nox aufert* whatever night grabs”

***ipsum*, 100, does not contain *nox*.**

***heu*, 104, does not contain *nox*.**

miser, 108, refers to *miseras*, 46, so does not contain *nox*.

indigne, 112, “(with *nox*) blushing”

frater, 114, refers to *frater*, 48, so does not contain *nox*.

adempte, 1,16, “*nox diem adimat* the day would not be long enough [night confiscates day]

mihi, 118, refers to *mihi*, 92, so does not contain *nox*.

nunc, 120, “*nunc nox!* night now! (implying that this latest development is in some way unexpected)”

tamen, 122, “(strengthened by night) *tamen nocte* deadly all the same.”

interea, 124, “*contra ius interea solum nocte* against the law yet only at night”

haec, 126, “*media nocte abis: hoc decet?* you go away in the middle of the night: is that decent?”

prisco, 130, does not contain *nox*, but does contain “night,” “old as night”

quae, 132, “*quod homo est non est hoc nox* a man is not a night!”

more, 134, “*more noctis* a habit of sadness; without system, wildly”

parentum, 138, “*parenti potius quam nocti obsequi* to obey one’s parent rather than night”

tradita, 140, “*noctis satietatem trado* here is my opinion of night’s satiety”

sunt, 144, “*hoc est, id est, nox est* that is”

tristi, 146, does not contain *nox*, but does contain “night,” “*odor tristis* night smell”

munere, 148, refers to *munere*, 68, so does not contain *nox*.

ad, 152, “*ad dextram, laevam, noctem* on the right, left, night side etc.”

inferias, 156, refers to *inferias*, 56, so does not contain *nox*.

accipe, 158, *oculis aut pectore noctem accipit* he lets in night at the eyes and the heart”

***fraterno*, 160, does not contain *nox*.**

multum, 162, refers to *multas*, 8, so does not contain *nox*.

manantia, 166, “*omne supervacuum pleno de pectore manat* the whole pointless night seeps out of the heart.”

***fletu*, 168, does not contain *nox*.**

atque, 170, “*similiter atque ipse eram noctabunda* just like him I was a negotiator with night.”

in, 176, “*in noctem* death vote”

perpetuum, 178, “*nox perpetua* the debt owed to life”

frater, 180, refers to *frater*, 48, so does not contain *nox*.

ave, 182, does not contain *nox*, but does contain “night,” “(on sepulchral moments) now it is night”

atque, 186, refers to *atque*, 172, so does not contain *nox*.

vale, 188, does not contain *nox*, but does contain “night,” “*parum valent Graeci* verbo the Greeks have no precise word for this (but we call it ‘night’)”

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