

'Unstable by Design': The Programmatic Use of Perspective in Catullus 64.

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of
Master of Philosophy
in the Faculty of Humanities

2010

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Word Count: 50,154.

‘Unstable by Design’: The Programmatic Use of Perspective in Catullus 64.

The complex structuring and discordant material of Catullus 64 have long posed its critics difficulties of interpretation. Various attempts have been made to impose some form of thematic unity, whether moralising or aesthetic. This investigation will not attempt to engage directly in that debate for definitives, nor will the interpretations offered here form a cohesive whole. My intention is to explore the mechanism through which perspectives are created that provoke (and hinder) interpretations, to answer through a close examination of the text: ‘How does all this work?’

The methodology employed is a hybrid. Firstly, a narratological distinction will be maintained between the poet, the author of the poem, and the voice of the narrator. The characters of the poem who have a speaking role will likewise be considered as separate internal narrators. In conjunction with this, passages of the poem will be selected and read intertextually. Consideration will be given to the contexts of the intertexts chosen for discussion and the same narratological demarcation of narrators applied to their ‘voices’. Additionally, the passages selected for discussion will be arranged so as to consider their intratextual negotiations. The investigation then is concerned with the interactions of the voices of the poem both with one another and with the voices echoed in them.

I will argue that the poem, in repeatedly posing the reader problems of authorship and of audience, is encouraging us to read in this manner and that the questions asked, ‘Who is speaking? Who do you see? Who is looking? Who is listening?’ reveal a programmatic design: the creation of multiple readings made simultaneously available. In accordance with the methodology outlined, I will be making interpretations throughout the investigation, interpretations which though they are themselves often singular in perspective are intended, in the process through which they are made, to make plain the range of possible perspectives attainable through reading within the framework of voice and allusion. The approach shall not be applied in the same manner in all areas, in order to underline the flexible (or unstable) nature of the relationships. Thus in chapter five I will posit a collaborative relationship between the primary narrator and the internal narrator Ariadne in an investigation of perspectives of love, whereas in chapter four she will adopt a more contrary stance in her indictment of Theseus.

Finally, I will argue the possibility that the allusive language and ambiguous testimonies of 64 provide more than an example of poetry written in accordance with an aesthetic, namely that 64 is itself structured so as to be a model, a contained demonstration of layered narratives.

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1. Introduction

Poem 64 can be a difficult poem. Catullus' longest work, four hundred and eight lines of hexameter verse with a mythic subject regarded by some as a masterpiece, others as a magnificent failure. With its skewed narrative emphases and its interwoven stories, related in a highly euphonious language, carried and contained in verse often rigid and heavy, it continues both to delight and confound its audience. Many critics have proposed and debated theories of structural or thematic unity¹ whilst others prefer instead a poetry of display: 'Certainly, there is meaning in *Peleus and Thetis* and even some vestiges of narrative, for all its lyricism; none the less, it belongs to that class of poetry which strives not so much to *say* as to *be*.'² These voices will be heard in the course of this paper but our study entails the exploration of a different type of cohesion and a multitude of being.

In brief, the premise I wish to explore is that Catullus 64 is designed so as to resist classification, constructed so as to offer multiple concurrent spectacles to appeal to all levels of its readership, that at its core is this aesthetic - a poetry of perspectives, not as either overt declaration or implicit commentary but embodied in its practice. Two components are central to the mechanism, voice and allusion. It is through the investigation of the complex workings of narratorial voice and study of the poem's intertextual building blocks that we will see how readings are created, coloured, recoloured, recreated. The approach is indebted to Julia Gaisser's work on the poem's competing views and voices: 'I will argue that the poem is a work of competing perspectives whose authority is repeatedly called into question and that within it Catullus has created a space separate from the logic and chronology of the external world where different stories come together to become the same story and all times exist at the same time.'³

I am, however, less concerned with those chronological distortions that arise in the looping time of her Labyrinth. My focus is on how it works and there are additional complications to the method. I will make a stronger distinction between the poet and the voice of the poem's narrator. Establishing that relationship and then how we each choose to mark it, and how we each choose to regard the narrator's character, will widen the field of available readings. Creating a space for the independence of the primary narrator and also for the internal narrators, Ariadne, Aegeus and the Parcae, whose direct speeches and

1 The principal voices are documented and summarised in Pavlock 1990:116-118, n. 10-12.

2 Jenkyns 1982:137.

3 Gaisser 1995:579.

song he in turn relates will allow further perspectives to emerge: ‘The Peleus and Thetis epyllion would provide a superb script for six performers: 256 lines for narrator, 70 for Ariadne, 23 for Aegeus, and 59 for the three Fates.’⁴ Wiseman’s suggestion is provocative but 64 is not a drama and there is no dialogue between its speakers. However, viewing them as narrators does allow for the exploration of their intratextual negotiations.⁵ In their echoes and revisions of the text they inhabit can be heard their ‘replies’. Similarly whilst we are not here involved in re-imaginings of contemporary settings, we do need to be aware of staging. To what extent are the narrators ‘performing’ and for what audience(s)?

Furthermore Gaisser’s lucid paper does not greatly concern itself with the contexts of the intertexts. I would take her advice to be constantly thinking ‘Who speaks?’ and ‘Who sees?’ a stage further back. What are the motivations informing the voices heard in echoes? What are their own contexts? How does that affect our readings? What new readings emerge? ‘Who speaks?’ and ‘Who sees?’ are pluralised and the competition of perspectives increased. To prevent this proliferation of voices from becoming the cacophony of cranes, boundaries must be imposed.

On the matter of intertexts, I shall then in the course of this paper, be primarily concerned with the poem’s links with the Greek poetry of the past, especially the Hellenistic period, and of that period, much comment will be made of its relationship with the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius. Established paths will be explored to tease out new possibilities and some tentative steps made along new ones. Some conjectures might seem fanciful though they will grounded in the text and its echoes and the echoes heard within echoes. If some of the weighty and laudable scholarship striving for unity, seeking to establish (or disprove) a prevailing morality, is given less attention than its bulk demands, it is not done so out of weariness. It is much trampled ground. Similarly the relationship of 64 within the wider Catullan corpus might seem undervalued though connections will still be made, particularly and naturally when investigating the perspectives offered on love where the range of contacts has been extensively mapped by Putnam with much astute commentary.⁶

I will not apply all aspects of the approach to every passage discussed, such an attempt would become both tedious and bewildering (and beyond the scale of this paper).

4 Wiseman 1985:128.

5 On intratextuality, see Sharrock 2000:6, ‘It is the hypothesis of intratextuality that a text’s meaning grows not only out of the readings of its parts and its whole, but also out of readings of the relationships between the parts, and the reading of those parts as parts, and parts as relationship (interactive or reverberative): all this both formally (e.g. episodes, digression, frame, narrative, line, etc.) and substantively (e.g. in voice, theme, allusion, topos, etc.) - and teleologically.’

6 Putnam 1961.

Instead I will apply selective combinations, summon a manageable amount of views and suggest readings that appeal but are, by no means, exclusive: ‘With *topoi*, and indeed with allusive discourse at large, one can never step into the same river twice. No two readers will ever construct a set of cues in quite the same way; no one reader, even the author, will ever construct a set of cues in quite the same way twice.’⁷

In the next chapter I shall apply the approach to the ‘proem’ of the poem before moving on to a more thorough examination of the primary narrator. Much reference will be made to the findings of Richard Thomas in his influential study of the conflation and revision at work in those opening verses which he regards as ‘Catullus’ major polemical demonstration of his literary affiliations’.⁸ It is to his perception of 64 as demonstration that I owe the concept of this paper, though my thrust is not polemical.

Crucial to the premise, that the poem is programmatic demonstration, is the understanding that 64 doesn’t have to be a difficult poem at all. The story offers us voyages, monsters, gods and heroes, acts of courage and betrayal, there is love and loss, and a happily ever after: all the ingredients of a ripping yarn! It has a narrator to guide the reader and, should material require exposition, he helpfully backtracks and fill in the gaps. ‘Why does Theseus have to switch to a differently coloured sail on his return journey? Well, let me tell you what happened before he left for Crete.’ And so on. Proper names and periphrases are for the most part accessible or can be understood from their context. A reader *can* approach the poem with no background knowledge, no reference material and whilst the structure is convoluted and the emphases unusual, he need not be simply baffled by the experience.

Clearly the signs are there to encourage an intertextual response but the poem does not demand one. It constantly asks us what are we looking at, and can we trust what we are seeing whilst simultaneously posing as doing nothing of the sort. It is being ‘in the know’ that causes problems. The more we are prepared to engage, the more possibilities appear and the less certain we are of what we are viewing and hearing. In the course of my investigation, the first-time reader will be largely neglected, but we mustn’t forget that they exist or deny the possibility that they exist. 64 is a poem that encourages us to read behind the lines and then to reread them again but on one level, at one time, for one type of reader, it exists whole and undisturbed.

In summary then, my interest is in the ways *how* something is said affects *what* is

7 Hinds 1998:47.

8 Thomas 1982:145.

being said, how the echoes within the *what* provides further *whats* and how the *hows* multiplied by the *whats* reveal the creative *why*, the embodied aesthetic - simultaneously available perspectives.

2. Recommissioning the Argo

Peliaco quondam prognatae vertice pinus
dicuntur liquidas Neptuni nasse per undas
Phasidos ad fluctus et fines Aeetaeos,
cum lecti iuvenes, Argivae robora pubis,
auratam optantes Colchis avertere pellem
ausi sunt vada salsa cita decurrere puppi,
caerula verrentes abiegnis aequora palmis.⁹
64.1-7

Our poem is not quick off the blocks. The voyage to Colchis is conducted in languorous fashion, with the initial three hexameters, spondaic and alliterative, evoking an atmosphere of procession rather than expedition. Enclosed within the rhyming waters, the pine trees leisurely swim to the ends of the known world.¹⁰ ‘Quondam’ transports us to the past,¹¹ the Greek names affirm it as myth, and with the prominent placement of ‘dicuntur’, the narrator asserts himself to be following poetic tradition.

‘Once, so the story goes...’ is a familiar and assuring opening. However, the very act of utterance can also instil unease if we question the motivation: ‘I would prefer to put it another way, that although the device, which I shall call the “authority formula,” raises the issues of authority and truth, it does not necessarily vouch for them. Here, I suggest, *dicuntur* acknowledges less the fame of the Argo legend than its status as a fiction. The story has many authors, and we shall hear their competing versions in the following verses.’¹² The formula then also signals from the start the issue of variant myths and the prospect of alternate perspectives. I would like to draw an additional distinction though, and suggest that, spoken by a narrator, ‘dicuntur’ can be seen as vouching for the tradition,

9 Quoted text of Catullus is taken from Mynor’s 1954 OCT edition, substituting ‘v’ for consonantal ‘u’. Any translations, unless otherwise indicated, are my own.

10 On the rhyme at main caesura and line-end, Thomas 1982:155 n. 43, ‘The first of almost fifty such rhymed lines in the poem... The higher incidence of end-stopped lines in Catullus (as against Virgil) accounts, no doubt, for some of the difference, but clearly the pattern produces a highly mannered effect which appealed to Catullus.’

11 Theoc. 18 begins in similar fashion, Ἐν ποκ’ ἄρα Σπάρτῳ, on which, Hunter 2004:84, ‘In recreating a lyric form and telling of a mythical event, Theocritus relies, as do the lyric poets themselves, on an audience able to contextualize the narrated moment within a larger, and in this case very famous, story.’ Cf. Dover 1971:229.

12 Gaisser 1995:582. On the chronological impossibilities poem 64 will present, O’Hara 2007:42, ‘Somewhat like Callimachus’ allusions in the *Hymn to Zeus* to variant stories of Zeus’ birth, Catullus’ strong use of incompatible variants serves to undercut the authority of the speaking voice - not the poet behind the creation of the poem, but the voice of the speaker - and to call attention to the fictionality of the work.’ Cf. Fitzgerald 1995:141. On literary historical chronology versus mythic chronology, Hinds 1998:115, ‘For poets who handle mythological themes, occasions for negotiation between the time-frames of the narrated world and the time-frames of their own poetic traditions will tend to rise again and again.’ And on the use of ‘they say’ as citation, the ‘Alexandrian footnote’, Hinds 1998:2.

in so far as the introductory setting ‘Once upon a time, the Argo sailed to Colchis’ applies. Then, conjectures can simultaneously be made as to the quite different usages in play on the compositional level of the author. The conflict of multiple readings occurs, as we shall see, within the language of the lines whilst at the same time the narrator appears to be offering words of comfort. The names he invokes ‘Phasis’ and ‘Aeetes’ are exotic but not abstruse. The style is grand but not aloof and the novelty of swimming trees is quickly explained - When did this happen? When the Argonauts sailed to Colchis. Seven lines summarise the undertaking, sweeping oars parallel the activity of swimming and the nearing to destination is mirrored by the ship’s descent down the high seas (to shore).¹³ This habit of explication is to become a prominent aspect of the primary narrator’s character. Having created a fanciful but potentially puzzling image, he immediately repeats the same events in the same sequence with its more recognisable participants. He spells things out.¹⁴

However, whilst he provides explanation through variation, the sounds themselves convey suggestions of their own. The alliteration of the opening lines has already been noted. Accompanied by assonance, it is a persistent feature of the poem and serves functions besides euphony. One of these, as Richard Thomas observed, is intertextual. In beginning with the trees on Mt. Pelion, the first verse follows the revised sequence of Ennius’ *Medea Exul*. In the alliteration of ‘p’ sounds it recalls the Euripidean tragedy: ‘In the very first line of his poem, then, Catullus has artfully indicated two of his primary sources by conflating them into single line while yet preserving recognizable traces of the two originals.’¹⁵

Εἴθ’ ὦφελ’ Ἀργοῦς μὴ διαπτάσθαι σκάφος
 Κόλχων ἐς αἴαν κυανέας Συμπληγάδας,
 μηδ’ ἐν νάπαισι Πηλίου πεσεῖν ποτε
 τμηθεῖσα πεύκη,
 E. *Med.* 1-4

13 The problems of transitive *decurrere* are discussed by Thomas (1982:153). On my reading of vv.4-7 as an *explanation* of vv.1-3 the destination for *iuvenes ausi sunt decurrere* is understood (*ad... fines Aeetaeos*) though the accusative remains awkward.

14 Pace Coleman 1998:66, ‘The river Phasis, provided with a Greek case form, and the derivative noun from the name of Medea’s father, with its unLatin spondaic vocalism, provide appropriate exotic colour and enclose an old-fashioned alliterative phrase in which *fluctus* ‘waves’ suggests a substantial *flumen*. The periphrasis adds *gravitas* to the remote oriental region, but before readers can appreciate this, they do need to know what the references are. There is thus a loss in accessibility.’

15 Thomas 1982:155. And further on the Euripidean contribution, *ibid.* 156, ‘This claim is supported by two facts: first, Catullus obviously had the Euripidean opening [Κόλχων ἐς αἴαν] before him at this point, and, secondly, this [*Phasidos ad fluctus*] is the only clear example in Catullus of the simple word-order: proper name in the genitive + preposition + governed noun.’ On this and related Grecisms, see Mayer 1999:156ff.

On the reader's anticipation of a 'Medea', Gaisser states, 'Catullus' trick, however, confuses only a particular kind of interpreter, the 'neoteric reader,' as I shall call him/her, who is trained to look for allusive clues in the text and is both knowledgeable enough to recognize them and subtle enough to construe their meaning. Only the neoteric reader would have identified Catullus' references to Euripides and Ennius.'¹⁶ However, the introduction of the Phasis in third line of our text finds its source in the *Argonautica*, 'ἦ δὲ ῥέεθρα | Φάσιδος' (A.R. 2.1277-8). Catullus has adopted not only the proper name but the Greek genitive termination and same placement of the dactylic word at the start of the line. A strong enough echo, I feel, to undermine the learned reader's initial confidence, which can only suffer total collapse when, with the Argo on the verge of docking, the narrator flashes back to its origin.

diva quibus retinens in summis urbibus arces
 ipsa levi fecit volitantem flamine currum,
 pinea coniungens inflexae texta carinae.
 64.8-10

Clare elucidates this confounding of expectations: 'If it is the poet's intention to narrate a *Medea* in the Ennian/Euripidean mode, the narrative should, after the summary of the *Argo* voyage, move forward rapidly in time to events subsequent to the Colchis expedition. Yet, from verse 8 onwards, Catullus shifts the perspective by concentrating on the construction and launch of the ship *Argo*, a topic one would expect to be a major theme at the commencement of an *Argonautica*.'¹⁷ I will discuss the misdirection of intertextual cues shortly but first consider what such an early shift can convey about the character of the narrator.¹⁸

It could suggest a lack of organisation, that, after setting out, he feels obliged to retrace his steps to include some necessary background material. Later on, he will shout attention to his inability to steer a straight course, 'sed quid ego a primo digressus carmine

16 Gaisser 1995:581. On the neoteric 'school' see Lyne 1978. Regarding their affectations of style, *ibid.* 183, 'the neoterics were aiming at idiosyncrasy of style *and* content, for they were imitating genres that imposed both. They were imitating genres evolved by the Callimacheans to suit both new emphases in subject matter and a new (and concomitant) concentration on stylistic exquisiteness; and taking upon themselves the genres, the neoterics took upon themselves the whole strategy.'

17 Clare 1996:62 (on the assumption vv.1-7 constitute a 'Medea' of sorts).

18 In the embedded narrative of Theseus and Ariadne, we will encounter a succession of temporal shifts as their story darts back and forth through time from its anchorage at Dia. Note that unlike 64 importantly, the episodic Hellenistic epyllion is structured 'almost always in linear chronological sequence, until its appointed end.' (Fantuzzi & Hunter 2004:192).

plura | commemorem' (vv.116-7). Whilst that is a poetic ploy, giving an impression of spontaneous oral composition and simultaneously serving to underline the poet's control, the effect remains and the apparent loss of control lends colour to his portrayal. There is something endearing about this convivial and loquacious individual, who we will find possessed of an infectious enthusiasm for the tale, directly engaging with the cast, stepping out of the narrative, and at times struggling to manage proceedings. Whether we are to be convinced by his performance or choose to be more circumspect is another matter and in the subsequent section we shall look in detail at some of the techniques used to flesh out his character. Perhaps here then, in the lurching subject-matter, is an early hint of the explicit outbursts and intrusions to come.

Now, although only ten lines into the 'proem' of 64, let us additionally consider some possible audience responses to the story so far. With regards solely to content, someone hearing this story for the first time would have grasped that once a band of men sailed from Greece to a foreign land in search of a treasure and that they did so in a boat built by a goddess from pine trees. Someone who had heard the story before would recognise the men as the Argonauts, the divine builder Athena and the myth Jason's quest to win the golden fleece from Colchian Aetes. Someone with knowledge of the plays of Ennius and Euripides might feel echoes of familiarity in forms freshly heard and spurred by that discovery, strain to hear more. How many would nod at the poem's alliteration and admire the conflation?

The point of this hypothetical survey is not to applaud the most astute nor to point out that some intertexts are bigger than others, that some run deeper than others, in a poem we shall find built on allusion.¹⁹ The point is, that at whatever level and through whatever filter, the poem still *works* and it does so *concurrently*. My survey imagined four but shaded incrementally between each of those four crude sketches are a range of possible readers. Some of the allusions and interpretations suggested in this paper will appeal to some, others will not. It is my intention to argue that this chimerical appeal is the very heart of the poem. In probing, we are obliged to view only one aspect at a time but it is important to remember that every reference uncovered is nuanced by its connections, for example by who is speaking (and who informs that speech) or by who is listening (and listening in) and it is vital to bear in mind that whatever voice, character, image or emotion

19 On Hellenistic allusive methods, Gaisser 1995:579, 'The [Alexandrian] poets both emphasize and question the certainty of their utterance by presenting it through multiple and sometimes contradictory voices and points of view. They use the voices of their characters, to be sure, but they also invoke other views and voices by citing or alluding to previous authorities and texts, by quoting the songs of real or imaginary singers, and by describing the scenes depicted on works of art.'

is in focus at any one time those alongside them never cease to be in motion. Such protestations might seem obvious and unwarranted, or even hypocritical considering this exploration involves the same methods of dissection it might at times decry in others, but when the encompassing aim of this study is to demonstrate the work programmatic in its entirety and universal in its ambition, there is a burden to restate intentions as we again reach for the knife.²⁰

Picking out the references to Apollonius and Ennius, Euripides and Accius within the opening lines, Thomas states, ‘In his alteration, suppression, or promotion of details, he can be seen to be ‘correcting’ one or the other of his models, either in favour of an alternative source or in absolute terms.’²¹ This practice he considers to be essentially polemical, that the ‘proem’ of 64 in both correcting and conflating prior treatments of the Argonautic myth, demonstrates its superiority. This does raise the question in what arena or amphitheatre could a contest between tragedies, epic and ‘epyllion’ be envisaged? One can see a competitive quality in the artistry and arrangement but I believe the process to be fundamentally collaborative. Incorporating allusions to subjugate them in some way is a counter-productive strategy.²² Still Thomas’ observations are astute and intention sound: ‘what is lacking is a systematic examination of the nature of poetic reminiscence in these lines.’²³ The opening *is* implicitly programmatic but, in my view, programmatic to ‘ways of reading’, to a poetics of perspectives.

With the launch at verse 12 the poem appears to begin an *Argonautica*, a subject which collides with a startling chronological twist in the timing of Peleus’ first encounter with Thetis and abruptly sinks as the focus then shifts post-expedition to their wedding day.²⁴ However, there are suggestions in the narrative that do in fact prepare the

20 And that said, I ask the reader’s indulgence when in the course of this paper, I too, for the sake of brevity, lucidity, or convenience, fall back upon the singularly spectacular intertextual reader.

21 Thomas 1982:147. Cf. *ibid.* 144, ‘Without intruding into his verse the poet, through allusion and through alteration or conflation of his models, sets himself in a tradition and may thereby provide a commentary on his own place in that tradition, and ultimately on his own poetic art.’

22 See Zetzel 1983:253, ‘While such poets were, to an extraordinary degree, self-conscious in their deliberate manipulation of the details of language and meter, this technical mastery was not an end in itself, for either the Alexandrians or their Roman imitators.’ Cf. Gaisser 1995:583, ‘But the function of allusion is not primarily to demonstrate the poet’s knowledge of previous versions or to assert the superiority of one over the rest. It is also to reveal the complexity and mystery of the past and the contradictory nature of its sources. Thus Catullus sometimes allusively points to a conflict in the authorities and leaves it unresolved.’ I’d suggest the poet actively seeks out conflicts and uses their tensions to stimulate multiple readings. They’re not (primarily) coded footnotes to scholarly debate.

23 Thomas 1982:146.

24 Thomas 1982:145, ‘the description of the Argo’s departure seems deliberately chosen as a vehicle for polemical expression. Nowhere else does it play a significant part in the account of the marriage of Peleus and Thetis.’

intertextual reader for the apparent rupture. It is not sufficient to stop upon dismantling and reconstructing allusions in isolation. Intertexts bring intertexts of their own, and are shaded by contexts of their own. We need always to be thinking ‘Who else is speaking?’ and ‘Who else is listening?’

For example, Thomas well illustrates how vv.2-3 conflate Apollonian diction with Euripidean word-order but what I would add is that both source passages are verses spoken by characters. Medea’s nurse provides the word-order and Ancaeus, helmsman of the Argo, the diction.²⁵ Our narrator embarking on his narrative is conflating character speech. Who then are the sources of ‘dicuntur’ (v.2)? Is it the narrative tradition? Is it Euripides and Apollonius? Is it the nurse and the helmsman? All possibilities are simultaneously admissible, but if at any given moment we choose to ‘tune in’ to the final option, we ought to also consider how that then impacts upon the narrator’s authority. Does ‘dicuntur’ attract the weight of the mythical eyewitnesses to an event or gloss over hearsay? Does the poet’s artful conflation present a similarly erudite narrator or one who, in basing his testimony on the wish of a Colchian nurse and the speech of a Greek sailor, lacks discernment? Is his style without substance? Should we view him as naïve, as does O’Hara: ‘Catullus’ speaker never wavers from his devotion to the heroic age...’²⁶ Or can we find in his rhetorical techniques some measure of collusion with the author’s own strategies? Both are viable. All readers will not engage alike with all characters, either those in our poem or those drawn from the suggested intertexts. The point I am again attempting to make, by way of some conjectures, is that there exists a distinct character about whom to form opinions. This narrator has a personality and he will make himself known.

Now, let us consider the same allusions in their context. The lines spoken by the nurse occur, as in 64, at the beginning - the beginning of the tragedy that is the ending of the mutual story of Jason and Medea. The short speech of Ancaeus takes place at another ending, that of the second book of the *Argonautica*, with its heroes in celebratory mood as the ship at last arrives in Colchis (A.R. 2.1277-8). The third book is the beginning then of the story that sees Jason and Medea united, marked from the outset by the Apollonian narrator’s pointed appeal to Erato as being a love story. Privileging this context can profoundly affect our reading. What is being merged in the opening three verses of 64 is

25 Thomas 1982:156, n. 46, ‘The connection between Euripides and Apollonius is not necessary to our argument, and may not be intentional; however, in that Catullus had both passages in mind, it seems likely that he noticed the similarity.’ The remark is unkind to Apollonius. It would sound a subtly despondent note if Book 2 concluded with an echo of an ominous future for Jason.

26 O’Hara 2007:42.

not then a *Medea* and an *Argonautica*, it is more particular - the tale of two lovers, how it ended and how it began. On such an interpretation, any notion of 64 opening with a choice between tragedy and epic or purporting to retell the voyage of the Argo ought then only to be entertained when at verse 8 the narrator opts to turn back to the time of construction. If we acknowledge these intertexts within their contexts, what we might instead read in the lines is love, the start of a Colchian romance mingled with its own destructive conclusion in Corinth. Love is a theme that runs throughout this poem and one thus signalled from its outset in the reverberations of its echoes. The conflation of references is artful, but the artistry can be seen in the precision of the selection, and the wider we extend the limits of perception, the more possibilities the poem creates, inviting us to look and look again.

Some vistas are potentially troubling. Not all readers will equally allow all allusions. The mechanism accommodates grading. Clare's interpretation, for example, downplays the Apollonian allusion and argues for the dominance of a *Medea*: 'the assertion that the beginning of Catullus 64 signals the telling of an *Argonautica* is a misreading... one essential ingredient of such a context is missing, namely mention of the *Argo*'s passage through the Clashing Rocks, a prerequisite in the narration even of a summary *Argonautica*.²⁷ Shouldn't they then have been omitted from the Euripidean summary of events as related in the nurse's wish? The extant summary in which they do not appear lies within the play of Ennius.

Utinam ne in nemore Pelio securibus
caesae accidissent abiegnae ad terram trabes...
Enn. *Scen.* 246-7

Ought the reader then anticipate a story unfolding along purely Ennian lines? Catullus does, after all, follow Ennius in gathering the raw material before commencing construction: 'As is generally recognized, he 'corrected' the time-sequence of Euripides, removing the hysteron-proteron that appears at the beginning of that poet's *Medea*.²⁸ Perhaps their absence from the summary in 64 is an acknowledgement of the Ennian revision and implicit commentary on the process of poetic selection, revealed in this instance by what didn't make the 'final cut.'²⁹ The issue is not easily resolved nor should it be, I maintain that misreadings, or more diplomatically one's preferred readings, are

27 Clare 1996:62, citing Hom. *Od.* 12.59-72, Pi. *P.* 4.208-9, E. *Med.* 2, Theoc. 13.22 and 22.27 and the opening verses of Apollonius' poem.

28 Thomas 1982:154. On the Ennian revision, see Brooks 1981:182.

29 On concision and refinement, e.g. Pindar, μακ'ρά μοι νεῖσθαι κατ' ἀμαξιτόν· ὄρα | γὰρ συνάπτει καί τινα | οἴμον ἴσαμι βραχύν· πολ- | λοῖσι δ' ἄγημαι σοφίας ἑτέροις (Pi. *P.* 4.247-8).

cultivated by the poem's design, by intentional uncertainties and inversions. My preference here would be to admit the allusion to A.R. 2.1277-8 and the resultant ambiguities such a reading can entail.³⁰ The opening verses fuse sources and events, offer a subject (Jason and Medea) whilst creating uncertainty about the path to be taken.

illa rudem cursu prima imbuit Amphitriten;
 quae simul ac rostro ventosum proscidit aequor
 tortaque remigio spumis incanuit unda,
 emersere freti candenti e gurgite vultus
 aequoreae monstrum Nereides admirantes.
 illa, atque <haud> alia, viderunt luce marinas
 mortales oculis nudato corpore Nymphas
 nutricum tenus exstantes e gurgite cano.
 64.11-18

Those feelings of uncertainty grow stronger when the Catullan Argo sets sail with an inversion of the natural order of things: 'What strikes about this passage is that the expected relation between sea and sailors has been reversed: the Argo 'initiates' the sea... Sailing is here a novel experience for the sea rather than the sailors. This paradox is sharpened by the word *imbuit*, used of the Argo's initiation of the sea; the primary meaning of this verb is 'drench' or 'wet,' so one might expect the sea to be its subject not object.'³¹ Misgivings aroused by this topsy-turvy language of the launch are, for the *doctus lector*, compounded by those figures emerging from glittering waters ahead of their appointed time.

As stated in the introduction, my primary intertext for this study is the *Argonautica* of Apollonius, and in general, I will treat the Hellenistic epic as a first port of call in any intertextual analysis and venture out from there. It is a poem learned, complex and thoroughly allusive in composition: 'Apollonius' language, diction and phrasing are closely Homeric, and almost every line contains words and expressions quoted or adapted from the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*... But despite this verbal similarity to Homer, and despite the fact that it is epic in scope and theme, the *Argonautica* is a self-consciously

30 I remain to be convinced that Theoc. 13.75 περὶ δ' ἐς Κόλχους τε καὶ ἄξενον ἵκετο Φᾶσιν (Clare 1996:83, n. 6) weakens the link. No similarities in position or morphology, no noun for 'river', substitution of a place with a people and emphasis upon a land journey. There is little to recommend this parallel beyond 'Phasis' and another noun being linked with a conjunction. It is in any case, an apologetic closing line, see Griffiths 1996:104-110. On the relevant *Argonautica* passage, Thomas 1982:156, 'From here too Catullus no doubt took the spondeiazon of 64.3, for Αἰήτω appears at the end of the following line, *Arg.* 2.1279.' Also noted by Quinn 1970:300.

31 Fitzgerald 1995:151.

‘Callimachean’ poem.’³² Having seen how an awareness of the context from which references are drawn can influence readings, let us also consider not only linguistic but possible programmatic interaction as well through an analysis of the Argo’s previous departure before returning to some startled and startling Nereids.

ὥς οἱ ὑπ’ Ὀρφεῖος κιθάρη πέπληγον ἑρετμοῖς
 πόντου λάβρον ὕδωρ, ἐπὶ δὲ ῥόθια κλύζοντο.
 Ἄφρῳ δ’ ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα κελαινὴ κήκιεν ἄλμη
 δεινὸν μορμύρουσα ἐρισθενέων μένει ἀνδρῶν.
 Στράπτε δ’ ὑπ’ ἡλίῳ φλογὶ εἴκελα νηὸς ἰούσης
 τεύχεα· μακρὰ δ’ αἰὲν ἐλευκαίνοντο κέλευθοι,
 ἀτραπὸς ὧς χλοεροῖο διειδομένη πεδίοιο.
 A.R. 1.540-6

Catullus 64, in the nautical imagery of verses 12-13, makes several points of contact with the diction: ‘ventosum aequor’ (v.12) recalls ‘λάβρον ὕδωρ’, ‘tortaque remigio spumis incanuit unda’ (v.13) draws upon ‘ἄλμη κήκιεν ἀφρῳ’, but condenses the Greek agent μένος ἐρισθενέων ἀνδρῶν and instrument ἑρετμά into ‘remigium’ the activity of rowing, and looking further ahead, extracts its main verb ‘incanuit’ from ‘ἐλευκαίνοντο’. The sea itself is made white, the simile assimilated and made concrete.³³ The condensation is again artful but what should also be noted are the omissions. No mention is made either of the individual hero Orpheus or of the awe-inspiring collective (ἐρισθενής ‘very mighty’ is frequently an epithet of Zeus³⁴). The heroic element is reduced to a means of propulsion. Moreover there is no accommodating of the armaments, ‘τεύχεα’ - this Catullan Argo has been demilitarised.

In the course of 64, ‘heroes’ are addressed and their exploits to varying extents narrated, but they never get a speaking role. We shall more fully explore how heroism is handled in the poem in chapter 4 when we consider Theseus, Peleus and Achilles as they occur in the negotiations of the narrators. For our present purposes, it is enough to observe the selectivity at work. The Catullan verses are intertextual in composition but programmatic by occlusion. Perspectives are created by absences strongly felt as well as by those that are admitted. The revision thus again hints that there is something different about this voyage. The intertextual reader is forewarned that something extraordinary is

32 Hopkins 1988:182.

33 On Accius’ possible contribution, see Thomas 1982:160, n. 2.

34 E.g. *Il.* 13.54, *Od.* 8.289.

about to take place.

Πάντες δ' οὐρανόθεν λεῦσσον θεοὶ ἡματι κείνῳ
νῆα καὶ ἡμιθέων ἀνδρῶν γένος, οἱ τότε ἄριστοι
πόντον ἐπιπλώσκον. Ἐπ' ἀκροτάτησι δὲ Νύμφαι
Πηλιάδες κορυφῆσιν ἐθάμβεον, εἰσορόωσαι
ἔργον Ἀθηναίης Ἴτωνίδος ἠδὲ καὶ αὐτοῦς
ἥρωας χεῖρεσσιν ἐπικραδάοντας ἐρετμά.
A.R. 1.547-552

The men are object, observed by gods and mountain nymphs. 64 omits the former and retains the amazement of the latter but transforms the subject as well as both the distance and the direction of the gaze.³⁵ Taking a third selection from the *Argonautica*, we can observe that whilst the figures in our poem, those Nereids emerging in the vicinity of the vessel and looking up from the waves, are familiar, the location, timing and circumstances have been fundamentally altered.³⁶

Ἐνθα σφιν κοῦραι Νηρηίδες ἄλλοθεν ἄλλαι
ἦντεον· ἠ δ' ὄπιθεν πτέρυγος θίγε πηδαλίοιο
δίᾳ Θέτις, Πλαγκτῆσιν ἐνὶ σπιλάδεσσιν ἔρυσθαι.
A.R. 4.930-2

At the behest of Hera, Thetis leads the Nereids to perform a rescue, carrying the ship through the Wandering Rocks and facilitating the heroes' *return* from Colchis. Our Argonautic relaunch has combined journey's beginning with journey's end and thrust this element to the fore. No nymphs looking down from distant Pelion but Nereids now in the waters around the ship. And crucially that proximity allows reaction. The men can look in turn. The temporal marker 'illa... luce' (64.16) pointedly echoes 'ἡματι κείνῳ' (A.R. 1.547). On that day, they reciprocate. On that day, something changes.

In the *Argonautica* a third set of figures stand watching the ship leave the bay, the centaur Chiron and his wife who holds in her arms the infant Achilles and from the shore displays him to his father (A.R. 1.553-8): 'The *Iliad* has as its theme μῆνιν ... Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος (1.1). For the *Argonautica* this is a significant moment: Peleus leaves behind his son and Apollonius leaves behind the conventions of traditional 'heroic' epic.'³⁷ Change

35 On the missing gaze of gods, see Theodorakopoulos 2000:126.

36 On the novelty of the ship thus emphasised, O'Hara 2007:35, 'The marvelling of the Nereids at this *monstrum* underscores the singularity of the event.'

37 Hopkinson 1988:185.

the object of Peleus' gaze and change more than the story.

tum Thetidis Peleus incensus fertur amore,
tum Thetis humanos non despexit hymenaeos,
tum Thetidi pater ipse iugandum Pelea sensit.
64.19-21

From intertextual conflation and omission to innovation. Change the object and time unravels. At the same moment that Apollonius chose to place a statement of intent regarding the focus of his own epic, a radical rewrite.³⁸ Finally, the narrator offers names. One picked from the naked Nereids, one from the leering crew.³⁹ Peleus remains the catalyst, no longer, however, by looking back upon his son and martial epic but by looking forward to his future bride 'incensus amore'. A bride whom Apollonius revealed, shortly before the passage with the Planctae echoed in 64, as being separated bitterly and permanently from her husband, whilst their son still an infant.⁴⁰ Another journey begins by alluding to (and recasting) its ending.

It is bold but if we cast back a little, there were murmurings of a different sort that something new was approaching. Immediately upon launching, the Argo 'ploughs the windy plain' (64.12), an agricultural metaphor noted by Godwin.⁴¹ The image also echoes that of the simile in the *Argonautica* passage, the path seen across the green plain (A.R. 1.546). Moreover, she is, we read, 'prima' (v.11), the *first* to initiate the inexperienced sea ('rudem... Amphitriten') but *rudis* in reference to earth or fields means 'untilled'.⁴² Enough hints I feel to suggest an old complaint.

ἄ μάκαρ, ὅστις ἔην κείνον χρόνον ἴδρις ἀοιδῆς,

38 Cf. Clare 1996:64, 'Apollonius in his poem presents a final, not a first meeting between the pair. In short, love at first sight between Peleus and Thetis is not an Argonautic episode.'

39 On 'nutricum' (64.18), note Fitzgerald 1995:151, 'The emerging of the nymphs from the water is also the emergence in the Latin language of the desirable world of Greek art, for the breasts of the nymphs are an allusion, a neologism appearing in the Latin language to give us a glimpse of the Greek.' More than a glimpse, I'd say, the positioning of 'nutricum tenus exstantes' has their jutting breasts obstructing the main caesura.

40 A.R. 4.865-80. Thus on a rereading, 'The allusions to scenes involving Thetis in *Iliad* 18 and *Argonautica* 4 are preparing the *doctus lector* for the entrance of that goddess into the action.' (Clare 1996:64).

41 Godwin 1995:139.

42 *L&S* 1 I. On possible textual corruption of the line, O'Hara 2007:37. Cf. *ibid.* 40, 'Here it may be important to recall that the Argo as first ship was probably not a classical Greek myth at all, but developed in the Hellenistic or early Roman period, possibly as a result of a creative or perverse misreading of words in Euripides' *Andromache* 865 that could be taken to refer to the first ship, or to the Argo's maiden voyage.' On Theseus having sailed before the first boat, Theodorakopoulos 2000:139, 'This can only mean that the tapestry is either mendacious or prophetic, and this crucial difference is all the more difficult to determine because there is no acknowledged author or craftsman responsible for it.'

Μουσάων θεράπων, ὅτ' ἀκήρατος ἦν ἔτι λειμών·
 νῦν δ' ὅτε πάντα δέδασται, ἔχουσι δὲ πείρατα τέχνη,
 ὕστατοι ὥστε δρόμου καταλειπόμεθ', οὐδέ πη ἔστι
 πάντη παπταίνοντα νεοζυγῆς ἄρμα πελάσσαι.
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The ploughed field and Choerilus' chariot of song. Perhaps the use of 'currum' (v.9), the ship as chariot of the sea, is then a less peculiar image than first appeared or more pointedly peculiar. The Argo has sailed, the story told and retold. There were no new stories, the Samian epicist complained. Apollonius took a worn myth and created a Hellenistic epic incorporating its own poetics.⁴³ In 64's reworking of the launch (vv.11-18), we have the dilemma, dialogue with prior treatments and a striking solution - 'When Peleus met Thetis' - a version never heard before!⁴⁴ Or has it? 'fertur' insists the narrator. At the point of embarking on what appears an entirely new course, the narrator steps forward to assure us it's an age-old tale.

In this opening chapter, we have been largely concerned with the examination of some of the more obvious intertexts of the 'proem', considering how we grade their relevance and to what extent we admit their context at any one reading adjusts our negotiation with the story from the outset. However, this is a story being *told* and in addition to any close reworking of sources by a *doctus poeta* through which meaning is constantly nuanced, there is also its subjective narrator with whose manipulations we must contend.

43 On the Hellenistic negotiation with poetic authority and the literature of the past, note Morrison 2007:17, 'Callimachus, Theocritus and Apollonius overcome such problems through experimentation with the possibilities offered by different types of narrators and their juxtaposition - new voices (appropriating Archaic voices) rather than simply new content.' And esp. *ibid.*, 'It is not simply that Theocritus encountered Homer, Pindar and Euripides as texts to be read, nor because he himself was read in this manner, nor even because of the collection of all of these authors in one place where they could be read, that Hellenistic poets became acutely aware of their relationship to the poetry of the past. It is just as important that *Theocritus* read these poets, and responded with his own individual aims and artistic choices.'

44 On the prologue in general, Clare 1996:80, 'Allusion here is intended to unsettle the narrative and, by extension, the reader. The confusion engendered is a foreshadowing of the twists and turns the narrative will take throughout the course of the poem, and in all of this process the *Argonautica* of Apollonius plays a primary, pivotal role.'

3. I, Catullus

We shall now look at ways in which the narrator reveals himself as a subjective, intrusive presence in the poem. This will be done through considering both the poetic devices which highlight his involvement and noting the evaluative language used to convey and elicit emotional responses.

In outlining the visible *persona*, we shall examine his relationship with the author, considering the narrative techniques which guide the story and how the various distances we measure between author and narrator affect our readings of the text. Again we are faced with multiple options and the response we take at any one reading alters the interpretation. To take a polarising example, do we find the narrator naïve or collusive? Do we lean to the former and observe the work of an author ironically playful with his creation? Or to the latter and read warily, doubting the narrator's sincerity?⁴⁵ If we can differentiate between allusions, those (for example) we might consider nuance, a teasing memory of something else, and the close lexical adaptations which require to be positioned and interpreted besides parallel texts, how much erudition can we then impart to our narrator?

We shall throughout this section take into consideration intertextual readings which are filtered by our perceptions of his *persona* and where they can sit comfortably within the strategies of narrator or author (or both).

i. Performing Catullus

On several occasions the narrator disrupts the 'story' to engage directly with its cast. Apostrophe is a feature of epic⁴⁶ (and other genres) but its frequency here, given the relatively small scale of the poem, is uncommon, and I believe, designedly so, a technique employed in establishing a colourful narrative *persona*.⁴⁷

45 Cf. O'Hara 2007:44, 'The narrator's investment in the truth of the heroic age, and the way that the poem challenges the reader's ability to stay with him, suggest that the inconsistency about the first boat is not merely "playful", and that issues of the truth and falsity of myth and of the reliability of the narrator should be an important part of our experience of the poem.' A question of sincerity as old as Hesiod, ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, ἴδμεν δ' εὖτ' ἐθέλωμεν ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι (Hes. *Th.* 27-8).

46 On apostrophe to characters in epic (esp. Homer), see Block 1982, Richardson 1990:171-4, Morrison 2007:91-2.

47 In the 408 lines of the poem, there are five instances of apostrophe (three within the ekphrasis), accounting for thirty lines. Discounting the direct speeches of the internal narrators Ariadne (70 lines), Aegeus (23) and the Parcae (58), apostrophe alone thus accounts for eleven percent of the narrative. On apostrophe and interjections in Hellenistic epyllia, note Fantuzzi & Hunter 2004:193, 'We may suspect

sic neque tum mitrae neque tum fluitantis amictus
illa vicem curans toto ex te pectore, Theseu,
toto animo, tota pendebat perdita mente.
64.68-70

This apostrophe occurs early within the ekphrasis, as the poem is shifting from the pictorial description of Ariadne on the coverlet into narrative, the background story of Theseus' coming to Crete. The emotion has been building from the interjection 'eheu' (v.61), the narrator crying out in response to her transfixed gaze, himself captured by the grief in her sweet sad eyes 'maestis... ocellis' (v.60), until he identifies and addresses the source, 'Theseu' (v.69). Iconic word order nestles that source 'te' securely within the breast. Repetition consumes heart, spirit and reasoning, the final element 'tota... mente' split at main caesura and verse-end by the alliterative 'pendebat perdita' splinters rational thought, with a clutching desperation 'with all - she was clinging destroyed - her reasoning' whilst the natural rhythm of the hexameter binds 'perdita mente', all reasoning gone.⁴⁸ Artifice here *enhances* the emotion. She is entirely lost and the narrator appears immersed in that loss, yelling out a 'She loves you, she needs you, Theseus!' at the forever departing vessel.⁴⁹ 'a misera' (v.71), he shakes his head and steadies himself to relate the onset of her pain. The use of exclamation is again indicative of involvement, of emotion invested in the narrative.

Hutchinson is probably right to describe 'spinosas' (v.72) in the subsequent reference to Venus sowing *thorny* cares in her heart as 'picturesque' though I am less certain that the images 'somewhat mitigate the appearance of involvement.'⁵⁰ It is less, I think, a case of conflict between juxtaposed passages of distance and emotion but with passages of *composure* and emotion, of how the narrator affects to have the story in hand but is persistently pulled into the narrative. Yearning for a distant mythic past is clearly a

that, on the whole, shorter hexameter poems, unlike Apollonius' *Argonautica*, more strictly preserved an epic discretion in severely limiting 'authorial intrusion' into the narrative, but not enough survives to confirm these suspicions.'

48 Whilst it is not the focus of our analysis, we shouldn't forget that poetic language in its sounds, in the disjunctions and collocations made possible by arrangement and rhythm, itself suggests readings besides those imposed by grammar and syntax. Cf. Conrad 1965:213, 'As if pauses before and after *tota* were not enough to set it off emphatically, Catullus has even linked the two words between *tota* and *mente* by alliteration with the result that the separated elements are isolated even by the sound patterns from their context.'

49 Cf. Hutchinson 1988:304, 'The first scene on the couch is described with a passion quite abnormal in such *ecphraseis*. It is deliberately left unclear at first to what degree this passion (61f.; 69f.) simply pictures the passion of Ariadne; but the suggestion is that the poet too is sympathetically involved.'

50 Hutchinson 1988:305. So too Quinn 1970:313, 'An elegant, distancing line; the latent metaphor in *spinosas* is brought out by *serens*.'

part of that but feels more enmeshed within the emotional struggle itself as set against the telling of a story rather than there being (primarily) a dichotomy between distancing artifice and passionate involvement. A narrative fiction of 64, felt most keenly within the ekphrasis, is that there exists somewhere a more linearly constructed (and more objective?) account but we'll never get to hear it because of the inability of this narrator to refrain from interruption and from digression.

Following the exclamation comes reflection on her suffering which segues into the backstory accounting for the plague in Athens and the nature of the city's tithe to Minos. It is allotted a scant ten lines (vv.76-85) before the focus is shifted once more to an Ariadne now looking at Theseus for the first time. Indeed, his heroic motivation (he has come to liberate his city from a Cretan king's tyranny, vv.81-3) seems less important than the fact he is there and can be looked upon by her, object and catalyst for the awakening of desire. And after eight verses exploring the inception of a maiden's passion, the narrator is suitably aroused so as to burst into apostrophe again as his involvement leads him to address Cupid and Venus concerning their effect upon the girl (vv.94-102).

Quinn's synopsis places vv.94-8 under 'Ariadne in Love' within a flashback spanning vv.76-115, thus framing this apostrophe and entirety of the narrator's account of her suffering (vv.86-104) with the narratives of Theseus' arrival and of his killing of the Minotaur.⁵¹ This partitioning blurs a key facet of the narrator's approach, namely his focusing on scenes of interest and entirely passing over others without so much as a summary. It is an approach which depends upon a reader disposed towards episodic narration, a reader who can 'fill the gaps', a reader carried along by the force of the narrator's personality, or most likely some combination thereof. In the epic narrative of the *Argonautica*, almost a thousand lines follow Eros' wounding of Medea (A.R. 3.298ff.) before the day of Jason's contest (A.R. 3.1225ff.), incorporating the interview with Aeetes, Medea's dream and vacillations, her meeting with Jason at the shrine, his sacrificial ritual to Hecate following her instructions, etc.. Here, only apostrophe and the image of lovesick Ariadne at prayer bridge to Theseus' *aristeia*.⁵²

Since first drawing attention towards Ariadne on the coverlet, the narrator's chain of thought can be summarised thus - 'How in love she is! How did she come to be so in love? How in love she was! What did she do for love?' There appears to be an obsession

51 Quinn 1970:298.

52 In contrast with Aeetes his epic counterpart, Minos, the villain of our piece, has been relegated to two localising references 'attigit iniusti regis Gortynia templa' (v.75) and 'magnanimum ad Minoa venit' (v.85), whereby the second advances Theseus to his halls from the first landing him in Minos' Crete.

threatening his storytelling until after narrating Theseus' victory over the Minotaur and for the most part in simile (vv.105-113), that moment of clarity.

sed quid ego a primo digressus carmine plura
commemorem...
64.116-7

The narrator poses as though suddenly aware that his absorption in the scene on the coverlet has led him to digress too far into the associated myth. But what is his *primum carmen*? Ariadne on the coverlet? Or is he acknowledging that he has veered considerably from his earlier promise to the Argonauts to sing their praises ('meo vos carmine compellabo', v.24)? Theseus might have emerged from the labyrinth but the narrator is having difficulty extricating himself. This break-off device can by its very deployment play up a narrator's control as he returns to the main narrative, e.g. ἄλλὰ τὰ μὲν τηλοῦ κεν ἀποπλάγξειεν ἀοιδῆς (A.R. 1.1220), on which Morrison comments, 'This stress on the ἀοιδή ('song') and its proper arrangement keeps the focus firmly on the narrator.'⁵³

Additionally, and importantly, a narrator by intruding to comment upon a perceived deviation in his narration and in preparing to correct the course as though what remains to be said were still unscripted, can create an atmosphere of performance - an explicit instance of what Morrison refers to as pseudo-spontaneity. Discussing its various functions in Archaic Greek poetry, he notes how an impression of extempore composition can furthermore 'stress the sincerity of the narrator'⁵⁴ and how pseudo-spontaneity 'gives the author considerable control over what to include in a poem and how to structure a work.'⁵⁵

Immediately after the Argonautic break-off quoted above, the Apollonian narrator corrected the course and resumed the tale of Hylas' abduction by the water-nymph. Feigning a similar realisation of error, our narrator takes stock, rushes back to Ariadne and within five verses has wrested her from a loving family and posited her and us once more

53 Morrison 2007:295. Cf. (on its many incidences in Pindar) *ibid.* 69, 'Those which portray the narrator as having gone off course make the most explicit reference to the song as an ongoing composition...' Cf. Carey (also on Pindar) 1995:100, 'The ode progresses as though the poet were composing orally and did not have the opportunity to alter or expunge, merely to redirect.' And *ibid.* 101, 'The dramatic quality of such passages also enlivens the performance as experience by turning the audience into onlookers witnessing a developing and tense situation.'

54 Morrison 2007:70. Cf. *ibid.* 71 (on the apostrophe to Leto in the Archaic *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, vv. 14ff.), 'The apostrophe might seem irrelevant to the greater purpose of the hymn, and to have intruded 'spontaneously', but this very impression makes the praise of Leto appear sincere.' And note *ibid.* 92 (on less involved Homeric usage), 'Homeric apostrophe to characters is in fact remarkably free of emotional content.'

55 Morrison 2007:71.

on Dia.⁵⁶ ‘I’m aware of the dilemma,’ he postures, ‘But what can I do? This is interesting stuff. Aren’t you absorbed too?’ We can thus smile at the mock improvisation and coaxed by an engaging manner, fall in with the persisting detour and do not concern ourselves unduly with when we shall surface again in Thessaly.

It should also be stressed that sincerity is not incompatible with artifice. The narrative techniques utilised to tell the story ‘his way’ do not *per se* rule out a genuine interest in the content. Again, it is how we as readers choose to measure the level of performance. At one extreme, we could allocate the technical use of the break-off entirely to the author, although we could hardly excuse the narrator of being overwhelmed by the wealth of material; the scale of the poem hardly allows for narratorial crisis.⁵⁷ We could see him as deeply concerned with and passionate about the material, that he really did lose focus for a while. There is a danger, however, that absolute rupture might ironise the narrator. For example, when the ekphrasis nears its close and our gaze is directed towards the depiction of the approaching Bacchus, the narrator’s urging of Ariadne to look as well ‘te quaerens, Ariadna, tuoque incensus amore’ (v.253) is a lapse that could provoke laughter. ‘Don’t despair, it’s okay, Ariadne. Bacchus is coming for you. Look over there!’ he is telling her, but having just returned to ekphrasis in its modern sense of plastic description (‘at parte ex alia...’ v.251), he is in fact pointing out the embroidered position of Bacchus on the coverlet to an Ariadne incapable of turning round.⁵⁸ From a privileged position alongside the author, we smile or sneer as we might at the tragicomic Polyphemus of Theoc. 11.

Conversely, assimilating narrator and author and so putting ‘Catullus’ on the stage presses other dilemma upon us. Either the sincerity is a sham and sheen is everything or we credit it to the author likewise, the pervasive nostalgia heartfelt, the poem’s concluding indignation entirely genuine. Too close an alignment might ascribe the same lack of sophistication to the author that disjunction did to the narrator.

However, there are levels of collusion, shades of separation, and a multiplicity of readings hovering between these poles. Let us consider again the singular instance of a break-off in the poem. Whatever our stance on the relationship of author and narrator at this point, what is not contestable, by merit of its physical existence in the text, is that the

56 Hutchinson 1988:305, ‘The writing, even as it stresses the syntax of rejected digression, suggests the poet’s emotional concern.’ Cf. Jenkyns 1982:123.

57 On epic, note Hinds 1998:94, ‘One of the ways in which an epicist marks his genre as the highest and most ambitious is to stress his incomplete capacity to control it.’ For a study of the deterioration of narratorial authority in the *Argonautica*, see Morrison 2007:271-311.

58 His Big Book of Myths According to They Say has stories in the wrong order, others different from those related anywhere else and some incidents completely missing!

author constructed it thus. Regardless of intentions, its presence in the narrative calls attention to his relationship with the narrator. The application of the technique involves awareness of a digression that is either ongoing, or alluded to in cases of the ‘pious’ break-off by which the narrator stops short to avoid blasphemy,⁵⁹ and following awareness there is a return to the main narrative. The author is advertising by its inclusion that Ariadne is (for now) the *primum carmen*. The narrator is captivated by a new song that he always intended to sing.⁶⁰ And yet, he can still be complicit, the break-off functioning for him as a rhetorical flourish. The exclamation assures us that all the pieces are still in play but for the time being we shall linger with Ariadne. The affectation need not be disingenuous, a theatricality of delivery need not invalidate sincerity of emotion. The contrivances can be seen as those of a showman, not a charlatan. Warden’s reconciliatory comment in his conclusion to his restructuring of 64 into two movements, ‘a poet does not have to choose between being earnest and being playful’ might apply equally well to our narrator.⁶¹

Moreover, whilst the author-narrator dynamic is variable and requires us to make decisions as readers that affect how we read at any one time, what is consistent is the narrator’s character. He is digressive, distracted, involved but reliably so. These are traits and we can ‘read’ him. We might not know quite where his focus will fall but a familiarity with his manner can serve to forecast when change is ahead. If we consider the ekphrasis from beginning to break-off (vv.52-117), we might separate its elements thus: description of figures on the coverlet (vv.52-67), apostrophe and exclamation (vv.68-75), narrative flashback of Theseus’ arrival (vv.76-93), apostrophe to Cupid and Venus (vv.94-102), narrative flashback of Theseus and the Minotaur (vv.103-115), break-off. The basic pattern becomes obvious: action, reaction, rinse, repeat. We come to anticipate, because it is the nature of his performance, that emotional response is a prelude to change. His conspicuous presence serves to put the reader at ease, to both signpost and smooth transitions. To step up to the level of author and text and strain for an analogy, we might think of him in this respect as flight attendant to the author’s pilot. There might be turbulence ahead but we relax in comforting hands.

Having become better acquainted with the narrator and considered some ways in which his demarcation as a character assists the telling of an unusually weighted narrative,

59 For useful categorisations of break-offs in Pindar, Morrison 2007:68.

60 Alternatively it can be seen as surrender of voice, so Theodorakopoulos 2000:139, ‘Moreover, the authorial voice, which makes use at the beginning of the hymnal ego (24), retreats entirely after admitting that the labyrinth has worked.’ I prefer to see it as feigned, or as wilful submission, which does not of course prevent any unease felt at an apparent loss of authority.

61 Warden 1998:412.

let us flashback ourselves to the poem's first sequence of narrative/apostrophe/narrative and gazing again upon those Nereids relocated in the bay of Pagasae, explore how his performance fares with innovation.

ii. Man without a Muse

For the narrator the emergence of the sea-nymphs effectively scuttled any linear telling of an *Argonautica*; their marvelling at the 'monstrum' (v.15) a modest precursor to the fuller treatment given the heroes' viewing of them, itself underlined by the emphatic placement and extravagant hyperbaton of 'marinas' (v.16) and 'Nymphas' (v.17) at successive verse-ends. The Argo is all well and good, but look Nereids! Something better had come along.

tum Thetidis Peleus incensus fertur amore,
tum Thetis humanos non despexit hymenaeos,
tum Thetidi pater ipse iugandum Pelea sensit.
64.19-21

On the innovative content, Jenkyns, happy to mix and match, declares, 'it surely becomes evident that Catullus is following the tradition that represented Peleus as the happiest of mortals, and rejecting those sources which made Thetis a reluctant bride... The notion that Peleus and Thetis both fell in love at first sight, found in no other author, is probably Catullus' own invention.'⁶² Gaisser's comments are more reticent: 'And, although (or perhaps because) it lacks authority, it is introduced with another occurrence of the authority formula: *tum Thetidis Peleus incensus fertur amore* (19), "it was then that Peleus is said... then Thetis... then... the father..." But emphasis, repetition, and appeal to authority do not make it so.'⁶³ No, they do not, but the 'authority formula' serves more functions besides the calling upon tradition as witness or distancing the narrative. Regardless of the unusual nature of the material, structurally it signals change: 'they say' announces a new narrative is under way. However, before exploring this and further functions, some unpicking still needs to be done for both critics offer different responses to a common assumption, that the components of vv.19-21 constitute a temporal as well as syntactic whole. Quinn in contrast, admits his own unease with the construction when he

62 Jenkyns 1982:106.

63 Gaisser 1995:585. Cf. Clare 1996:61, 'The unexpectedness of this narrative shift may be gauged by the fact that Catullus feels it necessary to reinforce its introduction by frequent naming of the lovers..' On the shift as 'e-gression', see Theodorakopoulos 2000:125.

writes, '*fertur* seems out of harmony with the positive statements of 20 and 21.'⁶⁴

'*fertur*' marks a new direction for the narrative but it qualifies only the first element, the topic of that narrative, 'Peleus' love for Thetis'. Neither '*despexit*' nor '*sensit*' are subordinated and each of the three verbs has a different subject. Anaphora and polyptoton stylistically link but do not homogenise subsequent developments.⁶⁵ They are not concurrent, unless in that moment of Peleus falling in love, we are also to envisage Thetis reciprocating the amorous gaze with thoughts of marriage and somewhere a watching father nodding assent. Better, I think, to regard the sequence 'tum ... tum ... tum ...' as cumulative, the key notes of the story linked by structural repetition: first of all Peleus saw and wanted her, secondly Thetis was not in those days hostile to the concept of union with a mortal and thirdly, in these circumstances though not necessarily for those motives, the father made arrangements. Background materials to the wedding day.

The polyptoton on Thetis, object, subject and indirect object, makes her the hub around which associations revolve but (*pace* Jenkyns) it need not bind her in a union of mutual adoration. The 'amorous gaze', the moment passion arises, need not be a reciprocal event.⁶⁶ Nor does litotes transform '*non despexit*' into a boundless desire, and '*humanos*' is specifically non-specific.⁶⁷ On this reading, v.20 does not in fact reject the context of bitter and lasting separation which accompany those Argonautic allusions foreshadowing her arrival in our narrative. 'Then Thetis did not despise marriage with a man' ...but later she had cause to regret. Nothing in the text indicates her being aware of his gaze. Observation on her emotional attachment to Peleus is markedly absent. Her only appearance in the poem is as a reflection in his eye and the only future commentary related to their union comes in the embedded internal narrative of the Parcae's song. Furthermore, the traditions for her reluctance, for the exceptional status of Peleus, and for the interference of Jupiter share a common source: Pindar. He is a poet whose sophisticated economy and shifting story-lines provide a valuable model for the use of concise and evocative imagery and for the construction of intertwined narratives: 'Archaic lyric poetry knows of course, more complex narratives: the enfolded tales of Proitos and his daughters at Bacchylides 11.40-

64 Quinn 1970:304.

65 On the passion of the poem's polyptoton, Newman 1990:401, 'the technique of poem 64 is extreme, almost hysterical in its lyric crescendos.'

66 It is likewise Ariadne who burns on seeing Theseus in our poem, '*hunc simul ac cupido conspexit lumine virgo*' (v.86), cf. A.R. 3.287-9 (Medea staring at Jason). There are no eyes meeting across crowded courts.

67 Cf. Gaisser 1995:584, 'Catullus asserts her willingness if not her enthusiasm.' She also takes '*pater ipse*' to be Nereus, on which reading some of my comments made here would be transposed to v.26, '*Iuppiter ipse*'.

112 illustrate one kind of complexity, as the selectivity, ellipse, swift transition, and temporal dislocation (Medea’s prophecy) of Pindar, *Pythian* 4, illustrate another. Such complexities emphasise the poet’s control of narrative time and theme, and as such find their true heirs in Callimachean narratives, such as the *Hecale* and the ‘Victoria Berenices’, and later in the elaborate patterns of Catullus 64, rather than in the shorter Hellenistic ‘epyllia’.⁶⁸

In *Nemean* 4, Peleus conquers Iolcus, is saved by Chiron from Acastus’ plot and after wrestling her shape-shifting form, marries Thetis. The struggle is conveyed with compressed flashes of imagery.

πῦρ δὲ παγκρατὲς θρασυμαχάνων τε λεόντων
 ὄνυχας ὀξυτάτους ἀκμάν
 καὶ δεινοτάτων σχάσαις ὀδόντων
 ἔγαμεν ὑψιθρόνων μίαν Νηρεΐδων.
 εἶδεν δ’ εὐκυκλὸν ἔδραν,
 τὰν οὐρανοῦ βασιλῆες πόντου τ’ ἐφεζόμενοι
 δῶρα καὶ κράτος ἐξέφαναν ἐγγενὲς αὐτῷ.
 Pi. *N.* 4.62-8

She is fire and claws and teeth but Peleus endures and marries her. Another Aeginetan ode, *Nemean* 3 utilises primarily the deeds of the young Achilles in its praise of Aristocleides but still references the father.

καὶ ποντίαν Θέτιν κατέμαρψεν
 ἔγκονητί.
 Pi. *N.* 3.35-6

Again she resists. Again he triumphs. Pindar’s wrestling matches are the first surviving poetic account: ‘In its early form the tale evidently concerned a hero who caught sight of a bevy of Nereids, pursued them as they ran for their father for protection, and caught the one who turned out to be Thetis.’⁶⁹ Does our narrator then shy from mentioning a struggle which could obfuscate the projection of a compliant Thetis? Or perhaps piously refrain from an account of a man forcing himself upon a goddess? Possibilities, but Pindar, a poet apt to break-off to avert uttering blasphemies, clearly does not see their contest in a negative light. Overcoming the shifting forms of Thetis is an accomplishment for which the man is praised. Peleus’ status is defined by his relationships, husband of Thetis and

68 Fantuzzi & Hunter 2004:194-5.

69 Burnett 2005:131. See *ibid.* n. 26 for references to the pursuit scene in surviving vase paintings.

father of Achilles. In declining to relate his efforts to win the former as wife, the Catullan narrator has deprived Peleus of his *aristeia* and their union is then orchestrated solely by the father. In *Isthmian* 8 (again Aeginetan), Themis warns of the danger of Thetis giving birth to a god and urges she be given in marriage to the virtuous Peleus (Pi. I. 8.35a-40). Her counsel ends any potential quarrel between the suitors Zeus and Poseidon (Pi. I. 8.45-47).⁷⁰

We are not given the specifics but such deliberations hover behind v.21 and the perceptions of the father that then was a convenient time to make a match. The allusion to the prophecies of Themis will be seen again in the scars visible on her son Prometheus (vv.294-7).⁷¹ Thus two of our verses are grounded, albeit obliquely, in prior poetic treatments and the innovation is the first line alone, a chronological shift announced by a provocative appeal to an unattested authority. It is not dampened by juxtaposition to the following statements, not blended by the symmetry of the artistic arrangement but stands in bold relief. The narrator is drawing attention to the act of composition, calling upon tradition and adding twists of his own creation to form something unlike what has gone before, a method of composition which is in itself in accord with the poetic treatments of the past - ‘I am a poet and this is *my* song.’ The authority formula is thus multi-functional; a structural marker, a signpost of an innovation, programmatic commentary upon *techne* and, indirectly, upon poetic inspiration. The device is the narrator’s preferred method of announcing new narrative content.⁷² What is absent here, at a critical juncture in the poem, is also what was absent from the beginning - an appeal to a Muse.

o nimis optato saeculorum tempore nati
 heroes, salvete, deum genus! o bona matrum
 progenies, salvete iter<um... (23b)
 vos ego saepe, meo vos carmine compellabo.
 64.22-4

A theme is announced but there appears no request for assistance. Instead, astonishment at the union of goddess and mortal is rendered in apostrophe. His ‘lyrical outburst’⁷³ praises the good fortune of the Argonauts to belong to the time of myth, their semi-divine status,

⁷⁰ Reference to Poseidon’s part in the affair are also made at Pi. N. 5.37ff., Zeus persuades him to relinquish his interest.

⁷¹ Prometheus too claimed knowledge of the prophecy (from his mother). See A. Pr: 907-14.

⁷² And with v.21, he quickens the pace, the first verse to contain more dactyls than spondees. A shifting through the gears underpinning the new course.

⁷³ Quinn 1970:304. Hutchinson (2008:306) well describes the shift in tone, ‘the writing suddenly swells into rapture with the mention of Peleus’ and Thetis’ love and extraordinary marriage (mortal to immortal)...’

and builds to an enthusiastic promise: ‘Often I will sing for you!’ The intertwining diction ‘You, I... in my (yes, you) song... I will address’ underlines a desire to bridge the distance, to relocate a time of myth within his song.⁷⁴ ‘Ego compellabo’ he proclaims, sweeping onto the stage alone, and announcing himself for the first time. *This* is his song and he is passionate about his subject, ‘an age longed for beyond measure.’ There is an almost jealous admiration to the phrase.⁷⁵ On *nimis*, Jenkyns comments, ‘The idea of excess is basic to the word.’⁷⁶ Moreover, this not a momentary ecstasy; ‘saepe’ he insists, that is to say, ‘The way I feel now I will feel again and again.’ The style of the utterance is hymnal but the sentiment personal.⁷⁷ The emotional richness of the address is consistent with the *persona*, with the involved manner of the narrator we saw in the apostrophe to Ariadne but here the address enriched by an accompanying religious texture. The power inherent in the language of faith has been commandeered to serve a more personal commitment. These are observations on method, the means by which the reader is swept along. To examine the more subtle functions at play we must again consider tradition and some crucial intertexts.

‘Ἰλατ’, ἀριστῆες, μακάρων γένος, αἶδε δ’ αἰοῖδαί
εἰς ἔτος ἔξ ἔτεος γλυκερώτεραι εἶεν αἰεῖν
ἀνθρώποις. Ἦδη γὰρ ἐπὶ κλυτὰ πείραθ’ ἰκάνω
ὑμετέρων καμάτων,
A.R. 4.1773-6

With this address, the narrator of the *Argonautica* rushes the tale to its conclusion, five more lines convey the ship without incident from Aegina to Pagasae and the voyage is at an end. In the tone of the apostrophe, the personal engagement and reference to the enduring nature of song, our narrator is indebted to his predecessor: ‘The valour of the heroes could not be lauded more lavishly; we feel too a vivid personal contact between them and the poet.’⁷⁸ Yet the rapid summary which follows the effusive apostrophe closes the book and if we allow the context of closure to echo into our text, then our narrator

74 Hutchinson 1988:306, n. 56 cites Call. *Dian.* 137ff. for a similar sense of the ‘poet’s personal involvement with the remote subjects of his song.’ Cf. Warden 1998:403, ‘*Compellare* has an urgency to it, a sense of needing to get someone to do something, or to explain something.’

75 Cf. Jenkyns 1982:107, ‘The mood is not precisely definable; I should describe it as joy tempered by a regret so akin to pleasure that it seems virtually to be a part of the joy itself.’ It is not exactly nostalgia, there is an alertness to the tempo, in the spilling-over verses and urgent repetition that undercuts wistfulness or reverie. By ‘almost jealous’ I mean to infer that flash of ‘but why not me?’ that can briefly impinge on the delight we take even in the successes of those dear to us.

76 Jenkyns 1982:107 n. 24.

77 On v.24, Quinn 1970:305, ‘A common formula of hymns.’ Cf. Jenkyns (1982:107) who notes on the expanding forms of appellation, ‘these varied forms of address also imitate the enumeration of cult titles in cletic prayer.’

78 Hutchinson 1988:141.

appears to have made a non-event not only of the final leg but of the entire expedition: ‘Thus the educated reader knows to suspect that the frame might never be resumed and that the expected structure of the poem is already thrown off balance: far from being the beginning of the digression, this is in fact the premature ending of the Argonautic poem.’⁷⁹

If we wander a little further down this trail, there are other subversive possibilities. As the commentators note, ‘heroes’ and ‘deum genus’ also echo Hesiod’s ‘ἀνδρῶν ἡρώων θεῶν γένος’ (Hes. *Op.* 159)⁸⁰ occurring in a passage describing the age of heroes which leads to an unfulfilled wish, Μηκέτ’ ἔπειτ’ ὄφελλον ἐγὼ πέμπτοισι μετεῖναι | ἀνδράσιν (*Op.* 174-5). What triggered the *makarismos* in our narrative? Where did we leave our Argonauts? Ogling Nereids (vv.16-18). Did the Argo’s noble voyage develop into a voyeuristic cruise for nymphs? Is our narrator yearning for an age of battle and the best of men, the sort of men who could lift rocks that not even two of the men who live now could lift, or getting hot under the collar for supernatural beauties? Speculative, but despite (or because of) the decorum of the language, not wholly implausible.

More relevant to the role rather than the character of the narrator, are the allusions not to the closing apostrophe of the *Argonautica* but to its opening one. In contrast to its epic predecessors,⁸¹ it does not begin with an invocation to the Muses but with a strong first person statement of intent ‘μνήσομαι’ (A.R. 1.2) and a divine addressee in Apollo, ‘Ἀρχόμενος σέο, Φοῖβε’ (A.R. 1.1). The god, does not, however, serve as surrogate for a Muse but as a starting point from which the narrative can proceed (specifically his prophecy concerning Pelias and the one-sandalled man).⁸² It is only after a summary of the background motivations for the myth and manoeuvring Jason into meeting Pelias, that the Muses appear, prior to the naming of the heroes and after ‘another bold first-person statement’⁸³ μῦθησαίμην (A.R. 1.20). And their arrival is controversial, for the narrator does not require them to conduct the catalogue but rather exclaims ‘Μοῦσαι δ’ ὑποφήτορες εἶεν ἀοιδῆς’ (A.R. 1.22). The meaning of ὑποφήτορες (‘inspirers’ or

79 Theodorakopoulos 2000:126. Cf. (on the difficulties of reading without a map) *ibid.* 122, ‘the structure of the poem overthrows generic conventions, and dismantles the frameworks of story-telling to such a degree that linearity ceases to be a useful model of narrative.’

80 Quinn 1970:305.

81 So Morrison 2007:287, ‘there is an invocation to the Muse or Muses in the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, in the Cyclic *Thebaid* and that of Antimachus, the Cyclic *Epigoni* and Choerilus’ *Persica*.’

82 See Morrison 2007:287, ‘The address to Apollo does not resemble the opening Muse invocations in Archaic epic, which are requests for information using the imperative. Rather the impression is of a declaration of where the epic is to begin (with Apollo, or rather his prophecy - “such was the oracle Pelias heard”, v.5).’

83 Morrison 2007:288.

‘collaborators’ or ‘interpreters’?) has proved a contentious issue for scholars but as Morrison observes, ‘whatever the precise details of the relationship of narrator to Muses at the beginning of the epic, it is clearly different from that of previous poets, and the shift in the Muses’ function within Apollonian epic should not escape us.’⁸⁴

At a roughly equivalent stage in the narrative (making considerable allowances for the scale of the work) the Catullan narrator, about to deliver a new song, does not so cloud the issue. The Muses marginalised in the opening of the *Argonautica* are overlooked entirely. Instead he recalls the strong individual statement of narratorial control in his use of ‘compellabo’, relies upon his negotiations with the poetic tradition (into which the *Argonautica* has been assimilated) to foreground his autonomy and underpins the whole with the force of his personality. Moreover, in conflating echoes of the *Argonautica*’s opening and close, he appears to have now compressed the entirety of the epic within the apostrophe and having simultaneously launched and docked the intertextual Argo, he can proceed, perfectly placed, with a Thessalian epilogue.⁸⁵ If there are difficulties of detail, he can always ask the characters.

teque adeo eximie taedis felicibus aucte,
Thessaliae columen Peleu, cui Iuppiter ipse,
ipse suos divum genitor concessit amores;
tene Thetis tenuit pulcerrima Nereine?
tene suam Tethys concessit ducere neptem,
Oceanusque, mari totum qui amplectitur orbem?
64.25-30

The apostrophe continues, one hero singled out for his privileged position amongst the many and the swell of feeling channelled.⁸⁶ Ah, but especially you, the man whose lot was more than to live in the age of heroes and be counted amongst them, you Peleus, the man who married a goddess. We return to the image of Peleus on the deck of the Argo and to the sea-nymph reflected in his eye, not just any of the daughters of Nereus, but the one singled out by the amorous gaze of Jupiter himself. Peleus’ love rival was the ruler of

84 Morrison 2007:293. For summary and discussion of the debate and the Apollonian narrator’s relationship to the Muses, see *ibid.* 286-293.

85 Note that the version of the Argo’s voyage ending with the marriage of Jason and Medea occurs in Hesiod (*Th.* 994-1002). In the *Argonautica*, Jason and Medea are wed in Phaeacia, on which Theodorakopoulos 1998:196, ‘The wedding is clearly not a *nostos* nor a *telos*, in the sense of a goal, of the poem’ citing A.R. 4.1161-3, the narrator informing us the Jason had intended to marry in Iolcus. Our narrator, in finding another wedding with which to close his summary of the expedition, could perhaps be seen as commenting on a dissatisfaction with the Apollonian conclusion. Though of course, what he offers is not closure but a new opening.

86 ‘*adeo*: marks a climax; *L & S* III C’ (Quinn 1970:305).

heaven, a rival who relented. ‘ipse... ipse!’, the narrator repeats, his struggle to master incredulity highlighting the exceptional status conferred upon Peleus.

Carried away by his exhilaration we cannot stop to say ‘This isn’t the story I know’ as the narrator turns not to a Muse but to an alternative source of authority, an eye-witness.⁸⁷ The insistent anaphora of the vocatives ‘tene... tene’ builds upon ‘teque Peleu’, and he questions him as though needing confirmation for his mind reels in the lingering wonder of quadrisyllabic ‘Nereine’. The questions are peppered with proper names - Thetis, Daughter of Nereus, Tethys, Oceanus - the divine household to which Peleus will be linked by marriage. It is not that Nereus is made to defer the decision (in any case already made by Jupiter) to his own parents but rather a dazzled narrator scanning up the family tree of an illustrious ‘gens Oceani’, and the head of the family whose compass is the entire sea spreads across the final verse.⁸⁸ How did this happen, Peleus? Tell me *your* story. Yet the focalising manner is as old as Homer.

Ἐνθα τίνα πρῶτον τίνα δ’ ὕστατον ἔξενάριξας
Πατρόκλεις, ὅτε δὴ σε θεοὶ θάνατον δὲ κάλεσαν;
Il. 16.692-3

However, the Homeric narrator has his Muse, he is not feigning to interrogate Patroclus for a record of his kills. Our gaze is directed but distance maintained.⁸⁹ Quite unlike our narrator badgering Peleus. Did Thetis captivate you? Did the father agree to the match? Did you marry her then? The epic telling of a tale to its end has been replaced by the focus on something of particular interest. The distracted narrator has put to one side the enthusiastic promise to hymn the Argonauts whilst he unfolds a subsidiary sequence, one marital, not martial. It does not so much undermine the fervour of the general address as illustrate again his susceptibility to the tales suggested in the margins of a heroic narrative,

87 On the regular addressees of such questions, see e.g. Dover 1971:245 (on Theoc. 22.115ff., the narrator asking the Muse how it was that Polydeuces overcame Amycus), ‘The rhetorical question and the appeal to the Muse originate in epic motifs (e.g. *Il.* i.8f., ‘Which of the gods made them quarrel? The son of Leto and Zeus ...’) but are used also in Classical and Hellenistic poetry.’

88 Theodorakopoulos (2000:120) observes how the presence of Ocean at the end of the apostrophe offers an early image of enclosure, ‘evoking the way in which the images on the Homeric Shield of Achilles (the prototypical ekphrasis) are pictured as surrounded by Ocean, the appropriately cosmic boundary.’ On the genealogical interest, Quinn 1970:306 (without citations), ‘It seems to have been a Hellenistic trick to state explicitly the more remote family relationships of legendary characters (here 29 *neptem*) treating them for ironical effect as real persons...’ Whilst I doubt anyone’s maternal grandparents would thrill to be labelled remote relations, there is an element of scholarship to the references, albeit rudimentary.

89 The narrator’s apostrophe to Ariadne ‘te quaerens, Ariadna, tuoque incensus amore’ (v.253) is closer in this regard. The narrator directs her and our attention towards the approach of Bacchus and his entourage.

that persistent element of his *persona* key to his narrative method.⁹⁰

At the culmination of his enquiry there is no turning back. His thoughts spill over into the wedding, ‘*quae simul optatae finito tempore luces | advenere*’ (vv.31-2). The connecting relative has carried him from speculation to actualisation. It is another device to evoke an atmosphere of performance. On such a use in Pindar, Pfeijffer writes, ‘The next main clause then elaborates upon the association, which creates the illusion of the poet getting carried away by his thoughts, losing track of his main story line, and plunging into digression. Thus the procedure of introducing a myth by means of a relative pronoun syntactically mirrors the poet’s cognitive process on the level of the fiction of extemporizing speech.’⁹¹ The *tempus optatum* has been redefined as *optatae luces*. We never hear how that Catullan *Argonautica* might have turned out, only that after an unspecified amount of time (‘*finito tempore*’, v.31) and thirteen verses on from sighting the Nereids, wedding-bells are ringing.⁹²

It was the inception of a burning love which provoked the apostrophe and sent us forward in time without ever leaving the shoreline of Pagasae. Within the ekphrasis, the same motif, the awakening of desire, leads the narrator again into apostrophe, in an address not to Ariadne but to the source of her suffering.

heu misere exagitans immiti corde furores
sancte puer, curis hominum qui gaudia misces,
quaeque regis Golgos quaeque Idalium frondosum,
qualibus incensam iactastis mente puellam
fluctibus, in flavo saepe hospite suspirantem!
64.94-8

Whereas the questioning of Peleus followed a course of events that projected us to the wedding celebration, here attention is directed to the divinities that instil desire, calling upon Cupid and Venus before turning to their effect upon the girl and the betrayal to which passion drove her.⁹³

The relative clause attached to Cupid alludes to passages of both the *Iliad* and the *Argonautica*, to the pronouncement of Achilles to Priam that should Zeus will it, man

90 On ‘unusual narrative emphasis’, Morrison 2007:7, ‘This is the postponing or marginalisation of the ‘main event’ in a narrative where a greater part is devoted to what we might ordinarily consider peripheral events.’

91 Pfeijffer 1999:41.

92 Babin (1987:106) notes that we now have ‘three of the four primary elements of the epithalamium: the bride, the groom, and a relationship between them; we also find some secondary elements: praise of both bride and groom, as well as laudatory references to their ancestry, with indirect praise of their greatness.’

93 Cf. Morrison (on disjunction between author and narrator in Callimachus) 2007:34, “‘Callimachus’, the narrator, can do things Callimachus, the historical author, cannot, such as converse with Apollo.’

endures joy mixed with sorrow, ᾧ μὲν κ' ἀμμίξας δῶη Ζεὺς τερπικέραυτος, ἢ ἄλλοτε μὲν τε κακῶ ὅ γε κύρεται, ἄλλοτε δ' ἐσθλῶ· (*Il.* 24.529-30) and to the Apollonian narrator's weary acknowledgement, σὺν δέ τις αἰεὶ ἰπικρὴ παρμέμβλωκεν ἔυφροσύνησιν ἀνίη (*A.R.* 4.1166-7), his emotional observation on the hastily arranged wedding of Jason and Medea in Phaeacia, necessity thwarting their intention to marry later in Iolcus.⁹⁴ Whilst the relative clause can thus be seen as reiterating 'a common theme of divine providence',⁹⁵ again intertextual context should be considered. The example with which Achilles illustrates his claim is that of his father Peleus, a king who married a goddess but had only one son, a son who could not care for him in his old age (*Il.* 24.534f.). A possible early hint of an Achilles entering our narrative and an echo (embedded within intertext within narrative within ekphrasis) that does not portend well for the hero on his wedding day.

The apostrophe, again, in the questions put to Cupid and Venus, shows us a narrator striking a traditional pose, looking towards and questioning sources, gods who can function as Muses, and either provide the material to continue his tale or confirm it. Moreover, the appeal to Cupid in particular invokes a literary as well as a divine source not only for the apostrophe's subject matter but for the technique itself.

Σχέτλι' Ἔρωσ, μέγα πῆμα, μέγα στύγος ἀνθρώποισιν,
 ἐκ σέθεν οὐλόμεναί τ' ἔριδες στοναχαί τε πόνοι τε,
 ἄλγεά τ' ἄλλ' ἐπὶ τοῖσιν ἀπείρονα τετρήχασι·
 δυσμενέων ἐπὶ παισὶ κορύσσειο, δαῖμον, ἀερθεῖς,
 οἷος Μηδείη στυγερὴν φρεσὶν ἔμβαλες ἄτην.
 Πῶς γὰρ δὴ μετιόντα κακῶ ἐδάμασσαν ὀλέθρῳ
 Ἄψυρτον; Τὸ γὰρ ἤμιν ἐπισχερῶ ἦεν ἀοιδῆς.
A.R. 4.445-51

Morrison comments, 'The question put to Eros at 4.450-1 on the means by which Apsyrtus was put to death, and the subsequent mention of the next stage in the song in v.452, strongly suggest that Eros is playing a very similar role to the Muse of Love.'⁹⁶ The next

94 On increased visibility of the Apollonian narrator due to personal response (and his debt to Archaic models), note Morrison 2007:280, 'Despite the absence of biographical facts about the narrator, the audience of the *Argonautica* forms a picture of the narrator as being closely involved in his narrative, commenting upon the action and reacting emotionally to it.' And *ibid.* 281-6.

95 Godwin 1995:149. It is also a common observation on love, Quinn (1970:317) cites *Cat.* 68.18 'quae dulcem curis miscet amaritiam' (here the relative clause is attached to Venus though in the text she is referred to only as *dea* (68.17).

96 Morrison 2007:303. The 'Muse of Love', Erato, was invoked for assistance at the beginning of *Argonautica* 3 'Εἰ δ' ἄγε νῦν, Ἐρατώ, παρά θ' ἴστασο, καὶ μοι ἔνισπε' (*A.R.* 3.1) and (though unnamed) called upon to take over the narrative of Book 4 'Αὐτὴ νῦν κάματόν γε, θεά, καὶ δήνεα

stage in *their* narrative collaboration is the plot to kill a brother, in our poem it is the slaying of the Minotaur. And yet, whereas the apostrophe to Eros can be construed as the outcry of a narrator uneasy with the distasteful material he must now relate,⁹⁷ our narrator does not wrestle with similar narratorial apprehension, but, as though drawing strength from the address to Cupid and Venus, proceeds to embellish his portrayal of a girl tortured by love, anxiously praying for a stranger's safety.⁹⁸

There remains a final apostrophe to the divine, and another innovation. Having concluded the embedded narrative of Theseus and Ariadne, the narrator sends the Thessalian spectators home and summons his second audience, the gods who will listen to the prophetic song of the Parcae. As his short catalogue of attendees draws to a close, he addresses one who declined the invitation.

inde pater divum sancta cum coniuge natisque
advenit caelo, te solum, Phoebe, relinquens
unigenamque simul cultricem montibus Idri:
Pelea nam tecum pariter soror aspernata est
nec Thetidis taedas voluit celebrare iugalis.
64.298-302

Apollo, god of song and prophecy, is an eminently suitable replacement for a Muse but the apostrophe is cast as an aside. There is no appeal for assistance, no request to provide or confirm events but instead a short statement to the effect, 'Everyone else was there but you, Apollo (and your sister).' The potentially enormous guest list is thus neatly summarised by naming the meagre absentees. The language of the address is dignified, respectful.⁹⁹ There is a religious tone to the periphrasis with which Diana is obliquely referred to by a location sacred to her. Yet the air of reverent affirmation carries with it the literary innovation.

πάντες δ' ἀντιάσθε θεοὶ γάμου· ἐν δὲ σὺ τοῖσι

κούρης | Κολχίδος ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, Διὸς τέκος' (A.R. 4.1-2). See too Cuypers 2004:48, 'Problematic events are also framed by addresses to other divine agents.' For example, the Apollonian narrator's wondrous exclamation to Zeus when describing Medea's sorcerous destruction of Talos, the man of bronze (A.R. 4.1673-5).

97 On which topic, see Morrison 2007:271-311.

98 And unlike the narration of murder through ambush of a brother, the description of a monster's downfall is not a cause for consternation. When we come to Ariadne's retrospective view of the deed, however, we shall find her playing a precarious game with the parallels.

99 On piety of the narrator as a Hellenistic practice adopted by Tibullus, see Cairns 1979:20, 'This prologue [*Aetia* Fr.1 (Pf.) 21ff.] introduced a work structured as a set of questions addressed by Callimachus to the Muses and a set of answers (αἰτίαι) given in reply by the Muses. The pious *persona* which such claims required clearly became an integral part of the Hellenistic manifesto...'

δαίνυ' ἔχων φόρμιγγα κακῶν ἕταρ', αἰὲν ἄπιστε.
Il. 24.62-3

Apollo *was* at the wedding. 'Ever faithless' - thus Hera rebukes him for favouring Hector over the son of a goddess she herself had nurtured. And again, in the *Argonautica*, reminding Thetis to whom she owed gratitude, Hera declares that she called *all* the gods to the wedding feast ('θεοὺς δ' εἰς δαῖτα κάλεσσα | πάντας ὁμῶς', A.R. 4.807-8). Nor is there any mention of an absence in Pindar's account (Pi. N. 4.65-9). The wedding of Peleus and Thetis was an exceptional occurrence, attended by the entire pantheon. Until now. There was an antagonism between Apollo and Thetis but one which came about long *after* the wedding. A fragment of Aeschylus,¹⁰⁰ quoted by Plato, finds the god the object of a mother's anger.

νόσων τ' ἀπείρους καὶ μακραίωνας βίους,
ξύμπαντά τ' εἰπὼν θεοφιλεῖς ἐμὰς τύχας
παιῶν' ἐπηυφήμησεν, εὐθυμῶν ἐμέ.
κάγω τὸ Φοίβου θεῖον ἀψευδὲς στόμα
ἤλπιζον εἶναι, μαντικῇ βρύον τέχνη·
ὁ δ', αὐτὸς ὕμνων, αὐτὸς ἐν θοίνῃ παρών,
αὐτὸς τάδ' εἰπὼν, αὐτὸς ἐστὶν ὁ κτανὼν
τὸν παῖδα τὸν ἐμόν
Pl. R. 383b

A god who prophesied good things at her wedding would later guide the arrow that killed her only son, Achilles. He does not fulfil such a performing role in all accounts of the wedding. According to the chorus of Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis*, the Muses sang at the feast (IA 1040f.) and it was Chiron (taught the art by Apollo) who prophesied the birth of a son (IA 1062-75). Nevertheless Apollo's involvement in the death of Achilles is in accordance with tradition. So, crafted as a dutiful acknowledgement of an established (though at this stage future) hostility, does the narrator strike Apollo's name from the record and spare the god of prophecy any charge of hypocrisy?¹⁰¹ Is the address both apology and explanation for why the god can't be given a starring role? This song will have new singers and another (perhaps more truthful?) oracle. Of course what the apostrophe has again done, by raising the issue, and thus calling to mind variants and

100 A. Fr. 350. Quoted as an example of what ought to be expunged from the school curriculum, descriptions of deceitful deities, ὅταν φῆ ἡ Θέτις τὸν Ἀπόλλω ἐν τοῖς αὐτῆς | γάμοις ἄδοντα ἐνδατεῖσθαι τὰς ἐὰς εὐπαιδίας (Pl. R. 383a-383b)

101 With his sister, a supportive twin, standing by him.

showing their discrepancies, is illustrate the process of selection and revision, of *techne*. At the same time, the intertextual reader, by being pulled into the dilemma, reminded of prior poetic treatments of the myth and their contexts, is approaching the palace with visions of war, unhappiness and Achilles. In fact, the reader distracted by the innovation of the address has already been relocated. The narrator, after making his bold (and/or pious) statement moves the view from the procession of the gods to a survey of the feast that will follow the song of the Parcae. Apostrophes are digressive and progressive, the ‘action’ always moves on.

There is at the narrator’s disposal another alternative to a Muse, the ‘authority formula’. As with apostrophe, there are five occurrences of the formula within Catullus 64.¹⁰² We have already noted how ‘dicuntur’ (v.2) and ‘fertur’ (v.19) were employed as appeals to a poetic tradition whilst having a variety of additional functions, such as distancing the narrative, introducing it or announcing a change of direction, and highlighting an innovation. We also considered how which functions we choose to assign to the narrator and which to the author, particularly in the situation of conflicting intertextual echoes, expanded the range of available readings. To take another example from the ‘proem’, the description of the goddess Athena building the Argo herself, weaving its timbers as though plaiting a basket (vv.8-10), overlooks the contribution of Argus in the *Argonautica*. And, as Thomas has demonstrated, the opening ten lines of the poem as a whole conflated some elements of Euripides, Ennius and Apollonius whilst rejecting others such as their etymologies of the vessel.¹⁰³ A preference for Athena over Argus might be readily accepted as the choice of the narrator keen to emphasise the divine nature of this vessel whereas the careful unpicking and rearrangement of vocabulary and language as commentary on its construction materials would require a scholarly narrator more closely aligned with the author.¹⁰⁴ For a final observation on the use of ‘fertur’ to signpost a chronological novelty

102 See Fantuzzi & Hunter 2004:483, ‘The carefully mapped and interlocking structures and the repeated *dicuntur* (2), *perhibent olim* (76), *perhibent* (124), *ferunt olim* (212) are markers of poetic ancestry which confer a classicising authority upon Catullus’ poem, at the same time as they mark it as secondary.’ Cf. Jenkyns 1982:99, ‘Catullus has the power to breathe life into Hellenistic conventions ... dry mannerisms are marvellously converted into the stuff of a gorgeous voluptuousness.’

103 Thomas 1982:146-60.

104 See Morrison 2007:280, ‘Because of the mass of scholarly information displayed by the narrator in the *Argonautica*, and the impression given that he is constructing his narrative from several sources, we should take allusions to controversial passages of Homer and other poets as part of the portrayal of the narrator as a scholar.’ The Catullan narrator does not engage in the sort of explicit scholarly activities which Morrison goes on to list among the interests of the Apollonian narrator, ‘aetia... of rituals, customs, monuments and names’ (*ibid.* 280) nor do we find him qualifying events with disclaimers as does the Apollonian narrator with, for example, the particle *πρου* (on which *ibid.* 275ff.).

(Peleus first seeing Thetis *after* the Argo set sail), we turn again to Pindar.

οὐκ ἔγεντ' οὔτ' Αἰακίδα παρὰ Πηλεΐ
οὔτε παρ' ἀντιθέῳ Κάδ' μω· λέγονται μὰν βροτῶν
ὄλβον ὑπέρτατον οἷ σχείν...
Pi. P. 3.87-9

'fertur', a passive verb with a personal subject, Peleus. λέγονται, a passive verb sharing the same subject. Of all men, Peleus and Cadmus alone married goddesses. Pindar draws attention to their especial status in this regard which we can hear echoed in the Catullan narrator's use 'fertur'; that Peleus was in love is not in dispute, it is the timing that is contentious.¹⁰⁵

The remaining three examples of the formula all occur within the embedded mythological narrative spun from the description of the coverlet decorating the marriage couch of Peleus and Thetis. In its general content (Theseus and the Minotaur, Ariadne abandoned, the forgetting to change the sail and the death of Aegeus, Ariadne's rescue by Bacchus) it conforms to the poetic tradition. We do not find temporal displacements as in the outer narrative, instead the differences are in the treatment; the non-linear ordering of the events, where he chooses to apply emotional emphasis, the aspects of the story he relates at length and the characters to whom he allots a speaking role. At verse 76 'perhibent' is an appeal to tradition and introduces the explanation for the human levy imposed upon Athens by Minos. A usage that raises few eyebrows, paving the way for the narration of a familiar tale. However, it additionally signals a narrative departure and thus serves as a structural marker for the flashback, a process which also foregrounds the narrator once again as an organising presence.

The other two incidences precede the speeches contained within the ekphrasis, performed by our secondary internal narrators, Ariadne and Aegeus. Following the 'break-off' (vv.116-23), 'perhibent' (v.124) begins a passage of eight verses of indirect statements describing the frantic dashing about the island that precede Ariadne's lament (vv.132-201). On this sequence, Gaisser comments, 'It places a formal distance or barrier before the events it introduces (Ariadne and her lament seem very far away, and very deeply embedded in the narrative, presented as they are in indirect statement in a digression in an ekphrasis). More important, the formula makes us question the story's pedigree and seek out its source.'¹⁰⁶ I would add that the distancing thus achieved enhances the image of

105 And if we hear too the echo that his happiness was temporary, another cloud arrives on the wedding day.

106 Gaisser 1995:601. Hutchinson (1988:304f.) notes how the structural distancing effect of these 'they say'

isolation - Ariadne stranded far away on Dia, cut off in time, looking for her audience.

Gaisser's second observation, the use of the formula as a signal for the source-hunter, is one vital to the reading of the poem as a work of multiple perspectives. In the following two chapters, we will investigate some of the intertexts through which Ariadne constructs her lament and how she can be seen to enlist them to influence the audience's perceptions of herself and of the man who left her behind. The narrator, setting the stage for her monologue, is both assuring us of the reliability of the story whilst reminding us that there are stories behind stories. To these possibilities we can also add again innovation for whilst we have models, we have no extant 'source' for such a *tour de force* speech by Ariadne herself. This is the 'scoop' as it were, Ariadne in her own words. Her lament will be both composite and unique as Ariadne makes the transformation from image to artist.

The main clause of verse 212, 'namque ferunt olim' again distances and introduces. The moment of Theseus' arrival in port is held suspended as the narrator transports us back to the moment of his leaving and a father's parting words to his son. With Aegeus' warning to change the sail fresh in *our* minds, we switch back to view the forgetful son arriving under the wrong sail and catch the scene focalised in the eyes of the father before he throws himself from the rocks. Although considerably shorter than Ariadne's speech (only 23 verses) and limited in scope (expressions of paternal love and exposition of the instructions Theseus has been made to forget), the formula should still encourage the intertextual reader in like manner to be alert to potential sources that can throw up new perspectives on the character of Aegeus and on his relationship with his son, and to echoes with wider implications for ways to view the surrounding narratives.

iii. Staging Catullus

Having so far in this chapter investigated narrative techniques, we will now consider another element key to the establishment of an independent performing *persona*, his 'stage'. The narrator's apostrophe to Peleus revealed the subject of the song; his wedding to the goddess Thetis and the location for the celebration will be Peleus' palace in Thessaly.¹⁰⁷ Here his countrymen come to view the coverlet that allows for the telling of a second interwoven narration, here the gods come to hear the song of the Parcae and to

statements becomes complicated by their proximity to highly emotional passages.

107 Note Babin 1987:108, 'Catullus is elliptic about the actual ceremony - we do not know when or where the wedding took place; it is indicated only by one line: *quae simul optatae finito tempore luces advenere...* Thus, Catullus amazes his audience by the setting he presents, without actually stating that the wedding did not take place in its traditional location.'

feast. The palace is the setting for our narrative and it has been arranged magnificently.

ipsius at sedes, quacumque opulenta recessit
regia, fulgenti splendent auro atque argento.
candet ebur soliis, collucent pocula mensae,
tota domus gaudet regali splendida gaza.
pulvinar vero divae geniale locatur
sedibus in mediis, Indo quod dente politum
tincta tegit roseo conchyli purpura fuco.
64.43-49

In this visual feast, everything dazzles the eye, ‘fulgenti splendent.. candet.. collucent.. splendida’ and does so wherever the palace recedes. ‘quacumque opulenta recessit | regia’ entices us to enter and explore. ‘tota domus gaudet’ - the palace itself emanates joy and encourages this mood in its guests. All Thessaly has come to the location where a man will marry a goddess. The palace of Peleus is the hottest ticket in town.

Such is the stage for the mortal guests and for the story of Ariadne but the impending arrival of Jupiter and his family require a few more additions to the scenery, the ‘gifts’ of Chiron and Peneus. First comes the centaur laden with flowers picked from across the region (vv.278-82). Following him, Peneus, the local river god and a more burly stagehand, uproots a selection of trees from Tempe to landscape the approach (vv.285-92), ‘that cloaked in leaf, the entrance court grow green’ (v.293). There is an interesting echo to be heard in the palace’s response to Chiron’s flower arrangements, but before that, some arithmetic.

These two scenes of stage and staging which precede new narratives account for twenty three lines of verse. We have already totalled the 151 lines of speech by internal narrators and thirty lines of apostrophe. If we now add the final twenty five verses which comprise the narrator’s postscript (vv.384-408), and subtract, 179 lines remain. Of this, some will be required for the framing of embedded speeches and for similes, leaving roughly a third of the poem to cover the action of two stories. And when we find for example, a further fifteen verses indulged in a description of the Parcae (vv.305-19), it should become clear that ‘action scenes’ are not of paramount concern.

There is very little ‘movement’ by the characters of the poem. They are set in positions: Peleus and Theseus on ships, Ariadne on the beach, Thetis in the sea, Aegaeus on the rocks. From these positions their stories unfold, in commentary, in flashbacks and flashforwards which do include speech and action but there is a sense that, with the exception of Peleus who is presumably relocated in the Palace (the primary narrator leaves

it to the Parcae to acknowledge this in song, v. 323), the principal figures never go anywhere. The movement we do get is that of the internal *audiences* on the day of performance, of the Thessalians from home to palace and back again and the procession of the gods to the same location. Now, to return to the suspended echo and Chiron's flowers.

hos indistinctis plexos tulit ipse corollis,
quo permulsa domus iucundo risit odore.
64.283-4

Quinn comments that the metaphor of the laughing palace is 'as old as Homer' citing *Il.* 19.362,¹⁰⁸ the earth smiling at the glitter of bronze as the Achaeans arm themselves for battle. In 64, sight becomes smell as the palace responds to the scents of Chiron's gifts and laughs. Yet there is a more apposite allusion to be found in the poetry of Lucretius.

et quanto circum mage sunt inclusa theatri
moenia, tam magis haec intus perfusa lepore
omnia conrident correpta luce diei.
Lucr. 4.81-3

The attractiveness of the brightly coloured drapes decorating the theatre make it laugh in the light. Still spectacle rather than smell provoking the metaphor but the echoes ring clear; 'perfusa lepore omnia conrident' and 'permulsa domus iucundo risit odore'. If we combine the two descriptions of the palace into one glittering fragrant whole, complete with verdant entrance, we have our theatre of myth where amazed audiences await the entertainment. Nevertheless some lexical similarities and scene-setting are insufficient of themselves, so we turn now to another performance and a viable Hellenistic model.

ὦ ἔβενος, ὦ χρυσός, ὦ ἐκ λευκῶ ἐλέφαντος
αἰετοὶ οἰνοχόον Κρονίδα Διὶ παῖδα φέροντες,
πορφύρεοι δὲ τάπητες ἄνω μαλακώτεροι ὕπνω·
Theoc. 15.123-5

Theocritus 15 is an urban mime in which the protagonists, Gorgo and Praxinoa, make their way through Alexandria's busy streets to the festival of Adonis staged within the palace courtyard. The poem concludes with the hymnal performance they witness. Gow reconstructs the scene as follows:

108 Quinn 1970:336.

‘The stage is apparently a room, a marquee, or more probably a garden, inside the Palace precincts, decked with the tapestry admired by Praxinoa. There is an arbour of greenery hung with bunches of fragrant herbs and with figures of flying Loves, and in it a couch of ebony and gold, its legs formed by ivory groups of Ganymede carried off by the eagle. On this are purple coverlets, and reclining figures of Aphrodite and Adonis who embrace each other. In front of the couch are tables loaded with all sorts of food.’¹⁰⁹

Ebony, gold, ivory, a couch with purple coverlets. The surroundings described by the Adonis singer are all contained within the initial description of Peleus’ palace.

Conventional finery? Chiron and Peneus have together provided the greenery and the feast was assembled by persons unknown whilst our attention was directed to the gods taking their seats (vv.303-4). Despite the likeness of imagery I am not proposing that Theoc. 15 is a direct source reworked to provide a description for the palace of Peleus or to equate the Catullan narrator with the γυνὴ ἄοιδός who is a narrator with an internal audience and whilst we might draw a parallel with Peleus and the gods who hear the song of the Parcae, there is no parallel for Gorgo and Praxinoa as internal commentators.¹¹⁰ We do not hear a reaction to the song as the narrator whisks us on to the present and his conclusion. Instead I am attempting to demonstrate that there is a shared sense of theatre, that the settings have been arranged for performances. Commenting upon an Ovidian involvement in Statius’ *Achilleid*, Hinds writes, ‘In many passages the engagement consists less in specific verbal allusions than in an ambience, a narrative decorum... It might be said that, in some phases of this relationship, specific verbal allusions, where they exist, do not so much constitute the intertextual debt, which would be there without them, as footnote it.’¹¹¹ Something similar, I would argue, is the case here, a reminiscence is being created, a feeling for the stage and for its song. The γυνὴ ἄοιδός of Theoc. 15 performs the Adonis hymn in the palace of Ptolemy whilst the palace of Peleus can be considered the setting for all our performances - the primary narrator who oversees its construction and the entire

109 Gow 1953:56-7.

110 See Hunter 1996:118, ‘As embodiments of the poetic voice, Gorgo and Praxinoa guide us as we are usually guided by the poet; we cannot simply ignore their voice.’ On the Adonis song, cf. *ibid.* 123, ‘It too advertises its claim to be a “real performance”, the song of “the Argive woman’s daughter”.’

111 Hinds 1998:138. ‘gaza’ (v. 46) an exoticism placed at the end of its verse draws our attention. Why such a Persian flavour to the treasures of a Thessalian palace? Can we stretch the geographical associations to any distant ‘other’ to the East and speculate its wealth comprises plunder from distant Colchis? Or can we pull south instead, to Egypt and Alexandria? The exoticism of ‘gaza’ then ‘footnoting’ an allusion to the splendour of the Ptolemaic court? It could of course be simply the term most apt to describe the wealth of kings, we find it thus used by Livy of Hiero II, ‘multis, ut fama est, donis ex Hieronis gaza ab Epiclyde donatus (Liv. 25.25.13). A disingenuous citation perhaps as the Syracusan ruler was also the addressee of Theoc. 16, in which the poet sends out his bedraggled Graces to find a patron. Kingship, wealth, patronage - praise, poetry, performance - the echoes resonating around the palace of Peleus.

production, at a remove the embedded performances of Ariadne and Aegeus associated with the coverlet and within the palace itself the Song of the Parcae before the audience of assembled deities.

Additionally, the singer's description of ritual lamentation has several points of contact with how the primary narrator describes Ariadne in the moments prior to her speech.

ἄῶθεν δ' ἄμμες νιν ἅμα δρόσῳ ἀθρόαι ἔξω
οἴσεῦμες ποτὶ κύματ' ἐπ' αἰόνι πτύοντα,
λύσσασαι δὲ κόμαν καὶ ἐπὶ σφυρὰ κόλπον ἀνεῖσαι
στήθεσι φαινομένοις λιγυρᾶς ἀρξεύμεθ' αἰοιδᾶς.
Theoc. 15.132-5

Ariadne's pictorial and erotic dishevelment (hair unbound, bare to the waist) is similarly described by the narrator (vv.63-7). 'clarisonas... voces' (v.125), the clear sounding manner of her speech echoes the 'λιγυρᾶς... αἰοιδᾶς' that will be sung in the ritual lament of the women. Moreover the opening line of the song invokes the goddess Aphrodite thus:

Δέσποιν', ἃ Γολγῶς τε καὶ Ἰδάλιον ἐφίλησας
αἰπεινά ν τ' Ἔρυκα, χρυσῶ παίζοισ' Ἀφροδίτα,
Theoc. 15.100-1

Looking back to the discussion of apostrophe in the previous section, we find the goddess addressed indirectly by reference to the same two Cyprian locations, Golgi and Idalium, ('quaeque regis Golgos quaeque Idalium frondosum', v.96). Eryx, a mountain in Sicily that was home to her temple, we have also already encountered in the epithet 'Erycina' when the narrator referred to the thorns of love that the 'Lady of Eryx' sowed in Ariadne's heart, (v.71). Two incidences of the narrator obtruding, one apostrophe, one exclamation, both find common source material in the opening line of a hymnal performance.¹¹² Or a literary facsimile of one in hexameters as Dover suggests 'it is likely the actual Adonis-song at the Alexandrian festival would have been in lyric metres'.¹¹³

112 The Cyprian cult centres Golgi and Idalium do occur elsewhere in the Catullan corpus as being inhabited by Venus (*colis* 36.14 & *Idalium colens* 61.17) and in the latter, also a wedding song, she is addressed as the coupler of honest love (*boni | coniugator amoris*, 61.44-5). *Incola* in periphrasis occurs in 64 within the speech of Aegeus, 'sancti... incola Itoni' (v.228) referring to Athena. In the context of the apostrophe (vv.94ff.) provoked by the image of Ariadne's domination by the erotic, it is perhaps more apt that Venus here reigns rather than resides.

113 Dover 1971:209. See too Zanker (1987:17) on aspects of 'realism' in the Hellenistic poem. The word-painting (realism of style), love (realism of subject-matter), and learning (intellectual approach) he

Again the narrator is not asking us to believe he is singing a hymn but encouraging an ambience - reverent song, pious poet. It is another layer to the *persona*.¹¹⁴ Consider how, having set the palace scene, he zooms in on the coverlet and the details he picks to describe.

haec vestis priscis hominum variata figuris
heroum mira virtutes indicat arte.
64.50-1

‘heroum... virtutes’ recalls both the description of the rhapsode Demodocus moved by the Muse to sing ‘the glorious deeds of men’ (κλέα ἀνδρῶν, *Od.* 8.73) and the Apollonian narrator’s announcement to recall the same (κλέα φωτῶν, *A.R.* 1.1). On the latter echo, O’Hara further notes, ‘Treating *priscis* as a transferred epithet makes the figures depicted like the παλαιγενέων ... φωτῶν, “men born long ago,” of *Arg.* 1.1.’¹¹⁵ Pursuing this a stage further back, for the *Argonautica*’s conflation of ‘glories of men’ and ‘men born long ago’, Morrison finds potential links with Pindar: ‘There is perhaps also another echo of *Pythian* 4 in the description of the Argonauts at *A.R.* 1.1 as παλαιγενέων ... φωτῶν (‘men born long ago’), as in Pindar *Medea* addresses them at the beginning of her embedded narrative as παῖδες ὑπερθύμων τε φωτῶν καὶ θεῶν (‘sons of noble-spirited men and gods’, *P.* 4.13). The situation of the epinician poet is, in any case, recalled by the Apollonian narrator’s declaration that he will recall κλέα φωτῶν (‘the glories of men’).’¹¹⁶ Using the model of Apollonius and Pindar, we can create a performing *persona* aware of operating in a tradition of performance poetry whilst distinguishing the more specific intertextual echoes which aid the delineation of that *persona* as the work of the author. Thus, tradition can have different meanings as applied by author and narrator, for one it is texts, for the other role-models of ‘how and what to sing’.

‘heroum virtutes’ is the sphere of the rhapsode; performance poetry praising

discusses are all manifest in 64.

114 Cf. Newman (1990:402) commenting on the narrative frame to the Parcae’s song, ‘It leaps out of the epic framework into a (religious) lyricism.’ One might also consider the narrator’s reference to, but lack of elaboration on, the secret rites of Bacchus (‘orgia quae frustra cupiunt audire profani’, v.260), another potential illustration of his piety (and pious posturing). There, however, we find no accompanying narratorial comment to underscore the propriety of the *persona* as we encounter in the *Argonautica*, e.g. (on a similar refusal to provide ritual details) τῶν μὲν ἔτ’ οὐ προτέρω μυθήσομαι (*A.R.* 1.919).

115 O’Hara 2007:36, n. 4. Cf. *ibid.* 45.

116 Morrison 2007:284, n. 47. Cf. Cuypers 2004:44, ‘Since the Homeric hymns were traditionally sung as proems to epic recitation, Apollonius’ hymnic opening also conjures the fiction of an epic singer performing before a live audience’ and *ibid.*, ‘[its] narrative goal is praising - praising both the gods and the “famous deeds of men of long ago”.’

heroes.¹¹⁷ Catullus has created an *atmosphere* of rhapsodic oral delivery and on the point of entering (and disappearing into) the ekphrasis, the narrator announces the theme - ‘virtus’. He restates his allegiance, his enthusiastic pledge to Peleus and the Argonauts, ‘vos ego saepe, meo vos carmine compellabo’ (v.24) before appearing to pick up the wrong sheet and singing on regardless, oblivious to the bafflement or bemusement of the audiences. Regarding the contemporary audience, O’Hara writes, ‘The expectations created in some Roman readers by the phrase *heroum virtutes* would thus make for the strongest and sharpest contrast between the material in the coverlet and the introductory verses 50-4. It would not have been surprising, for example, if the words *heroum virtutes* had introduced more adventures from the Argonautic expedition.’¹¹⁸ We shall see in the following chapters that more Argonautic ‘adventures’ are indeed to come, though intertextually and of an amorous nature. And yet *virtus* will not be ignored, but rather than approach directly we shall explore the use of themes more as instrument than object, the means by which a poetry of multiple views can be demonstrated. However, before addressing the ‘heroes’ of our poem, we should tackle another issue raised by O’Hara’s statement - the Roman narrator.

Here we might point to some of the obvious differences with the Adonis hymn of Theoc. 15. Our narrator has no surrounding mimetic frame and we are left to persist with the default position that our narrator is a ‘Catullus’, a male Roman poet. We can corroborate this with some basic observations - it’s composed in Latin and situated within a larger corpus of Latin poetry by the same author, Catullus. A Roman intertextual relationship can also be added here, that of Catullus and Ennius. It has been noted that our ‘proem’ incorporated elements of the opening lines of the *Medea Exul*¹¹⁹ and we shall discover other allusions to his *Medea* when we come to study Ariadne in more detail. The use of Ennius simply as source of archaisms with which to ‘flavour’ certain passages points towards a Roman narrator,¹²⁰ one perhaps adopting his predecessor as a poetic foil,

117 On the debt of Hellenistic narrative to the rhapsodic tradition, see Fantuzzi & Hunter 2004:194, ‘Odysseus has precisely asked for the “song of the Wooden Horse” (*Od.* 8.492-3), and that is what he gets. The concentration upon a single dramatic moment within a larger mythic pattern (in this case the Trojan War) was to become standard in later “epyllia”.’

118 O’Hara 2007:46. Any such expectations will appear entirely confounded then, when the ekphrasis begins with the one hero singled out as not amongst those to board the Apollonian Argo because, its narrator informs us, Theseus was then detained in the Underworld, (*A. R.* 1.101-4). O’Hara (2007:46, n. 31) also suggests that on the other hand, it might *not* come at a surprise to see *virtus* passed over, noting a parallel in *Cat.* 11, a poem which begins as though its intention is to praise the deeds of Caesar but ‘abruptly changes direction with the words *non bona dicta* in line 16.’

119 See p.10 above.

120 Thomas (1982:157) drawing attention to several incidences of similar nautical vocabulary shared by the

mirroring the practice of the Alexandrians in their interactions with Homer.¹²¹ Or, following Zetzel, we can press the connection further: ‘Catullus, and presumably his fellow-neoterics, desired to naturalize the techniques of Alexandrianism, to interpret and adapt the Roman past and poetic traditions... In order to anchor the myths of Greece in the Roman tradition, Catullus uses Ennius as a point of reference, as a source of archaic diction, as a conveyer of traditional ideas of heroism, and as a Roman.’¹²² Such a confident statement would firmly secure our narrator in a Roman setting but lest we sketch too precisely portraits of Roman Homer and Roman Callimachus, we should also bear in mind that the allusions we can definitely mark as Ennian in our poem amount to a trickle beside the floods swelling up from Egypt.

However, we can include evidence of some particularly Roman terminology. Quinn notes how the ‘pulvinar... geniale’ (v.47) on which the coverlet is placed conflates two Roman practices, the *lectus genialis* being a feature of the Roman wedding whilst *pulvinar* ‘a special couch reserved originally for the images of gods in such ceremonies as the *lectisternium*, is here substituted for *lectus*, since the bride is a goddess (*divae*).’¹²³ This *pulvinar* then will seat ‘the real thing’ and it is tempting to read a light humour in the conflation, a reading requiring construction from purely Roman materials.¹²⁴

Then in the narrator’s postscript denouncing the immorality of the present (vv.384f.), we encounter a mother who knowingly commits incest with her son, and the accompanying narratorial comment ‘non verita est divos scelerare penates’ (‘she did not fear to defile the ancestral gods’, v.404). Now the reading of the manuscript V is *parentes*

‘proem’ and two fragments from Ennius’ *Annales* [suggested connections italicised] ‘*verrunt extemplo placide mare marmore flavo; | caeruleum spumat sale conferta rate pulsum*’ & ‘*labitur uncta carina, volat super impetus undas*’ (*Enn. Ann.* 384-5, 386 V) concludes, ‘These words are not particularly commonplace, and the coincidence is, I think, rather too high to be accidental. If so, then what we find in the lines of Catullus is a systematic sprinkling of Ennian *diction* [my italics] in an otherwise eclectic description.’

121 See e.g. Zetzel 1983:263, ‘The Alexandrian poets made Homer and other early poets the foils against which to operate: they explored their own peculiar desire to reshape the Homeric world by emphasizing poverty, domesticity, and various unheroic qualities exemplified by Apollonius’ Jason while couching their new approaches in Homeric language.’ Though neatly defining the dynamic, the terms Zetzel employs suggest the Alexandrians are somehow champions of a proletariat. In keeping with the premise of this paper, I would rather define their method as one of writing from the margins, an interest in peripheral views and providing our Roman narrator with the model for a poetry of new perspectives. It is a particular interest, but not particularly peculiar.

122 Zetzel 1983:263. Theodorakopoulos (2000:123) draws attention to Cicero’s use of the *Medea Exul* in the *pro Caelio* as well as the use of motif of the Argonautica and references to Jason and Medea throughout the trial. Usages which she suggests might have appealed to Catullus and lead us to consider the Ennian ‘influence’ (and the poet’s reactive position) more deeply entrenched. Thus *ibid.* 124: ‘They would enable us to take the poem’s opening to be a serious expression of Catullus’ mistrust of grand teleological narratives.’

123 Quinn 1970:309.

124 Though there is again an echo there of Theoc. 15 and the bed bearing the images of Aphrodite and Adonis.

not *penates* but with that caveat in mind and persisting with the latter, another peculiarly Roman concept emerges. The narrator has commented upon the mother's wickedness as an affront not to the Olympian divinities but to the guardian deities of the Latin household. What is of additional interest here to our current discussion of staging is the issue of *timing* raised by the vocabulary. We saw how the opening line transported us to a mythical past with 'quondam' (v.1) and that distance is maintained throughout, e.g. 'perhibent olim' (v.76) and 'ferunt olim' (v.212). It is only after drawing the curtain on the Song of the Parcae that the narrator references the present of performance, 'praesentes namque ante' ('for before the present day', v.384). It is then amidst the list of crimes of this 'now' that we find the 'Penates' which can thus be seen as a pointedly Roman reference to a Roman audience.

And yet, although highly probable, it cannot be claimed with absolute certainty. For a later example which could introduce doubt, we might consider Juno's angry words to Aeolus in *Aeneid* 1 describing Aeneas as 'Ilium in Italiam portans victosque penatis' (Verg. *Aen.* 1.68). Or if we view that not as anachronism but explanation for the institution of a religion in Latium by 'pius Aeneas', we might reflect instead upon Pentheus' rebuke to the old Tyrrhenian sailors for allowing the worship of the new god Liber to cause turmoil in the city they founded, 'qui longa per aequora vecti | hac Tyron, hac profugos posuistis sede penates', (Ov. *Met.* 3.538-9). Again Roman terminology intruding in a mythical setting. Now, whilst it is hard to countenance the Ovidian Pentheus as an *exemplum* of religious propriety and at one level the choice of phrasing used to chastise the old men parodies the parallel actions of Aeneas in the first example, both serve, I think, not to undermine the presence of a Roman audience before our narrator but to blur its exclusivity. 'penates' certainly encourages that setting but does not 'rubber stamp' it.¹²⁵ The narrator offers no landmarks, he names neither incident nor person in his catalogue of crimes of the 'present'. The *terminus post quem* he offers is 'sed postquam tellus scelere est imbuta nefando' (v.397). The 'now' of performance is a time after immortals mingled with mortals, a world without myth.

Now this can be taken as another illustration of a narrator careful to keep as many possibilities spinning as he can but we should also admit that whilst he persistently

125 Cf. Hutchinson 1988:307, 'The crimes are formally set in the (post-heroic) past, but they suggest actions very much at home in the modern Rome of moralistic imagination.' Cf. Theodorakopoulos 2000:117, 'The last lines of poem 64 should be read as a powerful moral indictment, which is of a piece with the idiosyncratic treatment of the Golden Age topos throughout the poem. The final indictment also coheres with Catullus' adoption of a disgusted and often moralizing stance vis-a-vis Lesbia and her ethics in other poems.'

interacts with the mythic past, he does not directly invite his audience to do likewise. Thus vocatives are thrown to the cast but never the readers. There are no first person plurals to encourage a sense of ‘shared focalization’ a technique by which the Apollonian narrator ‘invites his narratees to cross the distance between here and now and there and then, and to imagine themselves on the scene with the poem’s characters on that long ago day.’¹²⁶ And his acknowledgement and indictment of the evils of the present as compared with the intermingling of men and gods in the past stresses rupture rather than continuance.

We will examine narrative applications of his ‘moral’ postscript when we address the issue of closure in our conclusion but now after exploring various facets of the primary narrator in isolation, we shall turn to his interactions with his fellow cast members.

126 Cuypers 2004:53.

4. Heroes and Villains

We shall now examine the treatment the heroes receive in the narrative and in the speeches and song of the poem, a process intended to highlight the roles of their narrators, in the interaction of their language, in how they portray themselves and through listening to the allusive voices of other literary figures which both support and distort their own.

What I intend to demonstrate is how we are being encouraged to look upon multiple concurrent and contrasting views and that the more intense our scrutiny and the more possibilities we are prepared to consider, the more unstable the images become, and that this instability is at the heart of the poem - ‘What do you see now? Look Again. What do you see now?’ We shall begin with Theseus, hero of the embedded narrative, observed from the perspectives offered by the narrator, by his lover Ariadne and by his father Aegeus.

i. Theseus, a man of many turns

The character trait of Theseus that has proved difficult to reconcile with his heroic status is the ‘forgetfulness’ evinced in abandoning Ariadne on the return voyage from Crete. When Simaetha, the protagonist of Theoc. 2, attempts through witchcraft to charm her errant lover Delphis, her magic verse invokes a mythic *exemplum*.

ἔς τρις ἀποσπένδω καὶ τρις τάδε, πότνια, φωνῶ·
εἴτε γυνὰ τήνω παρακέκλιται εἴτε καὶ ἀνήρ,
τόσσον ἔχοι λάθας ὅσσον ποκὰ Θησέα φαντί
ἐν Δίᾳ λασθῆμεν εὐπλοκάμω Ἀριάδνας.
Theoc. 2.43-5

On her use of ‘φαντί’, Morrison comments, ‘this does not give the impression that she is a scholar, rather that she cites a common story - her statement suggests only a vague familiarity with the legend.’¹²⁷ Theseus’ forgetfulness and Ariadne’s abandonment can here be construed as prominent and widely known elements of a folklore: ‘This is the part that everyone knows.’ The spurned Simaetha can compare her plight to Ariadne’s, paradigm of woman forsaken, whilst seeking to bring her lover back by making him ‘forget’, as Theseus did, his current paramour. There is ambiguity in the latter. Is the ‘forgetfulness’

127 Morrison 2007:248.

she wishes to parallel the transient nature of Delphis' current infatuation, that discarding his 'fling', he'll come back to her? Or in the context of her incantations, is an outside agency implied likewise in the *exemplum*? Was Theseus 'bewitched'? Let us see how our narrator broaches a contentious subject.

immemor at iuvenis fugiens pellit vada remis,
irrita ventosae linquens promissa procellae.
64.58-9

Our first encounter with Theseus in the ekphrasis contains this description of a young man seen sailing away from Ariadne and his promises. Expanding upon his preliminary naming and activity 'Thesea cedentem' (v.54) as focalised in Ariadne's gaze 'tuetur' (v.54), the narrative thrusts his forgetful condition to the fore by its prominent placement at the beginning of the verse. 'Immemor' is the quality that marks the hero's *début*. Then again, when retracing his own steps from digressive flashback to the shore-scene pictured on the coverlet, a hesitant narrator questions whether he ought to persist with this narrative and elaborate further upon how 'the husband left, deserting her, his heart thoughtless' (*liquerit immemori discedens pectore coniunx?* v.123).

The translation 'thoughtless', negatively coloured, might betray my current inclination but 'forgetfulness' of itself does not apportion blame and some critics consider the narrator's lack of explicit commentary an indication of an impartial stance, or further read as balancing Ariadne's account.¹²⁸ It is true that the narrator's use of 'immemor' and 'immemori pectore' need not necessarily imply fault when according to one tradition Theseus' 'lapse' was divinely inflicted by Dionysus to remove a love-rival.¹²⁹ This is a view which Gaisser drafts some oblique support for from Ariadne's own observations. 'Paradoxically, however, what Ariadne sees also alludes to, and so makes us see, a different picture: a Theseus made forgetful to serve the ends of Bacchus.'¹³⁰ For the Thessalian observer, the depiction of that god on the coverlet presents an immediately

128 Kinsey 1965:919, 'Theseus did know what he was doing when he left Ariadne, and Catullus does not denounce him because Ariadne overstates the case against him, and Catullus is giving the other side of it.' *Pro Theseo*, Harmon 1973:319, 'The way Theseus treats Ariadne does not result from a sudden aberration from his normal psychological pattern but fits well into the plan of life he has developed around love of Aegeus and Athens.' Cf. (with mitigating circumstances), Knopp 1976:207, 'her plight reflects on him as a lover, not a hero.' Weighing up the evidence differently, however, Hutchinson 1988:310, n. 66, 'Despite Sch. Theocr. 2. 45/46a, it seems implausible that Theseus is presented as literally forgetting Ariadne through divine action. The reader must naturally suppose that heartlessness is in question (for *immemor* thus (58, 123) cf. e.g. 30.1). Ariadne, who certainly supposes this, takes up the same words (135, etc.), and Jupiter's assent to Ariadne's curse (200 f.) will reinforce the notion.'

129 For a summary of versions, Webster 1966:26ff.

130 Gaisser 1995:596.

visible and favourable outcome to a temporary distress and one the reader can choose to apply in hindsight to counter early misgivings.¹³¹ However, the internal audience does not have access to the narrator's commentary nor to the speeches of the internal narrators of the ekphrasis. These, along with his digressions significantly weight the story as read in sequence; vv.52-250 'Theseus & Ariadne', vv.251-64 'Bacchus & Ariadne'.¹³² These disparities regarding the availability of material to the audiences again foreground this paper's premise - the multiplication of perspectives at the core of the poem's design. And lest we, as readers, feel elevated by access to the narrator's abundant outpourings, we should bear in mind that we do not necessarily have the entirety of the visual. 'haec vestis priscis hominum variata figuris' (v.50) introduced the ekphrasis, but of the figures which pattern the coverlet, we can only with certainty claim to have been described two scenes - 'Ariadne on the Shore' and 'The Procession of Bacchus' before the narrator concludes 'talibus amplifice vestis decorata figuris', (v.265).¹³³

We can speculate as to whether those were the only two scenes embroidered, whether there were other scenes from the same myth, whether there were other scenes from other myths. It is not wholly implausible that the coverlet did contain scenes depicting 'heroum virtutes' after all but, in like manner to the distraction created earlier in the narrative by the appearance of the Nereids (vv.14-18), something else has again caught his eye. The deliberate ambiguity excused as the oversight of an involved narrator, invites us to wonder, to exhaust our imaginations as the Thessalian spectators do their sight, 'cupide spectando Thessala pubes | expleta est', (vv.267-8). At the same time, admitting we might not be seeing the whole picture, reminds us of the selectivity involved in composition and reinforces the presence of our guide.

The forgetfulness with which he associates the hero is not an isolated quality and appears a less neutral term when taken alongside the additional material - the empty promises of a youth running away in the first instance and a man described as a husband in

131 So e.g. Kinsey 1965:927, 'Ariadne's position only seems hopeless to her; happiness is in fact just round the corner.' Whilst this is true, does it diminish our sympathies for her complaint? Does her rescue absolve her abandonment? Should she just stop being so hysterical?

132 Cf. Newman 1990:404-5, 'The happy ending of his subtext is allocated fourteen lines out of 215, and even there the emphasis is on the advent of the god accompanied by his wild and noisy train (his *komos*), rather than on any passionate consummation or reward for Ariadne.'

133 So Gaisser 1995:600. The second scene contains little by way of description before resolving in a novel fashion of its own (vv.261-4), as Newman (1990:400) notes, 'At the end, with the epiphany of Iacchus and his troop, painting passes wholly, and quite surrealistically, into music.' On the possibility that visual 'readings' are not themselves completely synchronic, and that texts can themselves suggest synchronic rather than diachronic readings, Sharrock 2000:36. On a synchronic reading of the Theseus and Ariadne narrative, Theodorakopoulos 2000:118, 'the narrative line in the ekphrasis is complicated to such a degree that it cannot really be perceived as a line. It might, instead, usefully be described as a "simultaneously available field" (Baxandall 1985:3).'

the second. Still, there is plainly scope for disagreement and even then the competing pictures can be viewed side by side (the existence of one does not of course obscure the other) but what I intend to explore is the relationship between the statements of the primary narrator and those of the internal secondary narrators. It is important to realise from the outset that at no point within the ekphrasis do we gain any insight into Theseus' psyche. In Homer, heroes address their θυμός (spirit or heart) in direct speech.¹³⁴ Theseus offers us nothing himself. We have the actions as described by the narrator, his commentary on the characters the hero's actions affect and the opinions offered in direct speech by those characters. The 'refusal' to be drawn into providing Theseus' point of view can, I think, also be seen as part of a general narrative strategy to relate the myth from alternate angles to the heroic standard. Clearly how the reader interprets the primary narrator's evaluative language influences the reading of the poem, but what I consider of especial interest is how the characters within the poem develop that vocabulary, providing their own interpretations and in doing so offering the external reader a 'blueprint' for ways of reading.

Forgetful Theseus. When Ariadne herself speaks, it is an aspect of his character she addresses in her opening lines.¹³⁵ 'Direct speech,' remarks Laird, 'is not to be found in the narration of any other ancient ekphrasis.'¹³⁶ A novelty to make a jaded reader prick up their ears but any notion that this would be an ekphrasis in the modern sense of object description dissolved when Ariadne's clothes began to swirl about her feet and the narrator shifted back in time (vv.66ff.).¹³⁷ This is not a painted Ariadne with accompanying word balloons. What I intend to examine here is not so much innovation in structural placement but in the content and manner of her speech. What do we hear? Where else have we heard

134 E.g. *Il.* 18.4ff. (Achilles).

135 Rees (1994:84) sounds a note of caution in taking Ariadne entirely at her word, finding the indirect speech 'haec dixisse' (v. 130) which introduced her lament 'adds to the poem an element of hearsay.' Whilst I agree with his comments to the extent that she is an artful speaker, the 'authority formula' is as we have seen multifunctional and a favourite 'tool' of the narrator. Sources are never named, unlike e.g. *Aetia* fr. 75.54 Pf., where the Callimachean narrator acknowledges Xenomedes as the source for his Acontius and Cydippe narrative. Authorship is persistently vague, as Theodorakopoulos (2000:130) has observed, there is no mention of Daedalus, architect of the labyrinth, just as there is no mention of the coverlet's creator. However we choose to view his sincerity or the veracity of his sources, that doubt exists is again a reminder that no two readers will judge her complaints in entirely the same manner. Also consider Harder 1990:295, 'Another means the narrator may use for drawing attention to certain events is the rhythm of the story, in which the space he allows certain events and the attention he gives to them plays an important part. Closely related to this is the use he makes of the means of allowing certain characters bits of direct or indirect speech and the way in which he is introducing or capping these speeches.' The narrator prepares the audience for her arrival, then steps back and allows her the centre stage.

136 Laird 1993:20.

137 Newman 1990:406, 'Her silent *pas seul* is transformed into a solo aria.'

it?

sicine me patriis avectam, perfide, ab aris,
perfide, deserto liquisti in litore, Theseu?
sicine discedens neglecto numine divum,
immemor a! devota domum periuria portas?
64.132-5

Ariadne wastes no time in expanding and qualifying the relative terseness of the narrator's description. For her this is abandonment, contrary to the will of heaven and the arrangement bolsters the reading: 'The *deserto litore* of the first question seems to lead to the *neglecto numine* of the second.'¹³⁸ Note also the subject-object relationship of the opening 'me... avectam... liquisti' (vv.132-3). From the outset we observe how she portrays herself as passive, recipient, victim, and in 'avectam' there is at least the suggestion of an abduction.¹³⁹

As a supporting intratextual echo, one of style and sound, there is the epanalepsis enforcing his faithless nature, 'perfide... perfide', a repetition which is for one critic 'by standards Catullus sets elsewhere, overwhelming.'¹⁴⁰ It is striking, and I would suggest for good reason, as this is the second time the poem has made use of the device. When we first encounter Ariadne woven into the coverlet, she is observing Theseus in his flight, 'prospicit, eheu, | prospicit' (vv.61-2). We watch her watching. The impossibility of her averting her gaze, the focus on her essential rigidity is brought out by comparison to a statue of a Bacchant. When Ariadne speaks, employing epanalepsis and patterning the same plosives (*perfide prospici prospici perfide*), we hear what her picture might have been thinking: 'Traitor!'.

Her rhetoric builds over three verses and then 'forgetful', the narrator's 'immemor' recalled in the same emphatic positioning but now encircled within a context of Theseus' wilful disregard for gods and his perjuries. It is not too fanciful to perceive some sarcasm in the revision, 'Forgetful! Really?' This is Ariadne 'setting the record straight', individual notes selected, elaborated and wrapped in a vocabulary of betrayal and blasphemy, leaving no doubt as to her perception of the man. No sooner has this creation been given voice than she's engaged in commentary and adaptation.¹⁴¹

138 Putnam 1961:175.

139 Cf. (Helen's abduction) Ov. Am. 1.10, 'Qualis ab Eurota Phrygiis avecta carinis | coniugibus belli causa duobus erat', vv.1-2).

140 Putnam 1961:175.

141 Laird 1993:29, 'Unlike other ecphrases, Catullus' ecphrasis is not deprived of stylistic features found in the outer narrative. Indeed some of those features that this ecphrasis shares with the narrative embedding

at non haec quondam blanda promissa dedisti
 voce mihi, non haec miserae sperare iubebas,
 sed conubia laeta, sed optatos hymenaeos,
 quae cuncta aerii discernunt irrita venti.
 64.139-42

Theseus was not, strictly, her ‘coniunx’ (v.123), but such we discover were her expectations for ‘conubia laeta’ and ‘optatos hymenaeos’.¹⁴² The narrator’s proleptic suggestion is adopted and confirmed. Theseus sailed away ‘forgetting’ his empty promises (‘irrita... promissa’, v.59), but watched all the while (‘maestis Minois ocellis... prospicit’, vv.60-1).¹⁴³ It is left for that daughter of Minos to reveal their concern, ‘marriage’, and in repeating their hollow nature ‘cuncta... irrita’, lend to the same adjective the emotional force of her eye-witness account of a faithless seducer.¹⁴⁴ ‘a misera’ (v.71) cried out the narrator overcome by the vision of her disintegration on the shore, and the term she now adopts for herself (‘mihi... miserae’), a fool to be taken in by his charms (‘blanda... voce’).

Eavesdropping the narrator’s account, Ariadne thus renders possible ambiguities and neutralities personal invective. *This* Theseus is an incredibly unsympathetic character. He didn’t, after all, promise to take her with him only to sneak away from Crete without her knowledge. He didn’t take her home only to have his head turned by an Athenian girl. No, he promised to marry her, but on the way back had a change of heart, alighted at a nearby island (one suitably desolate) and marooned her. Or so she claims and Ariadne provides more than manipulative rhetoric to support her reading. Beyond an awareness of her immediate surrounds is an awareness of the texts with which it interacts as her lament ventures deeper than its immediate intratextual resources and unearths other figures to

it are what make it unique: as well as quoted speech, we find similes, anonymous traditions, and apostrophes to characters, both without and within this ecphrasis.’ Whilst this is clearly the case, it does not lead to a merging or obscurity of voice but a feeling of narrators playing off one another, a persistent interaction, if not collaboration. An interweaving of voice signposted by the poem’s imagery of labyrinths and weaving, on which, Theodorakopoulos 2000:134, ‘Through its sustained reference to retracing and repetition as central to the creation and to the unravelling of the text, poem 64 demands an intratextual reader.’ Cf. *ibid.* 129-34.

- 142 Alternatively, Curran (1969:175) regards her use of the language of marriage as ‘bitterly sarcastic’ and ascribes to the narrator’s use of the vocabulary of conception (v.92 ‘conceiving a flame’, v.198 ‘birthing lament’), an intention ‘to make her experience a grotesque travesty of motherhood’.
- 143 On the use of aural suggestion in vv.59-60, Putnam 1961:202, n. 16, ‘the final syllables of *procellae* are repeated in *ocellis* which ends the next line. The result of Theseus’ perfidy is now literally apparent to her.’
- 144 Cf. Andrews (1996:29) on Simaetha’s referencing of the nurse’s speech which encouraged her to attend the festival where she would see and fall in love with Delphis: ‘The nurse’s imprecations and prayers are only reported or summarized... By embedding it, Simaitha adds subtly to the overall retrospective picture of herself as the primarily passive victim that she emphasises wherever possible in her narrative.’ Our narrator offers no account of any tryst, no mention of any meeting or exchange of words. We have only Ariadne’s recollection of the words that swayed her and the promises broken.

stand beside her on the sand, and speak.¹⁴⁵

The love story of Jason and Medea was (on a reading proposed in chapter 2) allusively suggested from the outset in an opening line conflating echoes of epic inception and tragic conclusion.¹⁴⁶ And as the stage was prepared for Ariadne, the audience was again nudged towards the potential incorporation of further source material by the narrator's reuse of the authority formula, *perhibent* (v.124),¹⁴⁷ and then through her opening words filter also those of a cousin fearing for her own life.

Αἰσονίδη, τίνα τήνδε συναρτύνασθε μενοιρήν
ἀμφ' ἐμοί; Ἥέ σε πάγχυ λαθιφροσύναις ἐνέηκαν
ἀγλαΐαι, τῶν δ' οὔ τι μετατρέπη ὅσσ' ἀγόρευες
χρειοῖ ἐνισχόμενος; Ποῦ τοι Διὸς Ἰκεσίοιο
ὄρκια,
A.R. 4.355-9

When overtaken by Apsyrtus' pursuit and blockaded, the Argonauts discuss the return, not of the golden fleece but of their accomplice Medea. Subsequently Jason is hauled off away from the others to explain himself, and to recoil at her rebuke. The similarities throughout the speeches are numerous, well-attested and, given like scenarios, to be expected; false promises, hopes of marriage, aid given, loss of family, prospect of death, fear of the father and a call upon the Furies. In the words of their lovers, these are men cut from the same cloth; scheming, thankless, godless, ignorant.¹⁴⁸ Yet for Medea at this point in her own story, much is still uncertain. It is the possibility, that is for Ariadne already reality, that feeds her panic, her anger, and will volunteer participation in the murder of a brother. This potentially ominous parallel led Clare to postulate, 'Is Catullus' heroine, as her own words would suggest, a woman to be pitied, or should we on the other hand afford primacy to those allusive voices which delineate her as a woman out of control, a woman to be feared?'¹⁴⁹

Under examination, Ariadne's witness appears turning hostile, a situation which

145 See Fitzgerald 1995:158, 'Ariadne is both fictional figure and artist; her voice is heard both as a lament and as poetry.'

146 See p.14 above. Cf. DeBrohun 1999:421, 'First, concerning allusive design: it is clear that Catullus has constructed his poem, and especially the story of Ariadne and Theseus on the tapestry, using as his primary nexus of allusions the myth of Medea; in particular, the literary versions of the myth found in Euripides' *Medea*, Apollonius' *Argonautica*, and Ennius' *Medea Exul*. Ariadne's lament relies very much on the speeches of these earlier *Medeas*.' Cf. Clare 1966:61.

147 See p.40 above.

148 Cf. Hutchinson 1998:303, 'Catullus here takes Medea's indignant and persuasive speech to Jason... and produces from it an extreme display and evocation of emotion: our attention is concentrated purely on the speaker's feeling, not on her manipulation of another person.'

149 Clare 1996:76.

does not necessarily undermine her case,¹⁵⁰ highlighting as it does the ways in which she is both alike and not alike. For example, both girls began their speeches with voices punctuated by sobs, ‘frigidulos singultus’ (v.131) and στονόεντα μῦθον (A.R. 4.354),¹⁵¹ but whereas Ariadne concluded ‘maesto pectore’ (v.202), Medea boiled with rage, ἀναζείουσα βαρὺν χόλον (A.R. 4.391) and Jason fears her. He cowers, ὑποδδείσας (A.R. 4.394). Medea is formidable, she offers to lead her brother into a trap, and, if he happens to be killed... οὐ τι μεγαίρω (A.R. 4.419). At this point of personal crisis she simply doesn’t care. Ariadne is not the same woman. She does not instil terror, not hers the evil eye that can fell a man of bronze¹⁵² or make a people avoid her gaze.¹⁵³ To aid Jason, Medea provided enchantments. To aid Theseus, Ariadne offered prayers ‘tacito suscepit vota labello’ (v.104) and string ‘errabunda regens tenui vestigia filo’ (v.113).

Nor can Medea’s threats of Furies to intimidate Jason neatly equate with a forsaken Ariadne’s final prayer to the same for revenge. Structurally yes, as both are situated in climax, but there are no clear lines plotted for Medea herself from Colchis to Corinth and her presence in Ariadne’s lament, unmistakably strong, is a constantly shifting image, as was that of the Apollonian Medea herself, simultaneously witch and girl.¹⁵⁴ Aspects of the wild unmanageable *persona* cluster towards the end of the young Medea’s speech, fear becoming frenzy, and are only fully rendered for the learned reader familiar with her future incarnation. Her initial recriminations are motivated by anxiety of abandonment and her first thoughts firmly in the past. The emphasis of the Apollonian Medea evoked by Ariadne is on what was and now is not. It is a line of inquiry which requires a *doctus lector* to look not forward but back, to the virgin’s seduction in the meadow by the shrine of Hecate, and to those promises dripping with honey, (μελιχραὶ ὑποσχεσίαι, A.R.

150 So Clare 1996:76, ‘A reading of Catullus 64 whereby Ariadne is granted moral superiority over Theseus through allusion to a woman who, according to a parallel myth, is a would-be murderess of Theseus, clearly subverts itself.’ For Hutchinson, Apollonius maintains the reader’s sympathy by deviating from the ‘usual’ version of the story wherein Medea kills the child Apsyrtus and tosses dismembered body parts into the sea to delay the Colchian pursuit. For the bibliography, Hutchinson 1988:125, n. 66.

151 Cf. (perhaps closer in sense) the lovestruck Medea who fearing for the stranger’s life begins her monologue ἦκα δὲ μυρομένη (‘gently sobbing’, A.R. 3.463) and speaks λιγέως ‘clearly/piercingly’. Cf. Achilles clutching the body of Patroclus, κλαίοντα λιγέως (*Il.* 19.5).

152 A.R. 4.1669-70

153 A.R. 3.885-6

154 Gaisser (1995:604) assesses Ariadne’s prayer differently: ‘The Medea in her now is no longer young, but mature and deadly like the Medea of Euripides. And this Medea, too, can kill at a distance’. On Ariadne’s prayer, Pavlock 1990:129, ‘The force of her own rhetoric and the poet’s conclusion to her story keep the idea of madness just below the surface.’ On the Apollonian Medea, see Hunter 1987:130, ‘the picture we have of her does not change; rather, different aspects are emphasised as the narrative moves through a wide range of action and emotion.’

4.359).¹⁵⁵

Εἶπε δὲ κούρην
ἦν τινα τήνδ' ὀνόμηνας ἀριγνώτην γεγαυῖαν
Πασιφάης, ἧ πατρὸς ὀμόγνιός ἐστιν ἐμεῖο.
A.R. 3.1075-7

To win over a girl tormented by love, and in doing so gain the potion that would ensure success in the contest of the bulls, Jason offered a bribe, to make Medea famous, choosing as an *exemplum* Ariadne, whose reward for aiding Theseus was a constellation,¹⁵⁶ Ariadne, whom the immortals loved, τὴν δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ | ἀθάνατοι φίλαντο (A.R. 3.1001-2). What he neglected to mention was her abandonment on Dia: 'The seductive rhetoric, playing with what is stated and unstated, works both on the innocence of Medea and on the sophistication of the reader, whose understanding of the allusions to a significantly untold story is a necessary collusion in the humour of this scene.'¹⁵⁷ Her soul melted, her assistance was won but curiosity remained. *Tell me about the girl*. A request he deftly skipped. *No need to speak more of the famous, beautiful Ariadne but if only Aeetes liked me as much as Minos did Theseus*. Indeed. And Jason's final promise?

Ἡμέτερον δὲ λέχος θαλάμοις ἐνὶ κουριδίοισι
πορσανέεις· οὐδ' ἄμμε διακρινέει φιλότητος
ἄλλο, πάρος θάνατόν γε μεμορμένον ἀμφικαλύψαι.
A.R. 3.1128-30

A lasting marriage. This is where Medea would have her audience look, her memory of events are true to their text. He came to her as a suppliant, 'ἰκέτης', implored her in Zeus' name (A.R. 3.986-7).¹⁵⁸ And with no surrounding narrative evidence of her own to draw upon, Ariadne, through allusion to Medea's situation and the Argonautic dialogue, encourages the audience to assimilate its truth to her own statements.¹⁵⁹ The focus is on the

155 For discussion of the Theseus & Ariadne *exemplum* in A.R.3.997-1004 and Apollonian 'exemplarity' in general, Goldhill 1991:301ff. On honeyed words, note Medea's reaction to witnessing Jason's audience with Aeetes, ἐν οὐασὶ δ' αἰὲν ὀρώρει | αὐδή τε μῦθοι τε μελίφρονες οὐς ἀγόρευσε (A.R. 3.457-8). Cf. ἄδυ φωνεῖ- | σας ὑπακούει | καὶ γελαίσας ἡμέροεν (Sappho 31.3-5). Compare Ariadne's acknowledgement of Theseus' own 'sweet-talk' (*blanda promissa dedisti* | *voce*, vv.139-40).

156 A.R. 3.997-1004

157 Goldhill 1991:302.

158 And again, before the stealing of the fleece, he promises marriage calling upon Zeus and Hera as witnesses (A.R. 4.95-8).

159 Cf. Konstan 1977:67, 'These allusions lend an inner unity to the poem... and so compensate for the episodic character of the narrative.'

men, manipulative, deceitful, selfish. ‘What Jason would do to Medea is what Theseus did to me. We *parthenoi*¹⁶⁰ are victims, we are innocent.’

A further link exists. If we read a little further into the Argonautic narrative to consider the form of the deceit that will lure Apsyrtus to his death, we find our curiosity rewarded with gifts, and one in particular is carefully selected, its description and background expanded: the purple robe presented to Jason by his Lemnian ‘ex’, Hypsipyle.

τοῦ δὲ καὶ ἀμβροσίη ὁδμὴ μέλεν ἐξέτι κείνου
ἐξ οὗ ἄναξ αὐτὸς Νυσηῖος ἐγκατέλεκτο
ἀκροχάλιξ οἴνω καὶ νέκταρι, καλὰ μεμαρπῶς
στήθεα παρθενικῆς Μινωίδος, ἣν ποτε Θησεύς
Κνωσσόθεν ἐσπομένην Δίῃ ἔνι κάλλιπε νήσω.
A.R. 4.430-4

Medea made her choice. To stay with the stranger, she would willingly trap her brother, using as bait the garment Ariadne lay upon with her saviour. The course of action irrevocably set, the narrator reveals that which Jason omitted: Ariadne never arrived in Greece. ‘I’m not the same as Ariadne’ she had protested at their first meeting, (οὐδ’ Ἀριάδνη | ἰσοῦμαι. A.R. 3.1107-8). Ariadne never had the opportunity to remonstrate face-to-face and unlike her, Medea *will* arrive with her lover in Greece, in accordance with Hera’s plan,¹⁶¹ but she too will be abandoned, another will come between them. In Corinth.

ὄρκων δὲ φρούδη πίστις, οὐδ’ ἔχω μαθεῖν
εἰ θεοὺς νομίζεις τοὺς τότε οὐκ ἄρχειν ἔτι
ἢ καινὰ κεῖσθαι θέσμι’ ἀνθρώποις τὰ νῦν,
ἐπεὶ σύννοισθά γ’ εἰς ἔμ’ οὐκ εὖορκος ὤν.
E. *Med.* 492-5

Fleeing the vengeful Peliades, Jason seeks to secure safety through marriage with the daughter of Creon, the Corinthian king. In Medea’s first *agon* with her opportunistic husband (a point at which she retains the sympathy of the Chorus), the echoes should again sound clear as Jason is lambasted for an impious and deceitful nature¹⁶² and perhaps

160 παρθενική (A.R. 3.975) - Jason’s opening address to Medea, παρθενική Ἀριάδνη (A.R. 3.998) - his Ariadne *exemplum*.

161 ὥς γὰρ τόδε μήδετο Ἥρη, | ὄφρα κακὸν Πελοπίδα ἱερὴν ἐς Ἴωλκὸν ἵκηται | Αἰαίη Μήδεια, λιποῦσ’ ἄ<πο> πατρίδα γαῖαν (A.R. 3.1134-6).

162 See Zetzel 1983:263, ‘If epyllion’s genre is epos, its mode is tragic, and it is only reasonable for a poet as learned as Catullus to demonstrate his understanding of his genre through the allusions employed.’

in Ariadne's use of *divum* (v. 134), a morphological archaism,¹⁶³ can be discerned a delicate play on this wronged wife's sarcastic hypothesis that heaven could be under new management. However, familiar circumstances once more also remind of fundamental differences of character. The Euripidean Medea would never tolerate Ariadne's meek compromise to serve if only to be near him,¹⁶⁴ and makes it clear she's not just his for better, but for worse.

χώρει· πρόθωι γὰρ τῆς νεοδμήτου κόρης
αἰρήνῃ χρονίζων δωμαίων ἔξώπιος.
νύμφευ'· ἴσως γάρ, σὺν θεῶι δ' εἰρήσεται,
γαμεῖς τοιοῦτον ὥστε θρηνεῖσθαι γάμον.
E. Med. 623-6

Even though we should be cautious of drawing parallels with the witch driven to infanticide by a faithless husband, this Medea nonetheless offers a model for the composition. On Apollonius' debt to the tragedy, Hunter writes, 'It was, above all, Euripidean drama that had licensed lengthy female narration and complaint.'¹⁶⁵ Ariadne walks the stage in Medea's footsteps but as Pavlock notes, she 'does not simply offer scathing reproaches, as Euripides' heroine does.'¹⁶⁶

Iuppiter omnipotens, utinam ne tempore primo
Gnosia Cecropiae tetigissent litora puppes,
indomito nec dira ferens stipendia tauro
perfidus in Cretam religasset navita funem,
nec malus hic celans dulci crudelia forma
consilia in nostris requiesset sedibus hospes!
64.171-6

Ariadne's appeal to Jupiter conflates several *Medeas*. The wishes of Medea's nurse that begins the tragedy, Εἴθ' ὄφελ' Ἀργοῦς μὴ διαπτάσθαι σκάφος | Κόλχων ἐς αἶαν
κυανέας Συμπληγάδας (E. Med.1-2), and οὐ γὰρ ἂν δέσποιν' ἐμὴ | Μήδεια πύργους
γῆς ἔπλευσ' Ἴωλκίας | ἔρωτι θυμὸν ἐκπλαγεῖσ' Ἰάσονος (6-8) along with the opening lines of Ennius' *Medea Exul*, 'Utinam ne in nemore Pelio securibus | caesae accidissent abiegnae ad terram trabes...' (Enn. *Scen.* 246-7 V). To these voices from the stage we can

163 See Sheets 2007:192.

164 'attamen in vestras potuisti ducere sedes, | quae tibi iucundo famularer serva labore', (vv.160-1). Hector preferred to die than live to see his wife Andromache suffer such degradation (*Il.* 6.456-65).

165 Hunter 2004:92. Cf. Hunter 1987:131.

166 Pavlock 1990:123.

add the distraught wish of the Apollonian Medea, a tearful runaway's prelude to flight, Αἴθε σε πόντος, | ξεῖνε, διέρραισεν πρὶν Κολχίδα γαῖαν ἰκέσθαι (A.R. 4.32-3).

It is a powerful mix of emotion, a distillation of Medea's wronged recast in an appeal for divine justice. The diction is considered with the addressee in mind. 'perfidus... navita' once again brings Theseus' betrayal to the fore and focuses on his deception, concealing his villainous intent whilst a guest. Ariadne's rhetoric contradicts the primary narrator's claim that Theseus came as one of the youths to be sacrificed (64.80-4).¹⁶⁷ By referring to him as *hospes*, she can intimate how she (and by inference her family) acted appropriately, fulfilling the duties one accords strangers who were protected by Zeus and contrasting further this 'guest' who makes false oaths and slays her kin.¹⁶⁸

Her address is thus more than an idle fancy to turn back time. It is neither the regret of Medea's nurse nor the outpouring of the young Medea's torn heart. Ariadne's thoughts are not of reconciliation. The idea she entertains of being his servant if not his lover (vv.160-1), is set in the past 'potuisti ducere' (v.160), an alternative he might have proposed and she accepted. She does not envisage the boat turning round. She watches but never cries 'Come back!' The hopelessness of her situation leads to the summoning of the Furies. It is a considered appeal for revenge. Wronged Ariadne will have her pound of flesh, ('prodita multam', v. 190). Moreover the penalty is in her eyes lawful ('iustam', v. 190). Closing her speech, she calls upon the same air of authority with which she earlier denounced all men.

nunc iam nulla viro iuranti femina credat,
nulla viri speret sermones esse fideles;
quis dum aliquid cupiens animus praegestit apisci,
nil metuunt iurare, nihil promittere parcunt:
sed simul ac cupidae mentis satiata libido est,
dicta nihil metuere, nihil periuria curant.
64.143-8

Jason drew selectively from myth when citing Ariadne as an *exemplum* of the hero's helper rewarded by the gods. Having alluded to that scene of seduction, Ariadne retaliates by casting herself as spokeswoman for all women misled, crafting of herself an alternative

167 See p.67 below.

168 On oaths, see Parker 1983:186, 'Gods witnessed it, sacrificial ritual accompanied it, and it was commonly tendered in a sacred place.' On sources see *ibid.* 186, n. 235. On suppliants, *ibid.* 146, 'Pollution occurs if the divinely sanctioned rights of suppliants are violated in any way, not merely if they are slain at the altar, and even an offence of thought can be spoken of in the same way: he who denies the efficacy of divine vengeance 'lawlessly defiles the gods.'

exemplum for posterity. The ‘forgetfulness’ of Theseus is a sham, a cover-up to protect a hero’s reputation when the reality was a man who lied to get what he wanted. And what she refers to here, his sated passion, reveals his desires extended beyond the aid given in the accomplishment of his *aristeia*.¹⁶⁹ Her situation is a warning to all maidens to safeguard their virginity, to beware seductive strangers, the men who will claim to love them only to leave them.¹⁷⁰ In the same spirit, the ‘heroum... virtutes’ (v.51) promised by the narrator can now be revised in a call to the Eumenides as ‘facta virum’ (v.192).

quae quoniam verae nascuntur pectore ab imo,
vos nolite pati nostrum vanescere luctum,
sed quali solam Theseus me mente reliquit,
tali mente, deae, funestet seque suosque.
64.198-201

Her grievances, she insists, are genuine (*verae*).¹⁷¹ Her focus upon the ruin his thoughtlessness has brought her is thus resolved in a prayer to see him undone by the same characteristic.¹⁷² For her, his *immemor* is a callous disregard. Theseus is guilty of wilful neglect and deception through perjury. There are the qualities which justify an appeal for divine vindication.¹⁷³ It is not that, even supposing her fleeing paramour had divulged details of his father’s instructions, she intends carelessness bringing bereavement upon him, that forgetfulness would be punished by forgetfulness. And yet her request was not only acknowledged but carried out almost to the letter.

169 The inference of consummation contradicts the version related by Odysseus, ‘Phaedra and Procris I saw and the beautiful Ariadne, daughter of baleful Minos, she whom once Theseus led from Crete to the hill of sacred Athens, but had no joy, for before that Artemis slew her in sea-girt Dia on the evidence of Dionysus’, *Od.* 11.321-5). Ariadne dismisses another hero’s account.

170 Again, it is a role familiar to her Colchian counterpart, κατὰ δ’ οὐλοὸν αἴσχος ἔχευα | θηλυτέρας (A.R. 4.367-8). But Ariadne’s comments are more expansive than self-pity and share an affinity with those of the stage *persona* of the Euripidean Medea, πάντων δ’ ὅσ’ ἔστ’ ἔμψυχα καὶ γνώμην ἔχει | γυναῖκές ἐσμεν ἀθλιώτατον φυτόν· (E. *Med.* 230-1). Note Hunter 1987:130, ‘We may compare the Medea of Euripides. She too is clever and dangerous, even if her magical powers are, until the end of the play, given less prominence than in Apollonius, but she is also a woman who expresses concerns which Euripides represents as common to all women and whose situation, that of being discarded in favour of another, is not peculiar to clever and dangerous women.’

171 On Simaetha’s use of truth formula, Andrews 1996:31, ‘It seems clear that the speech formula τὸν ἀλαθέα μῦθον, with its particular emphasis on the truth, is meant to heighten the contrast between her own speech (reflective of her character) and the less credible subsequent speech (and reflected character) of Delphis.’ Cf. *ibid.* n. 45, citing *Od.* 17.108; 122 and *Il.* 6.382 as examples of character evaluations within their speech. We do not hear Theseus’ version but Ariadne has dismissed it nonetheless.

172 Cf. Pavlock 1990:124, ‘the strong verb *funesto* denotes the idea of “polluting with murder”, and the verse ends with an emphatic epic-style compound connected by the double *que*.’

173 The invocation of Medea as related by the Corinthian women expressed a similar cause and target λιγυρά δ’ ἄχεα μογερά βοᾶι | τὸν ἐν λέχει προδόταν κακόνυμφον· | θεοκλυτεῖ δ’ ἄδικα παθοῦσα | τὰν Ζηνὸς ὀρκίαν Θέμιν (E. *Med.* 206-9).

sic funesta domus ingressus tecta paterna
morte ferox Theseus, qualem Minoidi luctum
obtulerat mente immemori, talem ipse recepit.
64.246-8

Theseus did not die nor did Ariadne, but through forgetfulness, he arrived at the state of mourning Ariadne found herself in upon waking abandoned in Dia as his failure to change the sail when his ship came into the view of Aegeus' anxious gaze and thereby to signal his safe return led the grieving king to throw himself from the promontory. Whereas the tale's conclusion is summarised by the narrator, the reasoning behind the use of a signal is related beforehand in flashback, in the direct speech of Aegeus himself. A short narrative interlude describes the immediate assent of Jupiter to her prayer and heaven and earth trembling at his nod (vv.202-6) and the resultant divine forgetfulness inflicted upon Theseus (vv.207-11) before with a now familiar technique 'namque ferunt olim' (v.212), we are cast back to the moment of departure and a father's desperate words to his son. This non-linear narration, the darting back and forth in time broken by the words of internal narrators allows for an intriguing staging of the myth's participants that is temporally and spatially impossible - Theseus' boat caught on the waves between Dia and Athens, between departure and arrival, watched from both shores by two figures grieving at his absence - Aegeus, 'at pater, ut summa *prospectum* ex arce petebat, | anxia in assiduos absumens lumina fletus' (vv.241-2) and Ariadne, 'quae tum *prospectans* cedentem maesta carinam | multiplices animo volvebat saucia curas' (vv.249-50). Newman comments, 'All this juxtaposes consoled Ariadne and unconsolated Aegeus.'¹⁷⁴ Although, at this frozen moment in the narrative neither is consoled and we might also consider the juxtaposition one of parallel grief with Theseus held in stasis between them and then as time restarts the juxtaposition between the former about to find rescue and consolation and the latter inconsolable and resigned to death. The watching Ariadne's cares are for herself destroyed by his leaving, those of the watching Aegeus for a son he was preparing to mourn even as he left. A brave and only son.

gnate mihi longe iucundior unice vita,
gnate, ego quem in dubios cogor dimittere casus,
reddite in extrema nuper mihi fine senectae,
quandoquidem fortuna mea ac tua fervida virtus
eripit invito mihi te ...
64.215-9

174 Newman 1990:397.

The old king has only twenty three lines to make his mark but leaves this reader with the impression that had he twice as many, he would still have included the same number of points. To summarise in paraphrase the essential components of his speech: ‘My son, I love you. I can’t stop you going and being a hero. I’ll put a dark sail on your ship and mourn until you come back. If you succeed, put up a white sail instead on your way home. Don’t forget. When I see it, I’ll stop mourning.’ That would seem to leave a good number of verses to incorporate, for example, background detail of troubled Athens, elaboration on their reunion, or his fears for the perilous undertaking ahead. Aegeus, however, believes that if something is worth saying, it’s probably worth saying slowly, and repeatedly.

His pattern of repetition is set from the vocative ‘gnate’ beginning his first two lines, ‘My son... My son.’ Simple anaphora rather than polyptoton, but endearing nonetheless. Jenkyns finds the archaic form ‘adds a touch of the grand operatic manner.’¹⁷⁵ Yet the style soon grows prosaic (the simple word order of v.218) and prolix. ‘in extrema... fine senectae’ (v.217) gives this reader the impression not of venerable age but that he could keel over at any moment. Then at verse 221 he announces that he cannot let Theseus go ‘gaudens laetanti pectore’, that is, he can’t be happy and happy at his departure. Quinn comments on the phrase as repetition for emphasis¹⁷⁶ but when Aegeus comes to conclude his speech forecasting his emotional state on seeing the white sail signalling success ‘laeta gaudia mente’ (v. 236) and we find him happy-happy again, one wonders if this is actually repetition for its own sake. Then there is the matter of that sail, the instrument of his undoing.

sed primum multas expromam mente querellas
 canitiem terra atque infuso pulvere foedans,
 inde infecta vago suspendam lintea malo,
 nostros ut luctus nostraeque incendia mentis
 carbasus obscurata dicet ferrugine Hibera.
 64.223-7

There’s a suitably poetic flourish with *vagus* describing the mast (though the metaphor might give the impression of it rolling around the deck) but *infectus* for the sail isn’t quite sufficient. One more line though and he has the embellishment, ‘speaks the darkened linen with its Iberian gloom.’ Here striving for the elaborative method of the narrator, as demonstrated for example in the effusive introduction to the wedding day, ‘domum

175 Jenkyns 1982:125. Cf. *ibid.* 124, offering a much more sympathetic reading of vv.215-20: ‘perhaps the most poignant words in the poem, and one of its few moments of real psychological penetration.’

176 Quinn 1970:329.

conventu tota frequentat | Thessalia, oppletur laetanti regia coetu', (vv.32-3).¹⁷⁷ In the narrator's description, it is possible to perceive initial objectivity yielding to personal involvement and a more emotional response. Aegeus on the other hand appears to be adding frills. The sail is relevant to the plot but the object itself is a simple one and hardly worthy of a speaking role ('dicet') on an abstracted emotion ('incendia mentis'). The attempt at a grandeur of style collapses into 'frigidity'.¹⁷⁸ In the narrative, the sail is referred to obliquely by 'signa' (v.210) and after Aegeus' exposition, is specified as 'inflati... lintea veli' (v.243). 'lintea' the dyed cloth still used as a sail (*velum*) seen 'bellying'¹⁷⁹ in the wind (*inflatus*). The image is there precise and the participle energetic and appropriate.

Consider Aegeus' final attempt to impress upon his son the sail's significance. On sighting home Theseus must take down from the sail-arms 'the funeral cloth', (*funestam... vestam* v.234). Now, commentators rightly draw attention to 'funestam' picking up the conclusion of Ariadne's prayer, thus serving as 'a thematic echo'¹⁸⁰ but the real 'pay-off' for Ariadne's 'funestet seque suosque' (v.201) is the narrator's 'funesta... tecta' (v.246) which follows Aegeus' speech. 'Forgetfulness' is the charge, the trait is the cause of ruin both envisaged and actualised, whereas the sail is the narrative prop, a use 'footnoted' by the echo. In the context of his speech, the 'funeral cloth' underlines Aegeus' self-portrayal as a father overcome by grief and unable to deviate from a path of premature mourning.

It might be facetious to suppose that in light of the father's habit of reiteration, Theseus might be prone to absent-mindedness after all but despite the deprecating tone of the analysis thus far, there is an assessment on Aegeus as narrator relevant to our consideration of his viewpoint and its relationships, both intratextual and intertextual - that he has a tendency to 'overact'. His syntax is wearying and his expositions do not clarify. He's not spelling things out in these examples as does the primary narrator. Nor do they provide additional emotional insight through content or style. Consider how the primary narrator captures the importance of the signal with word placement and rhythm, 'dulcia nec maesto sustollens signa parenti' (v.210). Evaluative and contrasting adjectives 'sweet not sad' before the main caesura, a vigorous present participle alliteratively sliding into the direct object *signa*, then an indirect object which completes the sense and closes

177 Godwin 1995:141, 'Note here how the same statement is made twice: first in a 'straight' neutral tone and then with more telling description. *domus* becomes *regia*, *frequentat* becomes *oppletur*, *conventu* becomes *laetanti coetu*.'

178 On ψυχρός as a description of style, see Demetr. *Eloc.* 114ff.

179 So Quinn 1970:331.

180 Quinn 1970:330.

the line whilst enfolding ‘signal’ within the image of the ‘sad parent’. Nor does Aegeus seek to make us aware of his suffering through a variation of approach as in the manner of Ariadne attacking Theseus from several angles but through repetition. Ariadne’s speech throbs with urgency and passion, in response Aegeus offers flaccid ornamentation.¹⁸¹ Hers is the rhetoric of persuasion, his of declamation.

It might seem unfair to be disparaging an old man who appears the casualty of a divine sense of irony or punctiliousness. He loved his son so much that the mistaken belief Theseus had perished in Crete prompted his immediate suicide. His death heaven’s punishment for the son. Should he not have our universal sympathy? We have put Theseus in the dock and considered some aspects of the case as brought by Ariadne, his prosecutor. And we know, because the narrator is immediately at hand with the verdict, that Jupiter judged in her favour. So why now a second speech with Aegeus called as a character witness? And how does his testimony fail to the extent that the most fitting punishment for the accused perjurer is the death of his defence? Let us persist with the analogy and letting them share the stage suggested by the juxtaposition, consider some points of contact with the testimonies of narrator and Ariadne and attempt to uncover where Aegeus went wrong.

The first trait then selected by Aegeus in describing Theseus is his courage. The image he would project is that of a dear son being pulled towards death on behalf of the father, driven towards danger by his heroic nature, his ‘fervida virtus’. Aegeus’ words reach back into the narrative to when, moved by Ariadne’s distress, the narrator recalled the story (‘nam perhibent olim’, v.76) behind the stranger’s arrival at the court of Minos.

quis angusta malis cum moenia vexarentur,
 ipse suum Theseus pro caris corpus Athenis
 proicere optavit potius quam talia Cretam
 funera Cecropiae nec funera portarentur.
 64.80-4

Selfless and patriotic. ‘funera... nec funera’ - the ferry to Crete is in effect a death sentence and Theseus has willingly taken another’s place.¹⁸² This is a hero to whose name the

181 On Ariadne’s rhythms, note Zetzel 1983:253, ‘Catullus 64 shows the highest proportion of such verses in Latin poetry [the spondaic hexameter], having, on average, one every 14 lines. But even such a deliberate mannerism is by no means evenly distributed. There is not a single spondaic verse in the 70 lines of Ariadne’s speech... In other words, the mannerism is manipulated.’

182 Cf. Jenkyns 1982:139, ‘it can hardly be coincidence that all the criticisms of Theseus are put into Ariadne’s mouth, whereas Catullus in his own person speaks warmly of his heroism and self-sacrifice at lines 81ff. and 101f.’

narrator twice applies the adjective ‘ferox’¹⁸³ and whose slaying of the Minotaur was recalled with the extended simile appropriate to heroic narrative. It was an outcome for which a pessimistic father, already viewing his son as a dead man walking, could scarcely dare to hope.

quod tibi si sancti concesserit incola Itoni,
 quae nostrum genus ac sedes defendere Erecthei
 annuit, ut tauri respergas sanguine dextram,
 tum vero facito ut memori tibi condita corde
 haec vigeant mandata, nec ulla oblitteret aetas;
 64.228-32

As the protasis of the conditional which begins the second of his two sentences finally concludes, Aegeus manages to confront one of Ariadne’s more contentious accusations.¹⁸⁴

an patris auxilium sperem? quemne ipsa reliqui
 respersum iuvenem fraterna caede secuta?
 64.180-1

Her phrasing is precise. The placement of ‘reliqui’ and ‘secuta’ at successive verse ends make a clear and poignant comparison - the father she abandoned, the youth she followed. Her Theseus stained with the blood of her brother is an evocative image of a guilty killer on the run but one that requires its Argonautic allusion to sway the jury, summoning as it does the memory of Apsyrtus whose blood splashed his sister’s veil as he fell, τῆς δὲ καλύπτρην | ἀργυρέην καὶ πέπλον ἀλευομένης ἐρύθηγεν (A. R. 4.473-4) and whose corpse Jason mutilated to hinder the avenging spirit.¹⁸⁵ Ariadne would make a hero’s *aristeia* a murderer’s miasma.¹⁸⁶ She can admit to leaving her family (and now to have regrets) but still plays a dangerous game in wanting to vilify Theseus through the aid of the intertext whilst evading being thought an accessory in the murder she would make of

183 Whereas Ariadne is variously sad, wretched and lost (*maesta* v.130, v.249, *misera* v.71, *perdita* v.70), Theseus is solely fearsome (*ferox*, v.73, v.247), his epithet on leaving Athens and upon returning. No other adjective is directly applied to his name by the narrator.

184 The apodosis, a ‘solemn’ future imperative is followed by a loose chain of further subjunctives in subordinate clauses. Quinn (1970:328-9) notes vv.228-37, along with vv.215-22, ‘probably contain the most complicated patterns of syntax in the poem... An attempt perhaps at stylization of an old man’s rambling way of speaking.’ Compare the breathless insistence of Ariadne’s anaphora and present imperatives (combined with the elegance of assonance and internal rhyme) in her appeal to the Eumenides, ‘huc huc adventate, meas audite querellas’, (v.195).

185 Cf. (Clytemnestra) οὕτω τὸν αὐτοῦ θυμὸν ὀρμαίνει πεσῶν | κάκφυσιῶν ὀξεῖαν αἵματος σφαγῆν | βάλλει μ’ ἐρεμνῆι ψακάδι φοινίας δρόσου, (A. *Ag.* 1388-90).

186 ‘But he who commits sin like this man and hides blood-stained hands, as upright witnesses for the slain hard by at hand are we, and as avengers of bloodshed do we appear against him to the end.’ (A. *Eum.* 316-20).

his heroics.¹⁸⁷ It is also the continuation of an ongoing strategy, and the second time her rhetoric has attempted to replace monster with brother.

certe ego te in medio versantem turbine leti
eripui, et potius germanum amittere crevi,
quam tibi fallaci supremo in tempore dessem.
64.149-51

‘turbine leti’ is a striking phrase which puts ‘tenui filo’ (v.113) under a great deal of strain in her efforts to undermine his victory. She has taken the narrator’s simile, the ‘indomitus turbo’ (v.107), remade it as metaphor and inverted it. Theseus is no longer like a whirlwind but imperilled within one. Again her patterning underlines her point and reinforces the bond she would make between them, ‘ego te’ - ‘You and I’ - she has snatched the pronoun from the maelstrom and held him to her. Kinsey describes ‘germanum amittere crevi’ as ‘an ashamed euphemism’ noting that she ‘never expresses regret for what she has done except insofar as it has landed her in her present plight.’¹⁸⁸ Ariadne presents a dilemma with only two options and a choice to be made, Theseus or her brother. Again the echo is risky. The recriminations expressed allude to the similar ones cast at Jason by a wronged Medea.

κτείνας' ἀνέσχον σοι φάος σωτήριον.
αὐτὴ δὲ πατέρα καὶ δόμους προδοῦσ' ἔμοῦς
τὴν Πηλιῶτιν εἰς Ἴωλκὸν ἰκόμην
σὺν σοί, πρόθυμος μᾶλλον ἢ σοφωτέρα·
E. Med. 482-5

Reminding Jason he owes his life to her intervention, the Euripidean Medea does not deny participation in fratricide. To her mind it is something which binds them.¹⁸⁹ However, Ariadne makes no mention of murder or conspiracies. Her vocabulary is one of *rescue*, she is the hero, Theseus the damsel she did *not* abandon. He chose to give his life to stop the

187 Cf. (Medea’s Nurse) ἦν μὴ ποτε στρέψασα πάλλευκον δέρην | αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτὴν πατέρ' ἀποιμῶξην
φίλον | καὶ γαῖαν οἴκους θ', οὓς προδοῦσ' ἀφίκετο | μετ' ἀνδρὸς ὅς σφε νῦν ἀτιμάσας ἔχει (E.
Med. 30-3).

188 Kinsey 1965:917 & 918, n. 1. Godwin (1995:153) notes that the archaism *crevi* ‘is legal language’ which might call to mind another situation with family and stranger presented as the competing claimants in a maiden’s court (A.R. 3.616-35). The quarrel which Medea presided over in her dream included some potentially prosaic vocabulary itself: νεῖκος (627) ‘a dispute before a judge’ *LSJ* I 3, ἐπιτρέπω (628) ‘to refer a decision to arbitration’ *LSJ* b 3 and αἰρέω (631) ‘to chose by vote, elect’ *LSJ* B II 3.

189 On the fratricide cf. ὦ πάτερ, ὦ πόλις, ὧν ἀπενάσθην | αἰσχυρῶς τὸν ἐμὸν κτείνασα κάσιν. (E.
Med. 166-7) and (Jason’s recollection) κτανοῦσα γὰρ δὴ σὸν κάσιν παρέστιον | τὸ καλλίπρωρον
εἰσέβης Ἀργοῦς σκάφος (1334-5).

human tribute (vv.83-4). She chose to save that life. At a cost. She *lost* her ‘germanus’, a dear brother, a full brother (no monstrous half-breeds here).¹⁹⁰ Ariadne’s allusions seek to assimilate Theseus to Jason, to lay further charges against him as a man polluted by the murder of her kinsman whilst through her selective vocabulary avoid for herself the taint of Medea’s involvement.¹⁹¹ This will not wash with Aegeus and had she not already acknowledged the true nature of this ‘brother’, the unconquerable bull (v. 173)? His retort is clear: ‘tauri... sanguine’. Quinn notes the ‘thematic echo’¹⁹² but not the correction. The father rejects her image of some bloodied fugitive and accurately replaces it with that of the hero’s *coup de grâce*.

Or that’s what he might have substituted, but given an opportunity for appropriate grandeur, Aegeus manages for once, the mundane. The defeat of the Minotaur, the savage laid low by Theseus in the narrative is rendered as a splashing of bull’s blood on the hand. Without Ariadne’s ‘indomitus’, without the association of her ‘dira stipendia’ that echoed the narrator’s ‘funera nec funera’, a bull is just a bull. *His* rhetoric has moved the hero from the Labyrinth to the abattoir, and moreover, wished a goddess aid in the slaughter.¹⁹³

‘If, god willing, you succeed’ might be too much of a paraphrase but is essentially the sentiment of his protasis. Aegeus, imitating the style of pious periphrasis with which the narrator addressed Venus in apostrophe ‘quaeque regis Golgos quaeque Idalium frondosum’ (v.96), obliquely encourages Athena to be kindly disposed towards the mission. The primary narrator’s apostrophe is succinct, contained within a single verse are present indicative, balanced relatives, a pictorial adjective which evokes some *locus amoenus* (and well-suited to the goddess of Love) closing the hexameter and stopping the whole falling in two exact parts. The model is there for Aegeus and his first line isn’t bad *per se* but having opted for ‘dweller of Itonus’ to describe the patron goddess of Athens, there seems to be some burden to qualify. Unfortunately his long-winded attempt at lofty verse spills over into a third line and the needlessly enjambed ‘annuit’ as he is forced to

190 *amittere* L&SI 1 B ‘to let go, slip’, II ‘to lose’ (commonly without criminality, by mistake, accident, etc.). Cf. DeBrohun 1999:423, n. 11, ‘These words read more easily as “death” when later echoed by Aegeus’ belief that Theseus is “lost to fate” (*amissum... fato*) in 245. And *ibid.* n. 13 & n. 14 for *germanus* as emphasising closeness (*TLL*, s.v. 1914.76-1919.75), and being ‘genuine’. Cf. *ibid.* n. 16, ‘Ariadne’s words do, ironically, ring true in the end, in that the Minotaur was in any case more genuinely her brother than was Theseus, as it has proved, a faithful lover.’

191 Cf. DeBrohun 1999:421, ‘But for Ariadne herself, the decisive choice - indeed, the only one worthy of mention - was that between Theseus and her brother.’

192 Quinn 1970: 330.

193 The attempted solemnity of the periphrasis is further undercut by the stuttering ‘*dererech*’ in *defender(e) Erechthei* as the old king struggles to finish his sentence. Compare the clean pronunciation of the narrator’s elision of the same, *sospit(em) Erechtheum* (v.211). Aegeus picks up on another recent usage and makes a hash of it.

complete the sense.¹⁹⁴ Contrast this with Ariadne's delayed and powerful 'eripui' - 'I snatched you out!' These repeated criticisms are not of course aimed at the author (or the narrator relating it). It takes a good poet to construct the *impression* of a bad one. They are complaints posed not at the hexameters but at the speech they contain. As already stated, Aegeus, if innocent, should have some measure of sympathy but his lack of artistry, in comparison with the primary narrator and Ariadne, is damaging his position.

Moreover it is not only his style which is troubling but also some of the echoes to be heard in his content. This is not the first time in our study we have encountered Itonus. A.R. 1.547-552, one of the passages informing the construction of our recommissioned Argo, contains the Apollonian narrator's reference to the Argo as ἔργον Ἀθηναίης Ἴτωνίδος (551).¹⁹⁵ An echo of the Argo's launch as Aegeus is instructing a Theseus about to set sail points up the inconsistency of the 'first boat' and the divergent traditions of mythological chronology. Acknowledging the echo, becoming distracted by the problem raised, involves inevitably an increased sensitivity to further Argonautic allusions in the vicinity. Thus the subsequent echo 'sanguine tauri' becomes harder to miss which is the worse for Aegeus. By replacing the legendary with the ordinary in his imagery, Aegeus has alluded to the unheroic manner in which Jason ambushed and killed the deceived Apsyrtus βουτύπος ὥς τε μέγαν κερεαλκέα ταῦρον, (A. R. 4.468). Ariadne's use of allusion at verse 181 'in respersum iuvenem fraterna caede' was aimed at blurring the Minotaur's destruction with the death of Apsyrtus, and Aegeus, unwittingly allusive and collusive in his rebuttal, has reinforced the link. But how does this tally with the narrator's own description of Theseus' heroism?

cum saevum cupiens contra contendere monstrum
aut mortem appeteret Theseus aut praemia laudis!
64.101-2

Death or glory. An unequivocal portrayal of the Homeric hero's pursuit of κλέα ἀνδρῶν. And he won it, he emerged from the Labyrinth 'with great praise' (*multa cum laude*, v. 112), after his monster-slaying had been related in suitably epic terms.

nam velut in summo quatientem brachia Tauro
quercum aut conigeram sudanti cortice pinum

194 Quinn (1970:330) notes, '*annuere* with dependent infinitive is uncommon' which might suggest Aegeus reaching for the purposely unfamiliar in the periphrasis to cast himself as a man of learning.

195 See p.18 above.

indomitus turbo contorquens flamine robur,
eruit (illa procul radicitus exturbata
prona cadit, late quaevis cumque obvia frangens),
sic domito saevum prostravit corpore Theseus
nequiquam vanis iactantem cornua ventis.
64.105-111

‘velut... indomitus turbo... sic domito saevum...’, conqueror and conquered. Tenor and vehicle are in unison and the victor’s name suspended until the action complete - ‘Theseus’, triumphant at line-end lording it over the beast in its death throes. Note too how the sense builds from successive line starts: ‘quercum’ object, ‘indomitus turbo’ subject then ‘eruit’ enjambed, emphatic, final. So did the hero, like a force of nature, destroy the monster. Yet that perception and perspective, with the addition of a syllable, are turned upside down by Ariadne’s intratextual echo at verse 150. ‘You say *eruit*, I say *eripui*.’ Theseus accomplished nothing, *she* saved *him*. Same position, enjambed, emphatic, final. Note the contrast with the passivity with which she began her lament, two strong active first person indicatives open and close verse 150, ‘eripui’ and ‘crevi’. In Crete she was in control, she made decisions, he was in her debt. And yet the chain goes on when Aegeus retaliates, ‘quandoquidem fortuna mea ac tua fervida virtus | eripit invito mihi te’ (vv.218-9). Same verb, same position, but the subject reverts to Theseus, to the qualities that drive him. ‘Compassion, nobility, courage!’ insists the father. One person’s word against another’s and Ariadne’s (justifiable?) hostility might discourage our faith in her version. Is the father similarly biased by love, although seeing the best rather than the worst in him? How secure is the narrator’s account? Whilst there is no *surface* ambiguity, there are still some echoes to admit.

Verse 111 is highly likely to be an imitation of a line from Callimachus’ *Hecale*, (πολλὰ μάτην κεράεσσιν ἐς ἠέρα θυμήναντα (fr. 165 inc. auct. H.) and tempting to read as an author’s intertextual nod to the model of the Hellenistic treatment of a heroic narrative in demonstrating how to map new emphases and push subsidiary characters and events to the forefront.¹⁹⁶ However, due to the *Hecale*’s fragmentary nature we cannot make comparisons between the condensed Catullan *aristeia* and the Callimachean account of Theseus’ battle with bull of Marathon. On the possible ‘abbreviation’ involved therein, Morrison cautions, ‘The degree of asymmetry here may, however, have been exaggerated -

¹⁹⁶ Hollis 1990:32, ‘For Roman poets the *Hecale* may have had a special position as one of the earliest, finest, and most substantial specimens of the epyllion.’ However, see Fantuzzi & Hunter 2004:197 for a notable dissimilarity in the ‘rarity, if not in fact total absence, of the intrusive authorial voice so familiar in the *Aitia* and the *Hymns*.’ Cf. *ibid.* n. 34, ‘The state of preservation of the text obviously enjoins caution, but enough survives to allow some confidence in this argument.’

the fragments we can certainly or probably attribute to the description of the battle (fr.165 inc. auct., 67, 68, 69.1-3 H.) suggest that the treatment of Theseus overcoming the bull may have been fuller than critics usually allow.¹⁹⁷ Our intertexts for the simile are fuller, one Homeric, one Hellenistic, both epic.

ἤριπε δ' ὡς ὅτε τις δρυῖς ἤριπεν ἢ ἀχρωῖς
 ἢ ἐ πίτυς βλωθρή, τήν τ' οὔρεσι τέκτονες ἄνδρες
 ἐξέταμον πελέκεσσι νεήκεσι νήϊον εἶναι·
 Il. 13.389-91

There are similarities of content here, the victim falling like a tree cut down in the mountains, but this occurs in relating the slaying of Asius by Cretan Idomeneus, one hero by another. The model cited for mortal overcoming monster has a disruptive context.¹⁹⁸

ἀλλ' ὥς τις τ' ἐν ὄρεσσι πελωρή ὑπόθι πεύκη,
 τήν τε θοοῖς πελέκεσιν ἔθ' ἡμιπλήγα λιπόντες
 ὑλοτόμοι δρυμοῖο κατήλυθον, ἢ δ' ὑπὸ νυκτί
 ῥιπήσιν μὲν πρῶτα τινάσσεται, ὕστερον αὔτε
 πρυμνόθεν ἐξεαγεῖσα κατήριπεν·
 A.R. 4.1682-6

Another monster slain, Talos, remnant of a more primitive age, his fall likened to a pine hewn by axes and finally toppled by a wind. Jason, however, had no part in it. The Apollonian narrator describes the state of mind amongst the Argonauts when faced with Talos as περιδδείσαντες (A.R. 4.1650). They were afraid. The conqueror of Talos was Medea: ὧς ὃ γε, χάλκειός περ ἐὼν, ὑπόειξε δαμῆναι | Μηδείης βρίμη πολυφαρμάκου (A.R. 1676-7). An intertext for Theseus' accomplishment is one where the hero is supplanted by his helper. Now, consider the framing of his encounter with the Minotaur. Immediately after the narrator describes the hero setting off in pursuit of glory, he turns his gaze to Ariadne.

197 Morrison 2007:8, n. 36. It is additionally unfortunate with regards to Aegeus. See Gutzwiller 1981:50, 'The poet apparently concentrated upon the relationship between Theseus and his father. There are preserved fragments of a conversation (P. Oxy. 2216=fr. 238) in which Theseus reassures Aegeus concerning the dangers involved in seeking out the bull of Marathon.'

198 The action of uprooting rather than felling might additionally call to mind another display of supernatural power within the *Argonautica*, a pine tree (ἐλάτη) being torn from the ground by Hercules to serve as a replacement oar πεδόθεν δὲ βαθύρριζόν περ εἴουσιν | προσφυῖς ἐξήειρε σὺν αὐτοῖς ἔχμασι γαίης (A.R. 1.1199-200) where this description is the tenor (Hercules can do what other men can only do in simile) and the vehicle a mast broken by the wind. An echo which might additionally remind, albeit faintly as echo in the context of echo, of the conflation and amendments manifest within the 'proem', here with regards to the 'correct' construction materials of the Argo. On which topic, Thomas 1982:147.

non ingrata tamen frustra munuscula divis
promittens tacito suscepit vota labello.
64.103-4

It seems an affectionate glance on the part of narrator, again showing concern for her emotional state. The diminutive 'labello' focuses our attention on her silent suffering. Her lips, perhaps trembling, unable yet to part and vocalise the passions within. However, does the extended comment on a favourable response from the gods to her offerings merely foreshadow a likewise favourable outcome for the hero in his quest or also imply her intercession ensured it? We know the efficacy of her prayers as vouched for by the prompt and positive action of Jupiter when her lament concluded. We can add a further hint towards her assistance when we observe how Theseus emerged from the Labyrinth, 'errabunda regens tenui vestigia filo' (v.113). His wandering footsteps there held in place by the thread she gave him.

If Theseus is not to be entirely deprived of his *aristeia*, there is at least room for establishing reasonable doubt that he could have succeeded without Ariadne. Before Jason seduced Medea with talk of marriage, she demanded only to be remembered, but threatened that, if he should forget the help she gave, she would fly on the winds to Iolchus, 'to throw reproaches in your face and remind you that you escaped by my will.'¹⁹⁹ Ariadne has drawn upon several Argonautic episodes to allusively adjust the perspectives of both Theseus' deeds and her part in them but goes further, and whilst she does not have recourse to her cousin's magic, in attacking Theseus' character, in smearing his heroic status, she proves adept at conjuring some literary monsters.

pro quo dilaceranda feris dabor alitibusque
praeda, neque iniacta tumulabor mortua terra.
quaenam te genuit sola sub rupe leaena,
quod mare conceptum spumantibus expuit undis,
quae Syrtis, quae Scylla rapax, quae vasta Carybdis,
talìa qui reddis pro dulci praemia vita?
64.152-7

For choosing him over her brother, she has been destroyed. Thoughts of herself as prey roll into those of Theseus' unnatural birth as she reflects upon the nature of the man who betrayed her; 'Ariadne considers herself about to be *dilaceranda feris*, with the result that

199 A.R. 3.1115-6

her mind (or the poet's) immediately turns to the image of Theseus and the *leena*.²⁰⁰ Note too how 'praemia' adjacent to 'vita' whilst linked by sound to 'praeda' underlines her complaint, 'The reward for your life is my death'. And whilst the images she offers might well be commonplace,²⁰¹ the echoes are pointed. His children murdered, his ambitions undone, a broken Jason hurled similar accusations at the true form of a triumphant Medea.

λέαιναν, οὐ γυναῖκα, τῆς Τυρσηνίδος
 Σκύλλης ἔχουσαν ἀγριωτέραν φύσιν.
 E. *Med.* 1342-3

Ariadne reaches not to the *Argonautica* but along the strands of tragedy to find Medea at her most chilling and adopts not her words but those of her husband to recast, and in doing so again separates herself from the murderer. Upon the chronological complications of the comparison, Debrohun comments, 'On a metapoetic level, Catullus has made especial use of the genealogical nature of allusion itself, in this case in terms of maternity, as it is Ariadne's questioning of Theseus' maternal lineage in Catullus' poem that leads us back most directly to Euripides' *Medea*, and in particular, to a passage in which Medea herself is specifically characterized in terms of her own role as monstrous mother.'²⁰² The mother of Theseus must be a woman like his stepmother, Medea!²⁰³

'spumantis exspuit undis' - the words froth on her tongue. Assonance and alliteration combine to enliven the image of a foaming spitting birth which gushes into an ascending tricolon of ever more terrible dangers of the sea. However violent her content,

200 Putnam 1961:176. On *quaenam* in emphatic initial position, note Conrad 1965:227, '[It] seems to function as a subject itself until it is completed by *laena* at the end.. The effect may be translated thus: "Who was she that gave you birth in some lonely grotto - a lioness?"'

201 So Fordyce 1961:234.

202 Debrohun 1999:428. Cf. *ibid.*, 'Lioness similes and metaphors are part of Euripides' characterization of Medea throughout his play.' Thus παιδοφόνου τῆσδε λεαίνης ('child-murdering lioness' E. *Med.* 1407) - Jason's words revising the earlier description by the nurse of the lioness *protecting* her cubs (187-9). She is also likened by the nurse to 'a stone or surge of the sea' (ὡς δὲ πέτρος ἢ θαλάσσιος | κλύδων, 28-9) and by the chorus to a 'rock or iron' (πέτρος ἢ σίδα- | ρος, 1279-80), on which Boedeker 1997:130, 'The Nurse's characterization of a stony, intractable Medea has proved accurate, in the view of the shocked Chorus.' Cf. on the ferocity of the lioness' glare, the blasphemous Erysichthon who dared threaten Demeter, τὰν δ' ἄρ' ὑποβλέψας χαλεπώτερον ἢε κυναγόν | ὤρεισιν ἐν Τμαρίοισιν ὑποβλέπει ἄνδρα λέαινα | ὠμοτόκος (Call. *Cer.* 50-2).

203 On Catullus following the Apollonian chronology of the myth, contrary to that of Euripides, Callimachus and Ennius, see Weber 1983:267-70. Cf. Gaisser 1995:608, 'In the strange world of the ephrasid the laws of time and space established in the frame are compressed and contravened. Only in such a labyrinth could the story of Medea (which has not happened yet) run parallel with that of Ariadne as its subtext and paradigm.'

Ariadne's composure and construction remains considered.²⁰⁴ This sea, Curran observes, 'vividly recalls the very different emergence of the Nereids from the sea in the Peleus story.'²⁰⁵ However, we should not neglect the importance of the voice. These are the parallels created by the author but these are also the opinions of his characters and these characters have agenda. Whose voice we choose to hear, whose eyes we look through at any one time will distort what we hear and colour what we see accordingly. The promise of love emerging from the waves in the figure of Thetis, mother-to-be, does provide a bitter backdrop to the vision of Ariadne on the shore, her own hopes of marriage submerged, facing out to a sea capable of birthing not love but monsters. Is this intratextual comparison being made by Ariadne, by the narrator who reports her speech, by the author who has constructed it, or all three? For the narrator of a wedding song, love is the natural theme and a reminiscence of Thetis here an apposite foreshadowing of the joyous celebration still to be told whilst this exploration of passion in his preoccupation with Ariadne, for all its heartbreak, still reveals the intensity of the emotion, the power of Love. For Ariadne, the echo reminds her audience of what she has been falsely promised, what is now lost. The concurrent availability of such readings falls within the sphere of the author, for whom the comparison then again promotes ways of reading, as each connection made is also a crossroads signposting the possibilities at the core of the poem's design.

Thus Curran's observation is pertinent but for multiple individuals viewing it differently and in Ariadne's case there is more to be drawn from the imagery than an intratextually-induced sympathy. This juxtaposition of images, of mothers and violent seas, has occurred before. The allusion carries us from a lonely shore to one resounding with the clamour of battle.

νηλεές, οὐκ ἄρα σοί γε πατήρ ἦν ἱππότα Πηλεΐς,
οὐδὲ Θέτις μήτηρ· γλαυκὴ δέ σε τίκτε θάλασσα
πέτραι τ' ἠλίβατοι, ὅτι τοι νόος ἐστὶν ἀπηνής.
Il. 16.33-5

Achilles has yet to appear in our narrative but this echo further entwines Ariadne in her surroundings, in the wedding day of Peleus and Thetis that precedes and the Song of the

204 Too considered for some, so Jenkyns 1982:120, 'The condemnation in line 154ff. is too elegant to be entirely savage.'

205 Curran 1969:178. Cf. *ibid.* 174, 'He forces us to consider the two stories together and to observe the light they cast on each other by inserting one within the other... It is restated in visual terms in the description, both at the beginning and end of the insert, of the way in which the coverlet bearing the Ariadne story embraces within its folds the marriage couch of Peleus and Thetis.'

Parcae to follow.²⁰⁶ That is not to say a virgin reader should anticipate the nature and subject-matter of that prophetic song but still a subtle groundwork is being laid. And there is more here than Ariadne spinning beyond her bounds if we consider the context of the Homeric passage.²⁰⁷ The Argives are pressed back to their ships as Patroclus begs Achilles to rejoin the fight but his mind is unbending. His refusal leads to Patroclus taking up his armour and subsequently dying at the hands of Hector. ‘Save us,’ pleads Patroclus but Achilles is νηλεές²⁰⁸ ‘pitiless, ruthless’ and his mind ἀπηνής ‘unfriendly, harsh’. ‘Save me,’ pleads Ariadne but Theseus’ heart too is hard (‘immite... pectus’, v.138) and his mind savage (‘crudelis... mentis’, v.136).

Ariadne’s speculations on the monstrous nature of his mother were fuelled by an acknowledgement of impending death, and the particular manner of that death, being torn apart by wild beasts, is a fate and phrasing with a notable parallel.

αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν
οἴωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι, Διὸς δ’ ἐτελείετο βουλή,
Il. 1.4-5

Thus, she layers her portrayal of Jason with images of Achilles intransigent and at his most bloodthirsty,²⁰⁹ whilst figuring herself as Patroclus, blameless, selfless, doomed. What could be regarded as stock insults have been carefully placed to arouse sympathy, she is victim, she is secondary - *Look there over the waves is your protagonist, Theseus*. The narrator’s ‘ferox’ has been revised. Aegeus’ talk of ‘fervida virtus’ dismissed. The

206 With the death of Patroclus, Achilles informs his mother of his intention to make the Trojan women mourn (*Il.* 18.122-4), an achievement to be prophesied when our Fates sing (vv.348-51), though they’re sensible enough not to mention the wish he made prior to the vow, that Peleus and Thetis never had wed (*Il.* 18.86-8).

207 Cf. Sharrock 2000:25, ‘Ariadne as text must be enclosed on the island and on the coverlet: we need to capture her like this in order to read her, but she, like texts, also flows out of her boundary into the frame, both of Catullus, 64 and of the Catullan corpus.’

208 Cf. Medea’s reproach to Jason, μάλα γὰρ μέγαν ἤλιτες ὄρκον, ἢ νηλεές (‘For certain, you’ve transgressed a great oath, pitiless man’, A.R. 4. 388-9). Hutchinson (1988:117) notes the similarities and also contrasts between Achilles’ mockery of Patroclus and Chalciope’s sisterly concern for a young Medea’s tears: ‘it is effective that the tears scorned as feminine in the martial epic should be regarded with such extreme earnestness in the feminine situation. The difference in tone embodies the difference in ethos.’

209 An incarnation waiting to be sung by the Parcae. Zetzel commenting on the allusion to *Il.* 1.4f. fails to find ‘any particular resonance’ (Zetzel 1983:255), cf. Zetzel 1978:333, ‘δαῖτα was objected to by Aristarchus because the word is used elsewhere in Homer exclusively to refer to human meals; that objection would apply to *cena* as well. Thus, it would seem, Catullus is alluding not only to the (correct) Zenodotean text, but to the objections of Aristarchus as well.’ I’d suggest that, besides the obvious suitability of *praeda*, any attempt to incorporate ‘meal’ would foster an unwelcome link to the *daps* of the Minotaur (v.79) at a point in the lament when she is attempting to humanise the monster and degenerate the man.

‘brave’ hero cast as ‘savage’ Achilles, as ‘wild’ Medea.²¹⁰

Lingering a moment longer within the Myrmidon camp, we find a further contact within the context. Patroclus’ speech follows Achilles’ rebuke for his tears whilst men such as Peleus still live. The father of Theseus too lives but after Ariadne brings her indictment to a close with the requested penalty, Theseus’ flight serves only to hasten Aegeus to his doom, ‘annuit invicto caelestum numine rector’ (v.204). Theseus, like Achilles, brings death. The old king’s fall from the rocks, the will of Zeus fulfilled.

ipse autem caeca mentem caligine Theseus
consitus oblito dimisit pectore cuncta,
quae mandata prius constanti mente tenebat,
64.207-9

We have returned to the deliberation with which we started: Forgetful Theseus or a Theseus made to forget? The instructions he kept secure. His memory of them endured until blanked by an undeniable force. The depiction of Jupiter’s power (vv.205-6), all reality yielding to his nod, underlines that this was something Theseus was helpless to resist. No sooner does Aegeus finish his speech than the narrator returns to make the same point with the same diction and an accompanying simile.²¹¹

haec mandata prius constanti mente tenentem
Thesea ceu pulsae ventorum flamine nubes
aereum nivei montis liquere cacumen.
64.238-40

The instructions thus frame the speech and crystallise a moment - Theseus in the act of forgetting. We watch a memory fade, flashback to its origin and having had it invigorated for us, watch it pass from him completely. Let us return to the exposition circled by this image and Aegeus’ record of the event. The instructions are evidently present but require some untangling from his syntax.

‘Quod si (quae annuit...) concesserit ut respergas... , tum facito ut mandata vigeant nec aetas oblitteret [mandata].’

The *mandata* have been forced to put in a double shift as subject and object to

210 An adjective also suggested by Horace as most apt in portraying Medea herself, ‘sit Medea ferox invictaque’ (Hor. A.P. 124).

211 On the parallel with the *aristea*, Warden 1998:409, ‘Now the blast of wind demonstrates his weakness, not his strength (cp. *flamine* in 107 and 239).’

accommodate a sententious finish to the verse. 'nec ulla oblitteret aetas' (v.232) - the instructions he would have recalled for eternity are a reminder to change a sail. It's not quite carving for Theseus a list of chores in stone but it is again inappropriate excess, more 'overacting'. His level of involvement here is not that of Ariadne reworking the primary narrator's material. There is no negotiation with the narrator's version. The narrator told us that Theseus forgot the instructions (v. 208). We then hear Aegeus telling him what the instructions are and not to forget them before the narrator returns and informs us that Theseus forgot the instructions (v. 238). Aegeus is providing him source material: these are the instructions according to what they say Aegeus said.

What Aegeus does do is repeat and embellish. As stated above, the changing of the sail is an activity key to the fulfilment of the punishment. Forgetting its purpose as a signal, as a device, allows the conclusion of this episode in the narrative. There is no emotional charge within the object itself or attached to its function, at least not until Aegeus attempts to apply to them an independent and pathetic significance. And in the awkwardness of his syntax, he appears to complicate the instructions he should make plain. Aegeus says the right things to his son but not in the right way. His love for Theseus is visualised in terms of the impact on himself of losing a son. *Mihi* occurs three times in the first five verses of his speech: 'dearer to me, returned to me, unwelcome to me'. He does not focus upon the troubles of the city or what awaits Theseus in Crete, the former are accounted for by a vague reference to *his* misfortunes (v.218) and the latter, subordinated within the protasis of a conditional clause, in a bland description of the hero's task (v.230). His preoccupation with his own suffering evolves through his projection of premature mourning into the explication of the instructions to be carried out to end his suffering.

'Nurture them in your heart,' he tells him. 'memori... corde' (v.231) - his son was *not* the forgetful type, Ariadne. Perhaps not then, but now those instructions are being blown from his mind even as we look back upon their inception. Forgotten because he forgot her. But, if his mind was constant and his heart abiding, how could he forget her? Was it Bacchus after all? Did Theseus wake besides her but made oblivious to her, and then set sail only have his mind tampered with a second time for a wrong he'd committed unknowingly? Was Theseus the victim of a divine 'double whammy'? If he wasn't, then this close succession of references to his dependable memory (vv.209, 231, 238) can only reinforce Ariadne's point. He could remember the instructions but not her. It was never forgetfulness that made him sail away without her. He just didn't care.

The interpretations offered here, as my own wilful manipulations have exaggerated the failings of Aegeus, can obviously be questioned. A view of Ariadne eavesdropping the narrator and knowingly allusive in her complaints requires considering her as a performer, and with an equal billing whilst some of the criticisms of Aegeus delineate a subordinate and sometimes naïve role. The same issues raised in trying to determine distance between author and narrator apply to the internal narrators. How we map these relationships adjusts the view. Is Aegeus caught on the rocks, set between and competing with on one side Ariadne's virtuoso lament, and on the other the prophetic grandeur of the Parcae's song, merely providing a foil for both? Adopting this view, could we then construe at the level of the author, the presentation of a ponderous Aegeus as metapoetic commentary on a poet out of step with the times? For proponents of a neoteric school, a Volusius amongst Cinna.²¹² Or posited within the programmatic premise we are exploring, did Aegeus fail (and perish) because he couldn't see beyond the obvious, because he couldn't allow for other possibilities? The dyed sail was always and only death: Aegeus was a man of singular perspective. Or is he, as Gaisser suggests, like us, 'for in looking at the deceptive sail he too is trying to read the message inscribed in a woven fabric'?'²¹³ The more interpretations that can be reasonably admitted, the more the programmatic nature of the work reveals itself. In illustrating the negotiations between the speakers of the poem, what should now be apparent is this is a strategy. These narratives are interwoven and in a design which allows them to be picked apart, rethreaded, put into patterns that recreate the images and their meanings.

However, there is one aspect of this 'trial' that is entirely unambiguous: the verdict. Jupiter's judgement was immediate and absolute. There would be no repeat reunion day for father and son, or as Aegeus chooses to phrase it, no age of prosperity, ('aetas prospera', v.237). The verdict of the poem's narrative arrangement, is no less emphatic. No sooner does Theseus enter the house of mourning than the narrator returns to Ariadne, reverts to ekphrasis and enthusiastically points out for her ('te quaerens, Ariadna, tuoque incensus amore' v.253) Bacchus come to carry her off in triumph in a scene that explodes into sounds of celebration. The version which flourished and no age erased was hers. At least amongst elegiac poets.

212 For his views on Volusius' poetry, see Cat. 36.18-20, 'at vos interea venite in ignem, | pleni ruris et inficetiarum | Annales Volusi, cacata charta', the same poem which contains the cult names of Venus which recur in 64. Cf. on Cinna and Volusius, Cat. 95, discussed below p.84.

213 Gaisser 1995:605.

Gnosia, Theseae quondam periuria linguae
fleuisti ignoto sola relictā mari:
sic cecinit pro te doctus, Minoi, Catullus
ingrati referens impia facta uiri.
Lygdamus=[Tib.] 3. 6.39-42

ii. *The Bridegrooms*

Theseus is not the only hero of the narrative to have his *aristeia* diminished. Whilst Peleus is addressed in an encomiastic fashion by both narrator and the Parcae, we never hear of his exploits. In fact, he is only ‘there’ when addressed. A relatively minor hero in the *Argonautica* (his one ‘big scene’ being to take a message from his estranged wife and be reminded by her presence of his loss),²¹⁴ this ‘B list’ character has been thrust into the spotlight but without any substance or lines, left to stand mute as events are directed around him and other stories found. Even the wrestling and winning of Thetis has been taken from him and revised purely as a divine mandate. His only related accomplishment is set in a future time within prophetic song - to be the father of Achilles. His glory then is to have a more glorious son. One effect of this projection to the deeds of Achilles at Troy is to superimpose the Peleus of the *Iliad*, dotting somewhere in the background of epic, never to see his son again. It is an image encouraged I believe by the preceding scene of Aegeus, the old king who died without ever seeing his son again. Peleus, virile bridegroom, is simultaneously old, estranged and alone.²¹⁵

Theseus’ actions were viewed from the perspectives of others but Peleus is given no actions to speak of so instead we have narration of events concerning him. Though addressed by the narrator as character, he serves in the narrative more as a means to introduce other interests. The wedding tale is told from the views of the guests, the setting and the entertainers, not from the perspective of a happy couple who are peripheral. The apostrophe smoothed the transition from the ship to the palace whilst foregrounding the role of the narrator. The focus was ostensibly on Peleus but the manner of the questioning told us more about the narrator. The stage was then lavishly set for a celebration of his greatest day but instead we were entertained by Ariadne. It is only with eighty verses of the poem remaining that the narrator’s promised song (‘meo carmine’, v.24) materialises,

214 A.R. 4.851ff.

215 It should be reiterated that Thetis does not explicitly appear in the poem. The image of Peleus we are offered is the expecting groom, the one alluded to is the estranged husband; we never see their brief and lauded union.

and in the time that has passed between, he has found someone else to sing it.

haec tum clarisona pellentes vellera voce
talia divino fuderunt carmine fata,
carmine, perfidiae quod post nulla arguet aetas.
64.320-2

After an extensive description of the shuffling Parcae and their spinning, we finally hear their song, and what we hear substituted is an upgrade, it is divine. The manner in which their prophecies are sung ‘clarisona... voce’ strikes an obvious parallel with that of Ariadne’s lament and her own clear-voiced speech as described by the narrator (‘clarisonas... voces’, v.125). Here, however, there is no call upon tradition. The narrator has discarded the ‘authority formula’ and chosen to make a strong declaration instead concerning the content. No future generation will be able to argue that these prophecies are false, that is to say, what the audience is about to hear will happen. It is less important to refer to a source for *them* saying what they said than to affirm everything they said came true. Or so he would have us believe and when the material we encounter is predominantly concerned with the exploits of Achilles at Troy and our familiarity with the legends has us nodding in agreement, he has worked his narrative magic again.

What source is there for the Fates singing at this wedding? When discussing the apostrophe to Apollo, we recalled the accounts of Homer and Pindar, of Aeschylus and Euripides. The prominent figures varied in what part they played, but the names were consistent; Apollo, Chiron, the Muses and not one wedding story mentioned the Fates. Here Apollo has declined his invitation, Chiron found another task²¹⁶ and the narrator, having denied them entry to the poem thus far, will not suffer Muses now. His tactic here is bold. Fifteen verses are lavished on the Parcae; on their fragility, their clothing, their hair, on all aspects of their spinning and weaving (vv.305-19). The names of previous performers and their summarised roles are blotted out by this vivid and full realisation. By the time the Parcae come to sing, the illusion thus created is that this was always their song.

Their extensive description, particularly in its focus on their infirmity has caused some critics discomfort: ‘The Fates are not grim or horrific, but their combination of power and decrepitude is a little uncanny, and their introduction into the wedding feast is

216 Jenkyns (1982:109) notes how the centaur Chiron, prophet of the Euripidean account, future tutor of Achilles has been reduced to a ‘simple sylvan bringing flowers.’

troubling, not deeply but none the less perceptibly.²¹⁷ For Theodorakopoulos, on the other hand, '[it] finally offers some kind of detail of physical texture that we might have expected to find in the ekphrasis, thus again linking the two inset narratives.'²¹⁸ In addition to the recurring motif of the 'thread as guide' with which she also connects the two embedded narratives ('leviter deducens fila', v.321, 'levi... filo', v.317 with the narrator's 'tenui... filo', v.113), we might further consider the element of staging common to the scenes; both speakers are rendered in detail in preparation for their deliveries, if somewhat 'dolled up' in the case of the Parcae (with their clean white dresses and hair adorned with red ribbons, vv.307-9). Here we might contrast the description attached to Aegeus whose speech is framed by these two command performances. 'inquentem gnatum ventis concrederet Aegeus, | talia complexum iuveni mandata dedisse', (vv.213-4): the paucity of the two line introduction underlining a peripheral billing?

The attention the narrative gives to the depiction of the Parcae prefigures and underlines their role as a major attraction but its content also carries information significant to an aesthetic: 'The passage is replete with the kinds of expressions which become conventional signals for Hellenistic affiliations in Augustan poetry, and which to a less clichéd extent are already present in some of the shorter poems of Catullus.'²¹⁹ Let us narrow the focus on the activity of their hands.

aeternumque manus carpebant rite laborem.
 laeva colum molli lana retinebat amictum,
 dextera tum leviter deducens fila supinis
 formabat digitis, tum prono in pollice torquens
 libratum tereti versabat turbine fusum,
 64.310-14

The first verse is enclosed by 'the endless task' and the 'balanced spindle' of the last is woven itself into a visually balanced line (balanced rounded spinning wheel spindle). The spinning, their craftsmanship, is order, harmony, and eternity.²²⁰ After the difficulties and uncertainties of the Theseus and Ariadne narrative which hijacked the wedding tale, we are firmly back on track, ready for a divine authority, a lucid delivery and a lasting testimony. The guiding thread spun with care will run true and forever, as born out by their

²¹⁷ Jenkyns 1982:142.

²¹⁸ Theodorakopoulos 2000:135. Cf. *ibid.*, 'The Parcae are described as creating their work, even as the narrative evolves, much like the shield of Achilles is described even as it is being forged by Hephaestus.'

²¹⁹ Theodorakopoulos 2000:135, noting concepts such as effort (v.310), polish (v.315-6), and softness (v.311, v.318).

²²⁰ The boundlessness declared by the content of v.310 is shackled by the structure of the line. The Fates can contain the uncontainable.

song's refrain, 'currere ducentes subtegmina, currere, fusi'.

The verse describes and underlines their tireless labour but its use as refrain, in song, suggests the poetry too will run forever. The Parcae, as artists, are making their aesthetic affiliations clear. They lie with the poet's own.²²¹

Zmyrna cavas Satrachi penitus mittetur ad undas,
Zmyrnam cana diu saecula pervolvent.
Cat. 95.5-6

The fame of Cinna's poem, Catullus tells us, will reach as far as Cyprus, to the river where Aphrodite and Adonis once made love. A learned allusion to a learned poem: 'Adonis was the son of the princess Smyrna, whose passion for her father Cinyras was the subject of Cinna's poem.'²²² And an allusion underlined, I believe, by *penitus*, which suggests not only the poem becoming firmly established but a journey to the source of the river that is likewise the source of the allusion. Unlike the work of prolific hacks like Hortensius and Volusius, this erudite polished poetry endures, rolling long down the generations. The immortal Parcae, tasked with spinning all fates in all details for all time, apparently themselves prefer a *carmen deductum*. However, refinement might require selectivity. How full will their prophecies be? Let us examine the content.

'o decus eximium magnis virtutibus augens,
Emathiae tutamen, Opis, carissime nato,
accipe, quod laeta tibi pandunt luce sorores,
veridicum oraclum: sed vos, quae fata sequuntur,
currere ducentes subtegmina, currere, fusi.
64.323-7

Praise of the bridegroom is a conventional beginning. The Parcae are conversant with the genre.²²³ A traditional start to the proceedings to put the reader at ease. We might recall the

221 Cf. Theodorakopoulos 2000:136, 'By turning them into poetesses after his own mould, the poet asserts their status as authorities, and the reliability of their song.' However, whilst goddesses can project unerringly into the future, as artists they construct their prophecies in the literature of the past. The assurance of divine linearity, of an unfolding sequence of 'facts' is thus complicated for the intertextual reader by an awareness that the content has sources and revises them.

222 Godwin 1999:206. Cf. Lyne 1978:173, 'The story, revolving around a heroine who fell in love with her father, would make a splendidly off-beat *epos* - as Ovid (who imitated Cinna too) again shows. Three lines are preserved (frgs. 6 and 7 M), which include an emotional apostrophe: "te matutinus flentem conspexit Eous...".' On his fellow neoteric Calvus' *Io, ibid.*, 'frg. 9 "a uirgo infelix herbis pascere amaris" shows us that Calvus not only emotionally apostrophized his heroine but also anticipated his own plot - both features of the wilful Catullan narrative.' See too, linking instead to the poem that stands at the head of the collection, Theodorakopoulos 2000:136.

223 For the required elements of the epithalamium (accepting it is for the most part a late Classical reconstruction from the extant literature) Babin 1987:111-2, 'What they are singing is an *epithalamion*,

languid assuring manner with which the narrator began the poem. The language of their address is grand but befitting their status and the occasion. ‘Emathiae tutamen, Opis, carissime nato’ - the vocabulary and phrasing convey a solemnity appropriate to the singers and to prophetic song. The references are learned but not overly abstruse. Similarly we encounter in their song, the ‘high-sounding’²²⁴ periphrasis ‘periuri Pelopis... tertius heres’ in lieu of ‘Agamemnon’ and the elegant ‘urbis Dardaniae Neptunia solvere vincla’ with its adjectival name-forms alluding to the founding of Troy and its rebuilding in a verse prophesying its destruction (an event underlined by the iconic word order, the city and its protection polarised at either end of the verse).

Already, however, an assertion on the truthfulness of their prophetic song, ‘veridicum oraculum’ (v.326). Our familiarity with the narrator’s method of enthusiastically vouching for material that simultaneously flouts tradition might make us suspicious. Ariadne had urged the Eumenides to view her complaints likewise true (‘verae’ v.198): ‘The insistent truthfulness of the Parcae also makes a point about the treachery, and specifically the breakdown of *fides*, that pervades the Theseus and Ariadne section... and which also occurs in many of the other poems in the collection.’²²⁵ Ariadne successfully sued Theseus for his failings and his home was ruined. However, despite Jupiter finding in her favour, can Ariadne in her own words, even if we accept her ‘facts’, be said to be impartial? From this comparison, another reason to support their candidacy as singers arises. It is not simply the contrast between mortal and divine conceptions of truth. Doubt was cast on Apollo’s suitability when we explored his ‘history’ with Thetis and suggested one interpretation of the narrator’s apostrophe could be his desire to protect the god from some libellous literature (which is simultaneously a poet’s intention to correct it). The Parcae then, can sing prophecy without prejudice. As our ever ‘sincere’ narrator has insisted then, there can be no doubting this song. Yet the same poet who provided variants for the couple’s first meeting, for the location and for the singers, has also a variant for the song; again Pindar. In *Nemean 5*, for Pythias of Aegina, Apollo plays his lyre on Pelion whilst the Muses sing.

ἀγείτο παντοίων νόμων· αἱ δὲ πρότιστον μὲν ὕμνη-

or perhaps more properly a *kateunastikos*. The song starts with extravagant praise of the groom, predicts the arrival of the evening star, and with it the arrival of the bride, and the joys of the wedding night... The song concludes with another request to unite the bride with her eager groom, and ends on a somewhat ribald note...’

224 Garrison 1995:140.

225 Theodorakopoulos 2000:136, with examples.

σαν Διὸς ἀρχόμεναι σεμνὰν Θέτιν
Πηλέα θ'
Pi. N. 5.25

After these addresses (in which Peleus is third and last), the Muses sing of Hippolyta's attempted seduction of Peleus.²²⁶ His spurning of her advances is given as the reason Zeus opted to give him Thetis in marriage, despite the amorous interests of Poseidon.

ὥστ' ἐν τάχει
ποντίαν χρυσαλακάτων τινὰ Νη-
ρεΐδων πράξειν ἄκοιτιν,
Pi. N. 5.35-6

She is thus the reward not for his valour but his virtue, specifically as it related to the behaviour becoming a guest: 'It is clear that the central theme of the Peleus and Hippolyta episode is that Thetis was Peleus' exceptional reward for his adherence to the laws of Zeus Xeinius.'²²⁷ Ariadne chastised Theseus for his failure to reverence the same, seducing her with his sweet deceits whilst a guest in their home (vv.175-6). In the absence of any contest to win Thetis in our poem, or any narration of his achievements beyond being a pillar ('columen' v.26) and a protection ('tutamen' v.324) to his homeland, is there the suggestion that Peleus was rewarded on the grounds that he was a 'good man'?²²⁸ We do not get some bawdy wedding song of guests fending off amorous married women, not from the austere Parcae. Instead, they take another element of the epithalamium; the prayer for a child.

Χαίροις, ὦ νύμφα· χαίροις, εὐπένθερε γαμβρέ.
Λατὼ μὲν δοίη, Λατὼ κουροτρόφος, ὕμμιν
εὐτεκνίαν, Κύπρις δέ, θεὰ Κύπρις, ἴσον ἔρασθαι
ἀλλάλων, Ζεὺς δέ, Κρονίδας Ζεὺς, ἄφθιτον ὄλβον,
ὥς ἔξ εὐπατριδᾶν εἰς εὐπατρίδας πάλιν ἔνθη.
Theoc. 18.49-53

Theoc. 18 is an epithalamium for Helen and Menelaus, celebratory despite that 'no

226 Burnett 2005:70, 'With the scene thus set, the audience expects a replica of praise at its most sublime, but what these boys who imitate goddesses actually produce is a vulgar folk-tale set to music.'

227 Pfeijffer 1999:73.

228 The Parcae's 'Emathiae tutamen' is itself both an acknowledgement and a loftier rewrite of the narrator's address, 'Thessaliae columen'.

wedding in mythology was more ill-omened.²²⁹ The presentation is very much a Spartan affair for a beloved daughter, and a Sparta located in legend: ‘The Sparta which Theocritus depicts, however, is a mythical place caught for ever in a golden age of ritual evoked by familiar landmarks...’²³⁰ We might know of other Helens, but should we read a Helen of Troy into this poem? Hunter suggests we do both, that the poem challenges reading and interpretation: ‘Idyll 18 not only dramatises this process [selective memory] by taking as its subject perhaps the most famously ‘difficult’ marriage in Greek legend, but it also challenges us to read, like the anonymous passer-by, ‘in Dorian fashion’, i.e. to set aside stories of Helen’s wantonness and celebrate the glorious goddess.’²³¹ The poem might not be a direct model for our own but these issue of alternate versions, of knowing what comes after the narration, and how to cope with them are the same we are confronted with when the Parcae’s prophecies unfold.²³² The twelve girl singers of Theoc. 18, Helen’s companions, wish for their good fortune and a beautiful child. The Parcae, on the other hand, do not have to hope or speculate, they know.

nascetur vobis expers terroris Achilles,
 hostibus haud tergo, sed forti pectore notus,
 64.338-9

Thus far we have witnessed a narrative temporally located at the time after the Argonauts return retreat further into the past and cast the previous heroics of Theseus in multiple clashing perspectives. Returning to its present it has enlisted new narrators but ones still with little to add to the glories of the hero of the hour beyond the praise conventional for the epithalamium. When finally we hear a relatively extended narration of the deeds of heroes it is not from the primary narrator or even announced by him but comes entirely within this song of the Parcae. A future heroism; the life and death of Achilles sung before his conception.²³³

Once again though, the Parcae’s ‘prophecy’ appears to have borrowed several details from the previous poetic treatments of Achilles by Pindar. In *Nemean* 3 comes

229 Cameron 1995:434. Also note the relevance of Theocritus to the model. Fantuzzi & Hunter 2004:465, ‘the refrain which structures the final section of Catullus 64 may in part derive from the similar structures of Theocritus 1 and 2.’ Whilst the *Argonautica* remains the primary Hellenistic intertext, time and again 64 shows an awareness of and debt to Theocritus, in manner as well as content.

230 Hunter 1996:157.

231 Hunter 1996:166.

232 Theoc. 18 has its own concerns, and a Ptolemaic context. I intend it only as a model for the *type* of negotiation.

233 Cf. μέγα δ’ ἀνέκλαγον· ἾΩ Νηρηὶ κόρα, | παῖδά σε Θεσσαλῖαι μέγα φῶς | μάντις ὁ φοιβάδα
 μοῦσαν | εἰδὼς γεννάσειν | Χείρων ἔξονόμαζεν (E. *IA* 1062-6).

praise of the athleticism of the boy (43-55), and his renowned swiftness of foot κτείνοντ' ἐλάφους ἄνευ κυνῶν δολίων θ' ἑρκέων· | ποσὶ γὰρ κράτεσκε (51-2) which there delights the watching Artemis and Athena is redrawn in the Parcae's revelation of the same.

qui persaepe vago victor certamine cursus
 flammae praevertet celeris vestigia cervae.
 64.340-1

Given the prominence of weaving within this scene with the Parcae, suggestive of the web of song (a motif hinted at elsewhere in the poem by the coverlet itself and Athena's weaving of the Argo's hull), the 'source hunter' could take *vestigia* as a signal to take up the chase themselves to trace tracks across the wandering literature of the past.²³⁴ Especially if, as *flammae* suggests, they are still warm. If so inclined we might also take the verb *praevertere* in the sense 'to surpass' to imply a poetic one-upmanship is also occurring.²³⁵ An intertext then of relevance to the subsequent content is *Isthmian* 8, wherein, following the agreement of gods to the marriage, Pindar recounts previous tales of Achilles and the Trojan War which share several points of contact with the Parcae's own prophetic treatment.

αἶμαξε Τηλέφου μέλα-
 νι ῥαίνων φόνῳ πεδίον
 γεφύρωσέ τ' Ἀτρεΐδαι-
 σι νόστον, Ἐλέναν τ' ἐλύσατο, Τροΐας
 ἵνας ἑκταμῶν δορί, ταί νιν ῥύοντό ποτε
 μάχας ἑναριμβρότου
 ἔργον ἐν πεδίῳ κορύσ-
 στοντα, Μέμνονός τε βίαν
 ὑπέρθυμον Ἔκτορά τ' ἄλ-
 λους τ' ἀριστεάς· οἷς δῶμα Φερσεφόνας
 μανύων Ἀχιλεὺς, οὔρος Αἰακιδᾶν,
 Αἴγιναν σφετέραν τε ῥίζαν πρόφαινεν.
 τὸν μὲν οὐδὲ θανόντ' αἰοῖδαι <ἐπ>έλιπον,
 ἀλλὰ οἱ παρά τε πυ-

²³⁴ The imagery is also suggestive of *poikilia*, an ancient notion with a wide embrace, as Sharrock (2000:14) notes, '*poikilia* signifies a nexus of words intimately involved in ancient and modern imagery for texts, such as embroidery, weaving, subtlety, complexity, a shifting multicoloured surface, notions of richness, artistry, even deception, as well as variety.' The imagery of the spun thread suggests linear narration, teleology, authority, but threads woven together hint at manipulation, threads can be put together differently, perspectives and perceptions altered by the artist's composition.

²³⁵ *L&S* II B 3.

ρὰν τάφον θ' Ἑλικώνιαι παρθένοι
στάν, ἐπὶ θρῆνόν τε πολύφαμον ἔχεαν.
Pi. I. 8.50-8

The bloodied plain of *Isthmian* 8.50 is clearly echoed by the parallel activity of the Achilles of our poem, ‘cum Phrygii Teucro manabunt sanguine campi’ (v.344). Pindar’s treatment is certainly selective. Aeginetan Achilles is made almost single-handedly to accomplish all that the Greeks achieved in Troy, liberating Helen and ensuring everyone could go home (after killing all the Trojans’ best men). Likewise the Achilles prophesied by the Parcae is a force of destruction but there are some noteworthy differences. Pindar makes mention of Hector and Memnon, but in the song of the Parcae the victims of Achilles are anonymous. He cuts them down like corn (vv.353-5), and dams the Scamander with their corpses (vv.357-60). This, we are told, is *virtus*.

illius egregias virtutes claraque facta
saepe fatebuntur gnatorum in funere matres,
cum incultum cano solvent a vertice crinem,
putridaque infirmis variabunt pectora palmis.
64.348-51

Noting the reader’s experiences of *virtus* thus far in the poem, Theodorakopoulos comments, ‘By the time the grieving mothers of Achilles’ victims (curiously like the Parcae themselves with their white hair and trembling bodies) come to testify, *virtus* rings very hollow indeed.’²³⁶ Still we do not need to empathise unduly to sense something is wrong. Homeric κλέα is gained on the battlefield in the duels of heroes, in the defeat of other great men (‘τ’ ἄλ- | λους τ’ ἀριστέας’, I. 8.55). Without names, without worthy opponents, where is the glory? Is this not the butchery of the undistinguished rank and file? Do the Parcae sing conscious of their immediate audience? After all, the sons of gods fought and died at Troy. Perhaps they are unwilling to provide unwanted ‘spoilers’?

Omissions signal that selectivity is at work. Some information is being either withheld or glossed, other information foregrounded. Pindar’s Aeginetan epinicians emphasise the achievements of the Aeacids, descendants of the nymph Aegina. The Spartan girls of Theoc. 18 are unreserved in their praise for Helen of Sparta. Localised versions of myth either created for (or posed as being) the appreciation of a partisan audience. Are the Parcae ‘playing to the crowd’? In our discussion of staging in chapter

236 Theodorakopoulos 2000:138.

three, we noted the number of verses taken to describe those activities. The gifts of Chiron and Peneus come from all over Thessaly and though there is included learned allusion (the poplars and the myth of Phaethon, vv.290-1),²³⁷ the emphasis is on the produce of the region ('quos Thessala magnis | montibus ora creat, vv.280-1, 'viridantia Tempe', v.285 and, if we admit Heinsius' emendation of a difficult verse, 'Haemonisin', v.287). Is Peneus himself enlisted because he's a 'local'? Similarly the catalogue of towns (vv.35-7) collected from all across the region indicate that this is very much a Thessalian affair. Although it is then curious that the people have already left having been entertained by an unrelated spectacle, leaving only Peleus to hear the song. Why were they there at all?

The abandonment of the rest of the region and the dereliction of the countryside aid in establishing the exceptional status of this wedding celebration. The people also have respects to pay and perhaps serve a function as mortal witnesses endorsing a marriage.²³⁸ But why stay to stare and leave? Perspectives. Their presence as spectators of a work of art works with and against our reading of a related though separate narrative. By being a different kind of viewer they make us question what we view, make us compare it with what we are told they are viewing and fantasise about what we else they might be viewing. By being there, the issue of perception is foregrounded and the available perspectives multiply. The fact that they do not provide a commentary, makes us fantasise all the more. The Thessalians look until they feel they've seen enough, and leave. The ekphrasis then is both without authorship and without some concluding guidance to narrow the field of interpretation. As also stated in the discussion on staging, the 'action' in the 'present' of the wedding narrative is largely provided by the movement of its audiences. Their activity is thus highlighted but their responses left to be filled in by the external audience, in this sense they serve as catalyst for further readings, our speculation on 'the imagined unsaid'.

239

The dilemma raised by their absence of commentary is now compounded here by their physical absence. If we do choose to view, on the basis of the localising references in the staging, that the Parcae, following the Pindaric and Theocritean precedents, are here offering the story of Achilles catered to a Thessalian audience, why has that audience left? Despite (or because of) the narrator's insistence on the song as truth, restated by the singers themselves, there are, as I have suggested, possibilities which indicate that whilst it

237 And lest we think the Argonautica is firmly and forever behind us now, Phaethon was also the nickname of Apsyrtus, (A.R. 3.245-6).

238 Babin 1987:108, 'the *Thessala pubes* are also needed to provide witnesses without which the marriage would not be legal.'

239 On which metaphor see Sharrock 2000:32 with bibliography n. 66.

might be the truth, it is not the whole truth. The spun thread offers itself as an image of authority but in our readings we have no-one with whom to compare notes. One audience has gone home and the response of the replacement we will never hear, as the narrator draws the curtain on the Parcae and rushes into his concluding indictment of the present.

Their song is the culmination of the wedding story but, for the intertextual reader, it comes at the end of a very bumpy ride. The story itself sprang from a deviancy in mythological chronology long before we emerged disorientated from the ekphrasis. Such a reader, when confronted again by the promise of truth could be forgiven for feeling sceptical. The song begins and ends with praise and sincerity, good-will and blessings, but in between stands the son whose own tale concludes with a wedding, of sorts.

denique testis erit morti quoque reddita praeda,
cum teres excelso coacervatum aggere bustum
excipiet niveos percussae virginis artus.
currite ducentes subtegmina, currite, fusi.
nam simul ac fessis dederit fors copiam Achivis
urbis Dardaniae Neptunia solvere vincla,
alta Polyxenia madefient caede sepulcra;
quae, velut ancipiti succumbens victima ferro,
proiciet truncum summisso poplite corpus.
currite ducentes subtegmina, currite, fusi.
64.362-71

The one name given amongst the exploits of Achilles is not that of a hero but a maiden. (again these goddesses show a similar interest to the primary narrator regarding which characters to focus upon). The scene which segues into the close singing of love and joyful union for the happy couple is the graphic image of a headless body slowly collapsing atop a mass grave. For Johnson, ‘epic grandeur is imperceptibly transformed into horror.’²⁴⁰ Her gory demise draws our attention. She is the crux of a dilemma. One of ‘truth’ and how to read it.

Isthmian 8 speaks of his death, the Muses who sang the epithalamium at his parents’ wedding will also sing the dirge at his funeral, but do the Parcae? O’Hara has argued that ‘morti’ (v.362) is unqualified and that by reading on and inferring back a reading of *ei mortuo*, we are ‘cheating’ in our reading: ‘For the internal audience, Peleus and Thetis, and apparently the naïve narrator of Catullus 64, the song makes no clear reference to the death of their son, since they do not know the myth of Polyxena as we do.’

240 Johnson 1982:158.

241 O’Hara 2007:53. Cf. *ibid.* 50ff. for the argument.

From ‘denique testis’, it could be construed that the fall of Troy was the end of his deeds, not his life. There were no more battles to be won. Yet, if we know the full ‘prophecy’ we know this tomb is his and that he died at Troy. The Parcae are ambiguous and it is difficult to overlook this as a general vagueness of delivery associated with prophetic speak when they are specific in naming Polyxena and binding her death to the destruction of the city. They are offering one prophecy but to two audiences. To the internal audience they sing the truth, before looking to us to ask, ‘Did we not tell them the truth?’ Regarding which, O’Hara writes ‘So the song which the narrator pronounces as trustworthy in fact deceives, opening up a gap between the perspectives of the internal audience and reader...’²⁴² Staring at this gap, the narrator’s claim that no age could declare it false seems hopelessly ignorant or very bold indeed.

Of course this raises issues of truth and deception but also it is again perception and perspectives. We are being pointed out the vantage points. They are flagging up their activities and in holding details back that lead the internal audience into a singular interpretation, they are showing us via a negative demonstration how not to read ourselves, or that readings are variable and arise from the knowledge applied. Thus the opposition between truth and lies is also one of ignorance and awareness. Peleus is the first-time reader of a narrative uncomplicated by echoes, the surface song. The song we hear is the one informed by the connections we are prepared to make (or are unable to ignore). Intratextual as well as (and combined with) intertextual.

For example, ‘praeda’ (v.362), the reward given to death is Polyxena’s life. Ariadne feared dying without burial and her body made spoils ‘praeda’ (v.153) for the beasts and birds. In exploring structural relations between the two ‘songs’, Daniels makes a thematic comparison: ‘Polyxena, the unwilling ‘bride’ of the dead Achilles, was sacrificed. Ariadne, the willing ‘bride’ of the living Theseus, was deserted. In each case, the result was the same - barrenness rather than a productive conjugal relation.’²⁴³ Or we could cast it thus - Polyxena, victim of Achilles, Ariadne, victim of Theseus, both victims of *virtus*. And intertextually, Ariadne has made the connection between the two men in her indictment. The Parcae’s prophecy could thus be seen as corroborating the allusion and supporting its validity.

Such interpretations of links do not invalidate the song as heard by Peleus, just as an intertextual reading does not invalidate the availability of a superficial reading of the

242 O’Hara 2007:53.

243 Daniels 1973:101.

poem. If the reader can be found or hypothesised then so can the reading. The Parcae are posing us similar options to those Hunter posed in relation to Theoc. 18. Which way or ways do we want to read?

‘What the Parcae say to Peleus and Thetis about their future concord, and about their son’s deeds at Troy, makes their song as deceptive as Apollo’s would have been, and in fact repeats the pattern of that story.’²⁴⁴ It is potentially misleading, to be sure, but do the Parcae at any point tell lies? They are economical with the truth but they are under no obligation to give full disclosure concerning the son, and (*pace* O’Hara) I can find nothing to indicate promises of a happily-ever-after for the couple. A joyous and fruitful union is foretold, an enduring love might be intimated, but there is no warranty attached. And they might have been blissfully happy before the son was born and their relationship soured. We know it went wrong, and we know why it went wrong, he’s there in the song carving his way through Trojans. Peleus’ hapless botching of her efforts to ensure Achilles’ immortality led to their immediate and permanent separation.²⁴⁵ This Peleus could look back and feel he’d been misled but, I believe, the Parcae have evaded the charges that might have been levelled at Apollo. Instead they have woven into their song that blueprint for the poem: ways of reading.

244 O’Hara 2007:53.

245 Τὸν δ’ ἄχος αἰνὸν ἔτυψεν, ἐπεὶ πάρος οὐκέτ’ ἰοῦσαν | ἔδρακεν, ἐξότε πρῶτα λίπεν θάλαμόν τε
καὶ εὐνήν, | χῶσαμένη Ἀχιλῆος ἀγαθοῦ νηπιάρχοντος (A.R. 4.866-8).

5. And the Women Who Loved Them

64 is a poem of love and lovers, and our own approach to *Amor* continues along familiar lines, allusive and polyphonic. However, this time with a more collaborative bent. I intend to suggest ways in which perspectives rather than clash discordantly might instead come together (most of them, anyway!) to help Ariadne say ‘I love you.’ In investigating and suggesting readings, hierarchies might form in the approach but they are not fixed and can be variously stacked.

i. Painted Love

Before listening, we need first to look. Her ‘self-expression’ evolves from ekphrasis. And so we turn back to the moment we met her in the poem, an erotic image on the coverlet: the material for her transformation from art to artist.

quem procul ex alga maestis Minois ocellis,
saxea ut effigies bacchantis, prospicit, eheu,
prospicit et magnis curarum fluctuat undis,
non flavo retinens subtilem vertice mitram,
non contacta levi velatum pectus amictu,
non tereti strophio lactentis vincta papillas,
omnia quae toto delapsa e corpore passim
ipsius ante pedes fluctus salis alludebant.
64.60-7

In depiction, grief at abandonment is rendered as a disregard for her appearance, absorbed as she is with a view she cannot accept as real (‘necdum etiam sese quae visit visere credit’, v.55). We noted that the Thessalian response to the ekphrasis was limited to the narrator’s comment on their satisfied gaze, but there are signs of his presence here, evaluating what he sees and thus filtering the view. We need now to qualify a statement made in chapter 4: ‘We watch her watching’ *through him*.²⁴⁶ We do not see the ekphrasis, we see *his* ekphrasis. She can’t believe what she sees (again the disbelief is also his projection), the narrator watches her watching and we are encouraged to see her as he does. Or is he inert and Ariadne is the focaliser as Gaisser suggests and we do see through her eyes, after all?²⁴⁷ Again we are confronted with perspectives and ways to respond.

246 See above p.55.

247 Gaisser 1995:595.

Whose view is this? Can we trust what we see?

Fittingly then, he focuses first on the eyes, the diminutive ‘ocellis’ reveals his affection, and looking into them he reads her emotion and enunciates his impression. Her pose is fixed, a statement of passion, but within he perceives an elemental force, alive and responsive to her surroundings as it moves with the sea, ‘magnis curarum fluctuat undis’ (v.63).²⁴⁸ She watches. And watching her, he shakes his head in sympathy. *Oh, how she watches*. On the narrator’s interjection, Fitzgerald writes, ‘the pathos of the observer’s words fuses the narrative level (Ariadne’s longing) with the visual level (the figure’s suspended animation) and so creates a mode of existence equivalent to that of Myth, in which Ariadne stands, the epitome of the abandoned woman, ready to be cited.’²⁴⁹ Already we are encouraged to wonder, nudged towards a desire to hear her speak. Imagining or willing life into representations is a sentiment common to ekphrasis. Thus the Apollonian narrator concludes the description of Jason’s cloak with a declaration for his reader.

Κείνους κ’ εἰσορόων ἀκέοις ψεύδοιό τε θυμόν,
ἐλπόμενος πυκινὴν τιν’ ἀπὸ σφείων ἔσακοῦσαι
βᾶξιν, ὅτευ καὶ δηρὸν ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι θηήσαιο.
A.R. 1.765-7

Such is the realism of Athena’s work that the embroidered ram seems almost to be talking to Phrixus in their scene.²⁵⁰ And it is verisimilitude that prompts Praxinoa’s comments on the hanging tapestries in the palace courtyard of Theoc. 15, ὡς ἔτυμ’ ἔστάκαντι καὶ ὡς ἔτυμ’ ἐνδινεῦντι, | ἔμψυχ’, οὐκ ἐνυφαντά. σοφόν τι χρῆμ’ ἄνθρωπος (15.82-3). Our narrator is not so explicit. He projects emotion and thus the possibility of animation but then withdraws. There is no need for wistful expressions. We will hear her speak. He hints but declines to show his hand.

Instead he pulls away from her eyes, pulling away also from comparison and interpretation, and for a time seems simply to gaze. With the distancing readjustment,

248 Cf. Gaisser 1995:594, ‘By reinforcing the visual allusion to a bacchant the simile helps to create an iconographic double image (a potentially explosive maenad superimposed upon a seated, pensive Ariadne) that is the visual counterpart to the effect of multiple literary allusions in the frame story.’

249 Fitzgerald 1995:154. For Fitzgerald, the figure of Ariadne by inviting us not simply to look but to question how we feel (or are invited to feel) when looking, reminds us both of our powerlessness (the unattainable world of Myth) and our power, our ability as creators ‘to project life into, for instance, the statue of a Bacchant’ (*ibid.* 155). Cf. (on Ovid’s Pygmalion), Sharrock 1991: 39. On the epanalepsis, see Jenkyns 1982:126.

250 On the lack of closure suggested by the Apollonian narrator, Theodorakopoulos 1998:201, ‘Through the narrator’s insistence at the end of the description that we might gaze upon the picture for all eternity and still not have had our fill, we are made aware that there is no fixed or prescribed ‘end’ to a visual work of art.’

insight is displaced by voyeurism.²⁵¹ He strips her with anaphora; lets down her hair, slides off her dress, reveals her breasts.²⁵² As Sharrock observes, ‘There can be no denying the erotic connotations of Ariadne’s unravelling, whether as text or as woman, nor of the objectifying tendencies of her captured picture in the coverlet. This is a classic case of womanufacture.’²⁵³

But something is not quite right with the description. The unravelling begins in the present, she can’t keep hold of her headband, but by the time we reach the dress we are in the perfect tense. Whilst keeping the focus on her, the narrator is already shifting away from the picture of Ariadne as captured by the unknown creator of the coverlet and into the story of why. We are asked to envisage her clothes bobbing on the waves about her on the coverlet but the tense of the action is now imperfect. We are no longer viewing but listening to him remember. In the past, things are starting to move. Fitzgerald finds vv.63-5 suggestive of the language of film: ‘the incantatory rhythm... with their subtle variations of grammatical structure, seems to hold Ariadne in a soft focus as the camera turns around her in slow motion’. We have seen this tactic employed before, the same use of the female body evident when the Nereids emerged from the waves, an erotic distraction that simultaneously heralded innovation.²⁵⁴ It is then concealed within the innocuous image of a playful tide, that Ariadne, ekphrasis and time all begin to unravel.²⁵⁵

The narrative that follows takes us back to Crete but when we return to Dia, Ariadne has come to life. She has been running about the island, climbing mountains, trying different *views* (‘unde aciem <in> pelagi vastos protenderet aestus’, v.127) and upon returning to the shore to speak is now mindful of her garments, (‘tum tremuli salis adversas procurrere in undas | mollia nudatae tollentem tegmina surae’, vv.128-9). Ariadne

251 Cf. Jenkyns 1982:117, ‘Catullus’ eyes travel slowly downwards with sensuous delight; it must be an insensitive reader who does not see that the poet is enjoying Ariadne’s body as her clothes slip off her into the sea.’

252 Her ‘mitra’ can be viewed as an exotic ‘colouring’, the East, the ‘Other’, the Colchian. It might aid in foreshadowing a later dementia, e.g. Tatham 1990:561, ‘Its latent Bacchic association is to be actualised at the end of the story.’ In its erotic context, I’m inclined to a lyric infusion - οὐδὲ μίτρα | Λυδία, νεανίδων | ἰανογ[λ]εφάρων ἄγαλμα, (‘nor Lydian headband splendid upon girls with big dark eyes’, Alc. 1.67-9 trans. West).

253 Sharrock 2000:25, n. 48. On the coinage, Sharrock 1991 *passim*.

254 Comparisons can naturally be drawn between Ariadne’s ‘lactentis... papillas’ and the description of the Nereids as ‘nutricum tenus exstantes’ (v.18), suckling and nursing. So e.g. Fitzgerald 1995:150. Or we can view as simply descriptive. cf. e.g. (Medea preparing to meet Jason) θυώδεϊ κάτθετο μίτρη | ἦ τέ οἱ ἄμβροσίοισι περὶ στήθεσσιν ἔερτο (A.R. 3.867-8). Taken alongside Ariadne’s golden hair ‘flavo... vertice’, it could be construed as a convention. Heroines of myth seem invariably to be nubile blonde starlets.

255 For a good analysis, Jenkyns 1982:117, ‘Line 67 is wonderfully sparkling; those s’s’, l’s, u’s and dental consonants ensure that we really see and hear the waves lapping... The gaiety of the metre [three initial dactyls] is enhanced by that last word: the waves *play* with Ariadne’s garments.’

is not prepared to be just an ‘object’ any more and she has something to say.

ii. *Savage Love*

quaenam te genuit sola sub rupe leaena
quod mare conceptum spumantibus exspuit undis,
quae Syrtis, quae Scylla rapax, quae vasta Carybdis,
talìa qui reddis pro dulci praemia vita?
64.154-7

We return to Ariadne’s tirade against his parentage. We previously observed how some of the allusions behind this invective could be used to tarnish his image by transforming the *fierceness* of the hero into the *savagery* of the beast. However, the motivations behind the intertextual recriminations were quite disparate; Patroclus’ desperation at the Argive rout and Jason’s horror at Medea’s infanticide. At the risk of unsettling the indictment, we will now consider some analogies that suggest an erotic motivation, stepping way from epic and tragedy, to a more bucolic setting to discover that not only mortals are nursed by beasts.

νῦν ἔγνω τὸν Ἑρωτα· βαρὺς θεός· ἧ ῥά λεαίνας
μαζὸν ἐθήλαζεν, δρυμῶ τέ νιν ἔτραφε μάτηρ,
ὅς με κατασμύχων καὶ ἐς ὀστίον ἄχρῖς ἰάπτει.
Theoc. 3.15-7

The voice belongs to an unnamed goatherd serenading an ‘Amaryllis’, the poem is a *komos* transposed to the countryside with a foliage-strewn cave entrance replacing the customary closed door. It is a treatment frequently described as comedy, one which ‘parodies the lover by the deliberate trivialization and bathetic articulation of the conventions of erotic self-expression in this goatherd’s performance’.²⁵⁶ Ariadne then the ardent paramour? Theseus the reluctant mistress? Hutchinson notes that ‘Hellenistic poets commonly derive their effects and their impact from piquant combinations of, or delicate hovering between, the serious and the unserious, the grand and the less grand.’²⁵⁷ We shall tread softly.

Both speakers, goatherd and Ariadne, target the cause of their pain, Eros and

256 Goldhill 1991:247. Cf. Gutzwiller 1991:115-23, Hutchinson 1988:172 and Morrison 2007:247-9. On the goatherd being a crude individual occupying the lowest position in a bucolic hierarchy, see Berman 2005:230. Catullus uses the phrase ‘goat-milker’ to disparage the verse of Suffenus, (*bellus ille et urbanus* | *Suffenus unus caprimulgus aut fossor* | *rursus videtur: tantum abhorret ac mutat.* 22.9-11).

257 Hutchinson 1988:11.

Theseus, and denounce their feral parentage, the lioness. In both instances, birth or upbringing occur in a desolate or secluded location, somewhere away from civilisation, deep within the wood and beneath a lonely rock. The settings so described also reflect the barren locations in which the respective narrators now find themselves delivering their futile entreaties. In both poems the lioness is placed prominently at the end of the line. Attention is drawn to the mother, to a nurturing which implies the source incapable of or oblivious to human feeling. But, whereas Ariadne builds upon the image and provides a succession of monsters to further damn her betrayer, the goatherd lapses immediately to his pain, the smouldering fire within the bones, the oppressive god denounced in his moment of clarity - ‘Now I know Love!’ Ariadne does not point the finger.

nullane res potuit crudelis flectere mentis
 consilium? tibi nulla fuit clementia praesto
 immite ut nostri vellet miserescere pectus?
 64.136-8

She shied away from overt comparison, relying on the intratextual suggestion between the narrator’s reference in apostrophe (v.94) to the hard heart of Love ‘immiti corde’ that excites the passions ‘furores’, and the absence of mercy in Theseus’ own ‘immitte pectus’. Now she blends to these linked and callous hearts the intertextual, a Theseus, like the goatherd’s Eros, born of a lioness. She might know but she does not state. Unspoken connections keep the emotions bubbling below the surface. There are additional links to bind their suffering. Both our speakers lack an audience (the goatherd must perform his *paraklausithyron* without the customary attendants),²⁵⁸ both experience an unrequited love and the thoughts of both turn to death.

Ἀλγέω τὰν κεφαλάν, τὴν δ’ οὐ μέλει. οὐκέτ’ αἰίδω,
 κεισεῦμαι δὲ πεσών, καὶ τοὶ λύκοι ᾧδέ μ’ ἔδονται.
 Theoc. 3.52-3.

The nymph he courts doesn’t care for his headache, he will cease to sing and die, a meal for the wolves. The same fate Ariadne anticipated for her own body (v.152-3) immediately prior to her thoughts turning to the lioness. There remain, however, important differences. The goatherd’s suicide *parodies* the singer ending the *komos* asleep on the lover’s threshold and he endures as an unsuccessful suitor whereas Ariadne’s relationship is the

²⁵⁸ On treatment of audience in Theoc. 3 (and similarly Theoc. 2), see Morrison 2007:246, ‘In Theocritus, however, the audience is *eavesdropping* - the primary narrator is ‘unaware’ of their presence.’

reverse and at an advanced stage.²⁵⁹ She has herself been courted only to find that love false (and in this aspect has more in common with the jilted Simaetha of Theoc. 2). Also, unlike the goatherd, Ariadne at no point makes reference to her own appearance as evidence of her suitability. The description of her beauty is left to her admiring narrator (vv.63-5). Nor can she say ‘I love you.’ The goatherd, mind dashing back and forth, on his appearance, his gifts, threatening suicides, reeling off ironic *exempla*,²⁶⁰ howls his pain and its cause whereas Ariadne, with the aid of allusion, only hints. Her use of brief genealogical *exempla* in vv.154-6 are, it should also be noted, the only occasion in her speech where she employs any *exempla* at all.

Admitting her epic and tragic intertexts evoked scenes of war and murder, alternate settings and masks for the ‘hero’. Admitting this Hellenistic parallel evokes the opposite for her, a pastoral backdrop, albeit isolated, and a humorous foil in the incompetent suitor. It is unsettling if we choose to view her rhetoric here as a character assassination of Theseus. If we are open to the allusion, we complicate the view and her motivations. She remains driven and vehement but the indictment is tinged by a failed courtship and her might-have-beens. Ariadne might now deny her dreams but they’re still reverberating in the background. Are her complaints truly ‘verae’ (v.198) or informed by rejection? And, after all, the lover’s word is not the same as an oath, ὄμοσεν· ἀλλὰ λέγουσιν ἀληθέα τοὺς ἐν ἔρωτι | ὄρκους μὴ δύνειν οὔατ’ ἐς ἀθανάτων (Call. *Epigr.* 25 Pf., 3-4).

There remains another voice to be heard on this matter and we conclude this section with the perspectives prompted by a ‘Catullus’.

Num te leaena montibus Libystinis
aut Scylla latrans infima inguinum parte
tam mente dura procreavit ac taetra,
ut supplicis vocem in nouissimo casu
contemptam haberes, a nimis fero corde?
Cat. 60

Five lines in scazons utilise the same imagery of lioness and Scylla in a plea for the unnamed addressee to soften. In a less elevated register, the allusions carry a different tone: ‘The emphasis on Scylla’s barking groin is not a commonplace, however: after

259 On the lover’s suicidal fantasy, Barthes 1978:218, ‘I scarcely know *how* I am going to kill myself. It is a phrase, only a sentence, which I darkly caress but from which a trifle will distract me.’

260 The goatherd lists *exempla* of romantic encounters which turned out less than successful. See Morrison 2007:249, ‘This naïve “rewriting” of myth, alongside the less-than-happy ending of all five of the myths he cites, marks the goatherd’s words as ironising him.’

poems 58 and 59, and in the metre of invective, it reminds us of sex and shamelessness.²⁶¹ There are additional distinctions. This voice exists without identity or frame, leading DeBrohun to comment, ‘In his combination of *vox*, *mens*, and *cor*, Catullus in poem 60 has produced an expression of pure emotions, unattached to a specific speaker or situation, in which neither the identities nor the genders of speaker or recipient can be discerned.’²⁶²

Still, there are the obvious parallels to be drawn with the addressee’s savage heart (‘fero corde’) and the vocabulary used by Ariadne to describe Theseus (‘crudelis... mentis’, v.136, ‘immitte... pectus’, v.138), and as Putnam observes, ‘There is a close connection between Catullus’ thoughts on his own *novissimo casu* and Ariadne’s meditation on her supposedly imminent death’.²⁶³ To tease out a further comparison, we have the narrator’s focus on their own status as a suppliant (‘supplicis vocem’). Ariadne never refers to herself explicitly by the term but we have seen from the first lines of her monologue how she had claimed to understand their relationship and how she chose to view the man who had broken an oath, the man who dragged her from the hearth (‘avectam... ab aris’, v.132). The *ara*, by metonymy ‘home’ retains its primary meaning ‘altar’, the refuge of the suppliant. Ariadne presents herself as both abducted maiden and abused suppliant. Both addressees stand accused of contempt for unions divinely sanctioned. This would seem suitable material for indictment, yet accepting the overtone Wiseman suggests, implies the soured relationship that is the source of the voice’s frustration was a sexual one.

Linking the barking of Scylla’s groin to expressions of canine shamelessness, Godwin cites *Il.* 3.180, κυνώπιδος ‘dog-faced’, Helen’s self-reproach when admitting she abandoned her family.²⁶⁴ We can also add her address to Hector, δᾶερ ἐμεῖο κυνὸς (‘brother of a bitch like me’, *Il.* 6.344), a phrase she uses again in the same speech (*Il.* 6.356). When discussing Ariadne’s use of ‘avectam’ in her opening indictment, we noted a parallel usage by Ovid that implied abduction - Helen dragged away from the Eurotas by the Trojans.²⁶⁵ Did Helen in fact go willingly? As we saw from the evidence of Theoc. 18, there is more than one Helen. Different Helens have different recollections of the same

261 Wiseman 1985:157. His comments draw attention to the book as guide. It is the proximity of other texts and a linear reading that informs his inference.

262 DeBrohun 1999:429, n. 29.

263 Putnam 1961:176.

264 Godwin 1999:182.

265 See p.55, n.139 above.

events.²⁶⁶ Was it marriage, Ariadne, or lust? Did you sleep with him on Dia?²⁶⁷ What would Nausicaa say?²⁶⁸ Lest the summoning of disruptive Helens through echoes within echoes seem too much of a stretch, let us look to the home Ariadne lost and admit that there are murmurs of something troubling beneath its posed serenity.

iii. *The Runaways*

hunc simul ac cupido conspexit lumine virgo
regia quam suavis exspirans castus odores
lectulus in molli complexu matris alebat,
quales Eurotae praecingunt flumina myrtus
aurave distinctos educit verna colores,
64.86-90

On the vocabulary, Pavlock comments, ‘The adjectives *sauvis* and *mollis*, two important terms in Catullan lyric connoting delicacy and tenderness, reinforce the ideal quality of maternal love... This depiction of the beloved home with the suggestion of a new family by marriage brings to epic a personal concern that runs through Catullus’ lyric, narrative, and elegiac poems.’²⁶⁹ But this ‘beloved home’ the narrator puts before us with match already in hand. The *virgo* has Theseus in her gaze and a burning desire has stirred. The evocation of innocence does not contrast the onset of *amor*, it is surrounded and devoured by it. Ariadne looks at Theseus, we look at the life she leads, we look back to Ariadne blazing within and the life we viewed has gone. The speed with which passion takes hold is startling. The narrator was compelled to address Cupid and Venus. Was that prompted by empathy or incredulity? Was there a suspicion of a more direct involvement as in the case of Medea, physically struck by his divine bolt, victim of the machinations of Hera?²⁷⁰ Doubts, if not answers, have been sown in the comparison.

Like the myrtles that grow around the banks of the Eurotas. A specific river. Proper

266 Compare the Helen of the Odyssey’s account of her own abduction and its cause, ἦν Ἀφροδίτη | δῶχ’, ὅτε μ’ ἤγαγε κείσε φίλης ἀπὸ πατρίδος αἴης (*Od.* 4.261-2).

267 On the similar concerns of a young Medea, see Hunter 1987:138, ‘Apollonius indeed structures Medea’s dilemma in Book 3 as a choice between following the example of Penelope and becoming a Helen.’

268 The Phaeacian princess takes a dim view on pre-marital sex, καὶ δ’ ἄλλη νεμεσῶ, ἢ τις τοιαῦτά γε ῥέζοι, | ἢ τ’ ἀέκητι φίλων πατρὸς καὶ μητρὸς ἐόντων | ἀνδράσι μίσγηται πρὶν γ’ ἀμφάδιον γάμον ἐλθεῖν (*Od.* 6.286-8).

269 Pavlock 1990:126. Cf. *ibid.* 125, ‘He thus gives the *domus* a new importance in heroic poetry... it reflects an emotional bond between mother and daughter as well as father and son.’ If indeed we are dealing with heroic poetry. On motifs from wedding songs, cf. *Cat.* 61.21-5, 56-9, and 62.21-3, 39-41.

270 ἦκ’ ἐπὶ Μηδείῃ· τὴν δ’ ἀμφασίη λάβε θυμόν (*A.R.* 3.284). Suspicion would be a narrator pose, the apostrophe is itself a nod to the source materials he (and/or the author depending on our stance on the narrator’s erudition) is adapting.

names might be a feature of Alexandrian poetry, that enlivening particularity,²⁷¹ but this river is more than some Spartan *locus amoenus*,²⁷² and we have already noted another poet mark its association with Helen. For some ancillary links we might look to some comments made on the work of a late Greek epigrammatist, not as a relevant intertext but perhaps to illustrate that the Eurotas was a location with a more than passing acquaintance with erotic literature and myth. In his analysis on *AP* 5.60, a poem on a girl bathing, Baldwin suggests that Rufinus might have chosen Eurotas (besides its function therein as a sexual synonym) due to its ‘handy associations with myth and beauty’,²⁷³ citing *Od.* 13.412 Σπάρτην καλλιγύναικα ‘Sparta of the beautiful women’ and *AP* 5.307 (Antiphilus) which connects the Eurotas with a bathing Leda’s seduction by Zeus.²⁷⁴ If these connections are tentative, for Helen herself we have our sturdier Hellenistic relation in Theoc. 18.

ἄμμες δ’ αἰ πᾶσαι συνομάλικες, αἶς δρόμος ωύτός
 χρισαμέναις ἀνδριστὶ παρ’ Εὐρώταο λοετροῖς,
 τετράκις ἐξήκοντα κόραι, θῆλυς νεολαία,
 τᾶν οὐδ’ ἄτις ἄμωμος ἐπεὶ χ’ Ἑλένη παρισωθῆ.
 Theoc. 18. 21-4

These speakers are κόραι, girls her own age, who ran and swam with her and will sing for her at the wedding. Helens, maidens, bathing by the Eurotas; enough to allow that the reference to the river is pointed and points towards seduction and/or abduction. Nor is it an isolated clue. The myrtle is sacred to Aphrodite, the opening of the flowers in spring suggests Ariadne is also coming into bloom. Moreover, there is something sensual and sensually unsettling about this scene. On the synaesthesia, Rees comments, ‘The “sweet aromas” of the maiden’s bed are compared to a tree and to colours: a scent, which stimulates the sense of smell is like a colour, which stimulates the sense of sight.’²⁷⁵ That chaste little bed is sending out mixed signals. We could view the way the myrtles encircle the river as suggestive of the decoration of the threshold on the day of a wedding (foreshadowing the activities of Chiron and Peneus), inviting a perception of Ariadne as a young bride-to-be, and perhaps not much longer to be within the embrace of a loving

271 On which. Fordyce 1961:290.

272 ‘Where on earth is there Sparta, save where are the waters of Eurotas and its fair reeds?’ E. *Hel.* 492-3).

273 Baldwin 1980:183.

274 Χεῦμα μὲν Εὐρώταο Λακωνικόν, ἃ δ’ ἀκάλυπτος | Λήδα χὼ κύκνω κρυπτόμενος Κρονίδας (*AP* 5.307, 1-2).

275 Rees 1994:75.

mother.²⁷⁶ Theodorakopoulos notes the recurrent imagery of enclosure in both the embrace and the encircling of the myrtles. Images through which the poem offers ‘safety’ against the potential endlessness of narrative: ‘The point of these examples is to show that there is... a strong tendency to envisage the possibility at least that things might be closed, or enclosed; in other words, that things might be stable.’²⁷⁷ Here, however, the safety is an illusion already fading, enclosed in turn by the chaos of a passionate love that eats its way into recollection. Maidens and flowers; in myth, the collocation occurs in settings not for domestic harmony or joyful wedding days but rape, since the time Persephone was snatched away from her companions by Hades, ἀρπάξας δ' ἀέκουσαν ἐπὶ χρυσέοισιν ὀχοισιν | ἦγ' ὀλοφυρομένην (*h.Cer.* 19-20).

Now we can introduce another girl, and another model. Moschus’ *Europa* is a Hellenistic epyllion which purports to be aetiological but is predominantly concerned with a narrative of Europa’s abduction by Zeus in the guise of a bull. It begins, like 64, without introduction: ‘No motive is given for the narration and there is no invocation of the Muses: the poem is presented, in the *in medias res* mode already familiar from Theocritus (‘Once upon a time the Cyprian sent a sweet dream over Europa ...’), as a single incident within the broad tapestry of received story.’²⁷⁸ After waking her from a prophetic dream, the narrator anticipates her loss of virginity.²⁷⁹

Οὐ μὲν δηρὸν ἔμελλεν ἐπ’ ἄνθεσι θυμὸν ἰαίνειν,
οὐδ’ ἄρα παρθενίην μίτρην ἄχραντον ἔρυσθαι.
Mosch. *Europa* 72-3

She and her companions go then to pick flowers in the manner appropriate to mythological

276 Cf. the Spartan maidens making fun of Menelaus by suggesting the groom has fallen asleep when he should be having intercourse with his new bride, εὔδειν μὰν σπεύδοντα καθ’ ὥραν αὐτὸν ἐχρήν τυ, | παιῖδα δ’ ἔαν σὺν παισὶ φιλοστόργῳ παρὰ ματρὶ | παῖσδειν ἐς βαθὺν ὄρθρον, ἐπεὶ καὶ ἕνας καὶ ἐς ἅῳ | κῆς ἔτος ἔξ ἔτεος, Μενέλαε, τεὰ νυὸς ἄδε (*Theoc.* 18.12-15). Commenting on this ‘ribald jocularity’ Dover (1971: 230-1) references the *procax Fescinna iocatio* at *Cat.* 61.119f.

277 Theodorakopoulos 2000:120, where she also cites v.185 (Ariadne surrounded by the sea) and vv.265-6 (the coverlet wrapped around the marriage bed).

278 Hunter 2004:95. Cf. on its structure, Cameron 1995:451, ‘The only Hellenistic poem that resembles the latin epyllia in any significant way, down to its long ecphrasis.’ For some observations on Moschus’ style pertinent to that of 64, note Gutzwiller 1981:63, ‘His use of innovative or erudite words is limited. The sentence structure is for the most part simple and paratactical in the epic manner. At the same time, his verse is highly mellifluous and filled with sound effects, especially assonance.’

279 See Gutzwiller 1981:63, ‘The characterization of Europa is the prime example of this [archaic naivete and Hellenistic sophistication]. On the one hand, she is childlike, playful, innocent in every way; Zeus can deceive her ‘tender mind’ (ἀταλὸν νόον, 78). On the other hand, she feels from the beginning the stirrings of her desire and succumbs willingly, though not with full knowledge, to her seducer.’ On the ‘loosening of a maiden’s belt’, cf. (Tyro abducted by Poseidon) λῦσε δὲ παρθενίην ζώνην, κατὰ δ’ ὕπνον ἔχευεν (*Od.* 11.245).

maidens (and as the narrator has forewarned us, for Europa it will be the last time) by the seashore, where they encounter the bull. Although all are disarmed by the bull's beauty and gentle disposition, πάσησι δ' ἔρωσ γένετ' ἐγγύς ἰκέσθαι | ψαῦσαί θ' ἱμερτοῖο βοῶς (90-1) only Europa is bold enough to act. Growing confident, she sits upon its back only to be swept off to sea.

ὥμοι ἐγὼ μέγα δὴ τι δυσάμμορος, ἢ ῥά τε δῶμα
πατρὸς ἀποπρολιποῦσα καὶ ἐσπομένη βοῖ τῷδε
Ξείνην ναυτιλίην ἐφέπω καὶ πλάζομαι οἴη.
Mosch. *Europa*. 146-8

On the diction, Gutzwiller writes, 'Bühler has shown that the words ἀποπρολιποῦσα and ἐσπομένη in 147 connect Europa's speech with a topos in Greek literature which goes back to the words of Helen in the *Iliad* (3.173-75). It is not an abducted maiden, but a woman who has willingly abandoned her father or husband for a lover who utters this type of regret.'²⁸⁰ Europa's dream had already hinted she might be responsive to seduction: 'the foreign woman drags her away οὐκ ἀέκουσαν (14)... Europa's reaction to the dream is less fright than an uneasiness caused by the awakening of her desires.'²⁸¹ Ariadne has yet to commit on this, but at almost the midway point of her monologue, she pauses to consider her audience, or lack thereof, and in like fashion, to reflect upon a course of events which led her to a lonely shore.

sed quid ego ignaris nequiquam conquerar auris,
externata malo, quae nullis sensibus auctae
nec missas audire queunt nec reddere voces?
64.164-6

Godwin notes that 'for a figure in a picture which is being avidly gazed at by the youth of Thessaly (267) to lament being alone, and to be described as uttering a plangent lament to that effect, is irony raised to a higher power.'²⁸² And yet, those wedding guests, the internal

²⁸⁰ Gutzwiller 1981:72 (referencing Bühler, W. (1960), 'Die Europa des Moschos', *Hermes*, 13:185-7).

However, in the naïve content of Europa's lament and in its humorous context (eloping with a bull), she suggests 'that Moschus intends a parody of the abandoned maiden's speech, such as that spoken by Apollonius's Medea (4.360-9).'

²⁸¹ Gutzwiller 1981:64.

²⁸² Godwin 1995:151. Cf. Quinn 1970:324, 'C. perhaps connects the practice with the phenomenon of echo. The 'up-to-date' rational language in which Ariadne registers her protest is part of the distancing irony.' Accepting the possibility, the intrusion of the 'modern' encourages us to look upon Ariadne also as an actor - both Ariadne performing and performing 'Ariadne'. Cf. Laird 1993:29, 'Ariadne may be dwelling on the fact that she cannot be heard or addressed because she is in a picture.' On the 'disobedient' ekphrasis, cf. *ibid.* 19ff.

audience, are witness only to images on a coverlet, to Ariadne object and immobile, they are spectators. Her complaint, with addressee sailing towards the horizon, is for an audience other than the wind. On the rhetoric, Putnam comments: ‘it specifically draws attention to the need, in such a situation as Ariadne’s, of the consolation of speaking and replying.’²⁸³ Here we might recall how Medea’s nurse was driven by grief, ὥσθ’ ἴμερός μ’ ὑπῆλθε γῆι τε κούρανῶι | λέξαι μολούσηι δεῦρο δεσποίνης τύχας (E. *Med.* 57-8) though a more apposite comparison for Ariadne as artist might be Simaetha for whom solitude is in fact a prerequisite of her own internal narrative performance, Νῦν δὴ μῶνα εἰοῖσα πόθεν τὸν ἔρωτα δακρύσω; | ἐκ τίνος ἄρξωμαι; τίς μοι κακὸν ἄγαγε τοῦτο; (Theoc. 2.64-5). As Andrews notes, ‘Unlike a tragic hero or heroine, however, Simaitha is not debating her future course of action, but the direction of her narrative.’²⁸⁴

Ariadne contrives to do both, for in surveying her surroundings she is also setting her stage, reminding us of where she is, of her area of performance. And she has her audience; the reader, privy to the shift from description to narrative. Her question is for us, and thus within the rhetoric of consolation is couched a reminder of our privileged position and an exhortation to keep listening.²⁸⁵ Simaetha as narrator wonders where best to begin her narrative. Ariadne, in midstream but unwilling to follow where memories led (the compromise of herself as servant girl in his household and another woman in the marriage bed (vv.160-3),²⁸⁶ adapts the narrator’s technique not of openings but of digression. *sed quid ego...* she recalls the loss of control he claimed, as she looks out to sea and laments the impossibility of a return to her own *primum carmen*.²⁸⁷

And there is more than an affinity with the primary narrator’s mannerisms as she again recalls his vocabulary.²⁸⁸ Reflecting upon her desolation, she acknowledges that she

283 Putnam 1961:78.

284 Andrews 1996:25. Cf. *ibid.* 24, ‘Simaitha’s debate about where to begin, placed at the beginning of her narrative... is frequently paralleled in poetic openings or at the beginning of narratives.’ On Theoc. 2. 64-5, Hunter 2004:91, ‘There is a certain realism in only laying bare her soul once the slave is out of the way, but the emphasis upon a connection between being alone and narration is part of Simaitha’s self-presentation as a heroine from drama and ‘literature’. For it is unhappy lovers and, above all, characters in drama who relate their stories to the heavenly bodies - the moon-goddess is in fact the external narratee of Simaitha’s story, as the repeated refrain, “Take note, lady Selene, whence came my love”, makes clear.’

285 Again and again she foregrounds audience; she shakes in dismay at the seaweed ‘nec quisquam apparet’ (v.168), ‘nostris invidit questibus auris’ (v.170) is her complaint against Fate, ‘meas audite querellas’ (v.195) her appeal to the Eumenides,

286 On which, Webster 1966:30, ‘here she has borrowed from the Euripidean Andromeda, who begged Perseus to take her as handmaiden, wife, or slave (fr. 133N2)’.

287 On possible parallel usage of digression at A.R. 3.1096-1101, Jason’s second speech to Medea, see Clare 1966:73. Cf. A.R. 1.220.

288 See Wheeler 1943:147, ‘Nobody can read these passages - particularly the commonplaces on cruelty, loveliness, devoted service, perjuries, vain complaints, and others - without discerning the hand of the

is out of her mind or beside herself in grief, ‘externata malo’ (v.165). She reaches back to the narrator’s emotional interjection, to when ekphrasis passed completely into narrative, and repeats the same rare word with which the narrator commented upon Venus’ influence upon her, ‘assiduis quam luctibus exsternavit’ (v.71). She is unsettled but not unhinged.²⁸⁹ And with an awareness of the text she inhabits can be seen a growing understanding of her condition, though she still cannot speak it and she has not forgotten the ‘killer’. For in verse 164, we catch an echo of the Minotaur’s fall, ‘nequiquam vanis iactantem cornua ventis’ (‘to no purpose tossing its horns to the empty winds’, v.111). Ariadne makes an intratextual connection between the monster/brother goring the air in its death throes and her own impending death - siblings doomed by the hands of Theseus. From there, the connection reaches out into the wider Catullan corpus and recalls the words of the poet speaking on his own brother’s death, ‘et mutam nequiquam alloquerer cinerem’ (‘and to no purpose speak to speechless ash’, 101.4).²⁹⁰

nam quo me referam? quali spe perdita nitor?
 Idaeosne petam montes?
 64.177-8

Ariadne recalls what she has lost, the landmark of Ida symbolising her home in Crete.²⁹¹ Abandoned by Theseus, she has no one to turn to for aid.²⁹² Her longing for home recalls the initial image the narrator painted of the life that a stranger’s coming turned upside down, the innocent safe in the bosom of family and also the subsequent tearful farewells that followed Theseus’ victory which the narrator skimmed over as he hurried back to Dia. Fleeing the futility of her present and despairing of a future, she seeks refuge in the past,

rhetorician.’ Is Ariadne in adapting the narrator’s own imitation of spontaneous composition attempting to counter claims of artifice, giving the impression of speaking ‘from the heart’? A manipulated sincerity then, to undermine suspicions of manipulation.

289 Cf. Harmon 1973:322, ‘She is “besides herself” with frustration because she is alienated from her nature’, who does, however, view that nature as sexually driven and draws upon the worst of Medea, ‘the exceptionally perverse woman so atypical of the norm that she can have no place in organized society’ (*ibid.* 328), to the exclusion of the *virgo*. In ‘externata’ we might also discern a seed of the motif that was to become prevalent in the aesthetic of Roman love elegy, ‘The keynote of elegy is one of alienation rather than exaltation.’ (Gibson 2007:161). Ariadne *exclusus amator*?

290 So Putnam 1961:178, ‘Likewise the world around Ariadne is dead. The pointedly repeated *nequiquam* in 101.4 and in 64.164 adds further poignancy to the vain uselessness of her cries, just as *mutam* coupled with *alloquerer* in 101 tells the reader that the poet for his part will speak, but will hear no reply from his beloved brother, for whom sympathy is now fruitless.’

291 Cf. Attis’ own desperate longing for home upon waking on the Phrygian shore, ‘patria o mei creatrix, patria o mea genetrix, | ego quam miser relinquens’ (Cat. 63.50-1).

292 The Medea of the stage made similar complaints, e.g. οὐ μητέρ’, οὐκ ἀδελφόν, οὐχὶ συγγενῆ | μεθορμίσασθαι τῆσδ’ ἔχουσα συμφορᾶς (E. *Med.* 257-8). Cf. ‘Quo nunc me vortam, quod iter incipiam ingredi? | Domum paternamne anne ad Peliae filias?’ (Enn. *Scen.* 276-77 V). Her allusions are to drama, for all the protests of isolation, Ariadne thinks in terms of audience and performance.

but the past too has been tainted by the stranger. Her use of ‘perdita’ echoes both its use by the narrator in describing her all-consuming love for Theseus (‘perdita’, v.70) and her mother Pasiphae’s emotional state when losing her daughter (‘deperdita’, v.119).²⁹³ Theseus has destroyed both her and her family. A justification for her final words ‘funestet seque suosque’ (v.201) but regarding her own role as helper, and her own erotic motivation, not yet a confession.

praeterea nullo colitur sola insula, tecto,
nec patet egressus pelagi cingentibus undis.
nulla fugae ratio, nulla spes: omnia muta,
omnia sunt deserta, ostentant omnia letum.
64.184-7

No way out and no direction home. Her phrasing ‘pelagi cingentibus undis’ (v.185), combines observations on her predicament with a poet’s understanding of a traditional motif of sealing. Both the archaic shield models of ekphrasis have their boundaries encircled by the ocean, ἐν δ' ἐτίθει ποταμοῖο μέγα σθένος Ὠκεανοῖο | ἀντυγα πὰρ πυμάτην σάκεος πύκα ποιητοῖο (*Il.* 18.607-8) and ἀμφὶ δ' ἴτυν ῥέεν Ὠκεανὸς πλήθοντι ἑοικώς, | πᾶν δὲ συνείχε σάκος πολυδαίδαλον (*Hes. Sc.* 314-5). Ariadne as artist, in commenting upon her desolation acknowledges her own position within art. Her ensuing rhetoric gives a further hint of the passion she cannot yet admit as its style recalls the reason for the emotion.²⁹⁴

sic neque tum mitrae neque tum fluitantis amictus
illa vicem curans toto ex te pectore, Theseu,
toto animo, tota pendebat perdita mente.
64.68-70

Her cries are motivated by the totality of that on which she depended seen sailing over the horizon.²⁹⁵ The meadows of a maiden’s seduction have become the weeds of a woman’s abandonment, ‘alga vacua’ (v.168).²⁹⁶ She embarked on a new life with her husband only to be betrayed.²⁹⁷ But he wasn’t her husband, ‘malus hic celans dulci crudelia forma |

293 On 64.117-20, note Curran 1969:175, ‘a parody of a bride’s departure from her own family’.

294 Pavlock 1990:124, ‘The economy of the anaphora with *nulla* and *omnia* and of the strong asyndeton, with four connectives eliminated, makes this a powerful statement of her lack of all possibilities for survival.’

295 Cf. (Medea) Τῶ φημι τεῖ κούρη τε δάμαρ τε | αὐτοκασιγνήτη τε μεθ’ Ἑλλάδα γαῖαν ἔπεσθαι (A.R. 4.368-9) and (Andromache) Ἐκτορ ἀτὰρ σὺ μοί ἐσσι πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ | ἠδὲ κασίγνητος, σὺ δέ μοι θαλερὸς παρακοίτης (*Il.* 6.429-30).

296 Again she adopts the vocabulary of her entrance into the poem, described standing, watching Theseus sail away ‘ex alga’ (v.60). And in doing so draws the pose she will be depicted in on the coverlet.

297 Cf. McGushin 1967:88-9, ‘Ariadne is viewed in retrospect as the maiden secure in the guardianship of

consilia' (vv.175-6).²⁹⁸ He was a handsome man, and a charmer. And she fell for him.

iv. A Passionate Love

non prius ex illo flagrantia declinavit
lumina, quam cuncto concepit corpore flammam
funditus atque imis exarsit tota medullis.
64.91-3

After ekphrasis ceded to the narrative sketching the arrival of Theseus at court, the narrator narrowed his lens to focus on a combustible princess. The view is staggered as we are pulled in through her eyes, into her body, into her bones, following the invasive path of love.²⁹⁹ Then, recoiling from the erotic passion burning in the core, the narrator turns instead to Cupid and addresses the cause but he cannot keep his own eyes from her for long.

quantos illa tulit languenti corde timores!
quanto saepe magis fulgore expalluit auri,
64.99-100

On her beauty in suffering, Jenkyns observes, 'Even when pale with anxiety, Ariadne is brightly golden, like a figure moulded in precious metal by a smith, or as an operatic heroine remains gloriously melodious even in grief.'³⁰⁰ We have noted several instances of Ariadne's composure in formulating her speech, but as her lament reaches its climax, she struggles to retain that grace as at the last, she articulates the swell of emotion.

quas ego, vae misera, extremis proferre medullis
cogor inops, ardens, amenti caeca furore.
64.196-7

her mother (64.86-88), recalling the picture of the bride in 62.21ff., who must leave the sanctuary of her home to face the responsibilities of married love and to widen the *pietas* due to her family circle to include her duty to her husband and her new home (62.65).'

298 Compare the narrator's description of Theseus in his apostrophe to Venus, 'qualibus incensam iactastis mente puellam | fluctibus, in flavo saepe hospite suspirantem!' ('on what waves did you toss the girl, her mind on fire, sighing often for the fair-haired stranger!', vv.97-8). Cf. (Ariadne wrongly perceiving Theseus as her 'soul-mate') Putnam 1961:171, 'The cruel counsels lurk beneath an exterior which tempts toward love. She was carried away by outward charm to hope for inner spiritual values where in fact there were none.' On the Apollonian Jason's divinely enhanced beauty, see A.R. 3.919-25.

299 Cf. Rees 1994:78, 'In these lines, the "fire" of Ariadne's love can be seen in stages: it originates in the eyes (*flagrantia lumina*) before moving to the flesh (*cuncto concepit corpore flammam*) and finally raging in her marrow (*exarsit*).'

300 Jenkyns 1982:112.

On the verge of wishing destruction upon Theseus and his house, she blurts a list of her current symptoms, allows us to diagnose her condition and after cross-referencing with the narrator's analysis, conclude that for her nothing has changed.³⁰¹ The fire that burns in her now is the same fire which immolated her in Crete when transfixed by a stranger's appearance. However, whereas the vocabulary is firmly intertwined, the manner of the delivery is distinct. The narrator *is* subjective, his emotional involvement transparent in his subsequent outburst to Cupid and Venus but there remains a calmness to his assessment and a fullness to the phrasing as he moves methodically through her.³⁰² In contrast, as though unable to be restrained any longer, Ariadne's feelings tumble out staccato - *helpless, burning, blinded, rage*. The rawness of the words and the breathless asyndeton illustrate again the importance of voice and distance in creating perspectives, here of passion watched and passion spoken. It is the latter which we shall now explore; how 'passion spoken' can diversify voice and multiply interpretations when finally in the act of admission, Ariadne has created an opening for the lyric 'I'.³⁰³

Love as fire is a topos familiar to lyric. Thus the fire that burns in Ariadne is also the fire that burns in Acme (*ut multo mihi maior acriorque | ignis mollibus ardet in medullis*, Cat. 45.15-6) and in Caecilius' girl when aroused by his poetry (*misellae | ignes interiore edunt medullam*, Cat. 35.14-5). So too is the topos of love as disease, a wasting of the limbs. When Ariadne professes to being close to death, the language with which she expresses her fear is suggestive of love-sickness.

non tamen ante mihi languescent lumina morte,
nec prius a fesso secedent corpore sensus,
64.188-9

Here we can compare Cat. 76. When his good words and deeds are 'all destroyed, entrusted to a thankless mind' (*omnia quae ingratae perierunt credita menti*, 76.9), the

301 Cf. Simaetha's complaint (albeit with an unpleasant and disruptive analogy for her poetic suffering), αἰαῖ Ἐρωσ ἀνιηρέ, τί μεν μέλαν ἐκ χροὸς αἶμα | ἐμφύς ὡς λιμνᾶτις ἄπαν ἐκ βδέλλα πέπωκας; ('Ah, grievous Love, why have you drunk all the dark blood from my body, stuck fast like a marsh leech?', Theoc. 2.55-6). Cf. ἦλθες, †καὶ† ἐπόησας, ἔγω δέ σ' ἐμαιόμαν, | ὄν δ' ἔψυξας ἔμαν φρένα καιομένην πόθῳ. ('You came, and I needed you, and you cooled the fever of longing that racked my heart', Sappho 48, trans. West). Cf. Barthes 1978:189, 'Such is love's wound: a radical chasm (at the "roots" of being), which cannot be closed, and out of which the subject drains, constituting himself as a subject in this very draining.'

302 Cf. Curran 1969:172, n. 3, 'the poet is sympathetically involved in the lives and situation of the characters he is creating and is not merely indulging in formal literary exercise.'

303 See DeBrohun 1999:422, 'It has for some time been noticed that, especially in the speeches of Ariadne and Aegeus, the poet employs words, images, and themes, and indeed expresses concerns - about fidelity and loss, or the importance of the *domus* - quite closely related to those of the Catullan lyric speaker.'

poet prays for a cure to the numbness riddling his limbs (*quae mihi subrepens imos ut torpor in artus*, 76.21). These thematic echoes on topoi encourage an identification of Ariadne with the lyric ‘Catullus’.³⁰⁴ However, before imaginations conjure visions of Roman poets in Lydian bonnets, let us look to a veiled princess infected by Eros in the court of Aeetes and the arrival of ‘lyric’ within ‘epic’.

βέλος δ' ἐνεδαίετο κούρη
 νέρθεν ὑπὸ κραδίῃ, φλογὶ εἴκελον. Ἄντία δ' αἰεὶ
 βάλλεν ἐπ' Αἰσονίδην ἀμαρύγματα, καὶ οἱ ἄηντο
 στηθέων ἐκ πυκιναὶ καμάτῳ φρένες· οὐδέ τιν' ἄλλην
 μνήστιν ἔχεν, γλυκερῇ δὲ κατείβετο θυμὸν ἀνίη.
 A.R. 3.286-90

Here, the impact of the arrow on Medea’s θυμὸν (A.R. 3.284) has already rendered her mute. Now she can’t stop looking at him just as Ariadne cannot tear her own flashing eyes from Theseus (vv. 91-2).³⁰⁵ Once the shaft has burrowed its way down under the girl’s καρδιά, Medea finds her spirit drenched in conflict. The description of her jumbled thoughts being ‘blasted’ (visually blown over the verse) are realised in Ariadne’s first person use of asyndeton. The sweet pain is an erotic combination observed by Sappho.

Ἔρος δηῦτέ μ' ὀ λυσιμέλης δόνει,
 γλυκύπικρον ἀμάχανον ὄρπετον
 Sappho 130

The compound γλυκύπικρος ‘bittersweet’ is first attested here. Eros is also ἀμάχανον ‘unmanageable’. Campbell comments, ‘She sees love’s assault as both physical and mental.’³⁰⁶ Note the compound δηῦτέ ‘look again/why again’. The lyric desire, imbued

304 So Putnam 1961:167, ‘In a word, poem 64 shows Catullus writing of himself in the figures of Ariadne and Aegeus, and of the way he had hoped his relationship with Lesbia would evolve in the story of Peleus and Thetis. With the present disguised under symbolic forms, it is true autobiography and consequently it says more than any other of his poems because it can do so with impunity’ and *passim*. Cf. Wiseman 1985:175, ‘It has often been thought that the choice and treatment of Catullus’ mythological themes were influenced by his own experience in love.’ *Contra*, note Kinsey 1965:912, ‘The only evidence for the suggested identification is the similarity of language between Poem 64 and certain of the shorter poems in which Catullus expresses his own feelings, and this proves no more than that Catullus attributed to his characters feelings similar to his own.’

305 Cf. (Nausicaa staring at Odysseus) θηῖτο δὲ κούρη (*Od.* 6.237). On the lover’s gaze, e.g. Nicarete lingering by her window to catch Cleophon’s flashing eye, that ‘bright lightning’ χαροπαὶ ἀστεροπαὶ (Asclepiades III=*AP* v.152) or (Zeus in the guise of a bull) ὅσσε δ' ὑπογλαύσσεσκε καὶ ἕμερον ἀστράπτεισκεν. (Mosch. *Europa* 86).

306 Campbell, D. 1983:18.

with striking vitality, is momentary. There have been and will be again other loves for its poets to sing. For Medea and Ariadne this is first love, and so far as they are aware, their only love. To Sappho we can also turn for further confirmation of Ariadne's condition.

ἀλλ' ἄκαν μὲν γλῶσσα †ἔαγε λείπτον
 δ' αὐτικά χρωῖ πῦρ ὑπαδεδρόμηκεν,
 ὀππάτεσσι δ' οὐδ' ἔν ὄρημ', ἐπιρρόμ-
 βεισι δ' ἄκουαι,
 †έκαδε μ' ἴδρωσ ψῦχος κακχέεται† τρόμος δὲ
 παῖσαν ἄγρει, χλωροτέρα δὲ ποίας
 ἔμμι, τεθνάκην δ' ὀλίγω ἴπιδεύης
 φαίνομ' ἔμ' αὐται·
 Sappho 31.9-16

Johnson comments, 'She cannot, she finds, speak or see or hear, fever and chills fasten on her body, her blood rushes from her head, she is near fainting, she is near death.'³⁰⁷

Ariadne in her blindness, her pallor, her deathly torpor, is clearly in Sappho's debt and whilst the echoes cannot reproduce the vigour and song of the lyric discourse, the tensions are there to be played.³⁰⁸ In chapter three, we reflected upon how the narrator could utilise allusion not to make a particular point of reference but to encourage an atmosphere, that feeling of staging and performance conveyed by fostering links with prior performing *personae*. Something similar is occurring here. Ariadne is neither a Sappho nor a Catullus, hers is a reported speech in an embedded hexameter narrative but she can evoke an *impression* of one, create an illusion of lyric intensity and immediacy within myth.

Again intertextual connections altering voice and offering alternate perspectives. Here, primary and internal narrator can be seen working collaboratively. The primary narrator drawing upon lyric *topoi* to describe her suffering whilst acknowledging the precedent in his clear reworking of the scene from the *Argonautica*, provides her the material and prepares the audience. Within the established patterns of their negotiation, the

307 Johnson 1982:39. Cf. Cat. 51, a 'quotation' and commentary of this fragment.

308 In speculating that scholars might have 'overdone it' regarding Callimachean influence on Roman poets (to which his answer is a qualified 'no') Thomas (1993:199) hypothesises that 'the self-consciousness, the metaphorical language and even the polemical and programmatic aspects of Greek lyric, deserve at least the same attention that has been accorded to Callimachus.' For further examples of these *topoi* in Greek lyric, e.g. ἀλλά μ' ὁ λυσιμελής ὤταίρε δάμναται πόθος. ('I'm overcome by crippling disease', Archil. 196) and λυσιμελεῖ τε πόσσωι, τακερώτερα | δ' ὕπνω καὶ σανάτω ποτιδέρκεται. 'with more crippling longing. Her glance more melting than sleep or death', Alc. 3. 61-2). Numbering and translations West. For her blindness τοῖος γὰρ φιλότιτος ἔρωσ ὑπὸ καρδίην ἔλυσθεις | πολλὴν κατ' ἀχλὺν ὀμμάτων ἔχευεν, | κλέψας ἐκ στηθ<έω>ν ἀπαλὰς φρένας. ('Such was the lust for sex that, worming in under my heart, quite blinded me and robbed me of my young wits...', Archil. 191, trans. West).

lyric presence arrives not unseen but not incongruous. The ‘I’ with which she denounced Theseus’ character becomes, where thoughts turn to emotion, the ‘I’ of the lover.³⁰⁹ Medea might have questioned the origin of her pain Τίπτε με δειλαίην τόδ’ ἔχει ἄχος; (A.R. 3.464) but Ariadne can finally express the emotion whilst gazing upon the source.³¹⁰

‘amenti caeca furore’ - her final observation on her condition recalls the narrator’s very first, when announcing her arrival in the text, looking upon her in ekphrasis and perceiving her held in passion’s irresistible grip. ‘indomitos... furores’ wrapping her and her heart inside the verse. *Furor* might not equate to μανία but it is still a fierce passion, and indomitable passions fall within the sphere of Eros.

ἦδ’ Ἔρος, ὃς κάλλιστος ἐν ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι,
 λυσιμελής, πάντων δὲ θεῶν πάντων τ’ ἀνθρώπων
 δάμναται ἐν στήθεσσι νόον καὶ ἐπίφρονα βουλήν.
 Hes. *Th.* 120-2

This is the same power of love that overcame even Zeus, οὐ γάρ πώ ποτέ μ’ ὤδε θεῶν ἔρος οὐδὲ γυναικὸς | θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι περιπροχυθεὶς ἐδάμασσεν (*Il.* 14.315-6). When the narrator returns to Dia, she is not then demented. The passion ‘they say’ burned in her is the fire of love (‘saepe illam perhibent ardenti corde furentem’, v.124).³¹¹ A passion she finally admits to herself, and in doing so verifies his assessment. It is like the μαργοσύνη of the Apollonian Medea. Cut my throat, Jason, she demanded, ὄφρ’ ἐπίηρα φέρωμαι εἰκότα μαργοσύνησι (‘that I bear a reward befitting my lust’, A.R. 4.375).³¹²

Superficially, the Catullan *Argonautica* ended when the Nereids emerged out of time and place and from an echo of endings sprang new beginnings, but between the lines of the embedded narrative, woven throughout Ariadne’s depiction and her words, is always Medea, from first love to flight, from Colchis to Corinth, saviour and destroyer. Cretan and Colchian merge, our perceptions of both characters continually altered by the allusions the learned love poet brings to bear upon them. In many ways Apollonius

309 Cf. Rees 1994:84, ‘Ariadne experiences the *odi et amo* of the rejected lover.’

310 Cf. (Simaetha) χάς ἴδον, ὡς ἐμάνην, ὡς μοι πυρὶ θυμὸς ἰάφθη | δειλαίας, (*Theoc.* 2.82-3). Note Hutchinson 1988:157, ‘δειλαίας, ‘unhappy me’, expressively placed, stresses the identity of speaker and sufferer, and thus intensifies the immediacy of our response’ and compare Ariadne’s own *vae miserae* (v. 196). Cf. on the use of τάλαινα in *Asclep.* 19, *ibid.* 274, ‘It stands out from the texture of the speech again, but conveys simply and expressively the speaker’s pain.’

311 Alternatively Gaisser 1995:601, ‘The maenad latent in Ariadne seems to have come alive while we were gone.’

312 Cf. the Euripidean Medea recognising she went with Jason πρόθυμος μᾶλλον ἢ σοφωτέρα (*E. Med.* 485). Cf. Barthes 1978:190, ‘Indeed, shall I deliberate if I must go mad (is love then, that madness I want?)?’

provided the precedent for the treatment of love within epic but Catullus has distilled its essence and refined the scale. The emergence of the Nereids do not then signal the conclusion of that narrative but rather the different nature of the enterprise; intertextually, Catullus' Argo sails on. The poet has taken from the *Argonautica* the love story of Jason and Medea and retold it without telling it by weaving it into the construction of his Theseus and Ariadne. By adhering to the Apollonian chronology that placed the voyage of Theseus to Crete prior to that of Jason to Colchis, he has told the tale prompted by the *exemplum* offered to Medea by Jason at their first meeting. In fleshing out the tale, he has rewritten its literary background. 64 now serves as an intertext for the *Argonautica*, Ariadne draws upon the literature of Medea and in turn informs it. The relationships exemplify the poem's programmatic foundation, simultaneously available readings.

It was left to the Apollonian narrator to fuse heroic narrative and lyric sentiment, whereas here the narrators are in partnership and Ariadne finds her voice when finally she points the finger, finally she knows the lyric god (even if she cannot call his name). Still, the approach has its flaws. The story of Ariadne for all the allusions evoked to expand its appeal cannot have the scope of epic, she cannot herself be a Medea (or a Dido). Equally, by being boxed within narrative, her speech though perceptive and passionate is not truly the voice of lyric. Her 'I' is the reported 'I' she said, the attested 'I' they said she said and the performed 'I' I say they said she said. At times she creates the illusion of transgressing these several boundaries but they remain.³¹³ However, what she can offer in compensation is something unstable and unique. No two listeners can hear the same lament.

'Ariadne's monologue is conventional in most of its themes and strategies... But the quality of this speech's music, at once somnolent and bitter, monotonous and hysterical, exists not to reveal this character in this situation, but rather to abet the imagination of a state of mind, of a reverberation of tangled feelings, that transcend story and conscious personality as they transcend the words that attempt to capture them.'³¹⁴

v. Echoing Eros - an intertextual exercise

The premise of this paper is that 64 is itself a demonstration, a poetry of perspectives in practice. And as our journey of exploration of the negotiations of voice and allusion, those

313 Cf. Rees 1994:84, 'Such is its compelling power that we tend to forget that it is reported speech. So it seems, does the poet: *has postquam maesto profudit pectore voces* (202).' I would put that 'slip' down to an affected narrator not to a nodding poet.

314 Johnson 1982:157.

mechanisms through which that creative kernel can be perceived, nears its own conclusion, I offer a limited demonstration of my own. We can point out echoes, discuss them, note the variations, the nuances they bring but how in the process of reading, are we reconstructing them, at any one time, into a whole? What follows then is a short and contrived amalgamation of extracted texts.

She did not turn her burning eyes from him
until she woke within all her body the flame,
and from foundations, from deep in the marrow
she burned completely.

Eros himself flitted back again from the high-roofed
hall, laughing loudly - but the arrow burned on in the girl,
underneath the heart, like flame.
Ah! - pitiless at heart, stirring up passions,
divine boy, you who mix up troubles and joys for men -

(once more I feel the sting of crippling Love,
that bittersweet, unmanageable midge) -

And you who rule Golgi and leafy Idalium,
on what manner of waves did you toss the girl, her mind ablaze.
often sighing for the golden-haired stranger?

Ever straight at Aeson's son she flashed her glance,
thoughts were blown from her breast, jumbled by pain,
nothing else did she remember but flooded her spirit with sweet grief.
How many anxieties she bore in her weary heart,
how often she grew more pale than the gleam of gold,
(Wrapped thus around her heart, it burnt in secret,
destructive Love), her soft cheeks would turn
sallow and then flush - her mind in torment,
when eager to compete against the wild monster,
Theseus sought either death or the rewards of praise.
And she feared for him, lest the oxen
or Aeetes with his own hand should slay him;
and she mourned him as though already slain outright.

Not unwelcome however nor in vain were the little gifts
she promised the gods as with silent lip she lit her prayers.
'Yet I would that he escaped unharmed;
yea may this be so, revered goddess, daughter of Perses.'³¹⁵

Translation with liberties of punctuation and arrangement does not compensate for the

315 Cat. 64.91-3, A.R. 3.285-7, Cat. 64.94-5, Sappho 130 (trans. West), Cat. 64.96-8, A.R. 3.287-90, Cat. 64.99-100, A.R. 3.296-8, Cat. 64.101-2, A.R. 3.459-61 (trans. Seaton), Cat. 64.103-4, A.R. 3.466-7 (trans. Seaton).

languages and poetry substituted. Nor does the occasional use of different translators effectively delineate the different narrators. This fusion of images renders only silent impressions without the music, without the sound and rhythm of the verse. Moreover the forced integration of ‘chunks’ of text does not adequately simulate *actual* processes of recall which would require a more radical splicing ‘laughing loudly, stirring up passions, deep in the marrow, the arrow burned on’ and so forth. And those might be recalled in images accompanied by snatches of the original texts, whether vocalised or not. The ‘cut-up’ is artificial, a collage of *content* relating to Ariadne and Medea, with the intruding observation of a lyric poet; it thus *represents* one possible reader response taken at one particular time acquiring, processing and reformulating *impressions* suggested within a section of the Catullan narrative.³¹⁶

However, whilst it cannot claim to successfully reproduce an effect, it can illustrate an aspect of it, albeit narrow in scope and flawed in execution - a demonstration then of a *type* of effect experienced by the reader familiar with the echoes (or one who has checked the citations). If that demonstration could be played out with different voices, replayed with different intonations of voice, replayed with different voices and different intonations, recorded with several audiences, perhaps with additional voice-overs from commentators, we might have a more adequate simulation, although still grounded in one facet of the original. Another composer of this selection would replace Apollonius with a Catullus or Theocritus, could substitute Sappho with Alcman or Archilochus, add a Euripides (or an Ennius) etc.. Thus what this demonstration is attempting to elucidate in its inadequacy, is that the perspectives available, whilst finite and all to some extent overlapping, are engineered by the design, which is then fuelled by our responses, which then offers new readings, which then prompts new responses etc., to create the illusion of endless permutations, that the poem is so constructed so as to appear to spin forever, *currere ducentes subtegmina, currere, fusi*.

316 Thus what it does not reproduce is the close textual composition at the level of the author.

6. Picking Up the Threads.

i. Housing a Labyrinth

saeva quod horrebas prisci praecepta parentis,
attamen in vestras potuisti ducere sedes,
quae tibi iucundo famularer serva labore,
candida permulcens liquidis vestigia lymphis,
purpureave tuum consternens veste cubile.
64.159-63

Euphony is prevalent in the language of 64. Examples in this selection are the alliteration and assonance of ‘prisci praecepta parentis’ and of ‘liquidis vestigia lymphis’ where the alliteration of ‘v’ is additionally carried through to the alliterative conclusion of the following verse ‘consternens veste cubile’. So too is rhyme, evident here at line end with ‘parentis’ and ‘lymphis’, ‘labore’ and ‘cubile’, in opening, e.g. the colours ‘candida’ and ‘purpurea’, or across the middle as with ‘horrebas prisci’ and ‘vestras potuisti’. On these lines, Jenkyns comments, ‘this menial office is described with almost an excess of conscious loveliness.’³¹⁷ Similar observations can be made throughout the poem. Its texture is rich and melodious.

Another dominant feature is the interlocking word-order. In verse 162, *candida vestigia* are entwined with *liquidis lymphis*, a word-order whose arrangement also enacts the activity it describes, the feet surrounded by the soothing waters. Elements of the lines are persistently woven and for the majority woven into syntactic wholes.³¹⁸ Thus in the selection above, every verse is a contained unit, one stacked on top of another. There are connections, to be sure, but there are very few occasions where we are forced to suspend completion of sense over several verses (Aegeus’ speech the marked exception). Enjambment does occur, but its usage is usually pointed, as we observed with ‘eruit’ (v.108) and ‘eripui’ (v.150), or the two instances of epanalepsis ‘prospicit’ (v.62) and ‘perfidie’ (v.133).³¹⁹ Thus for the most part, the construction is paratactic and the syntax uncomplicated: ‘Of the 408 lines of poem 64 given in Eisenhut’s text, 257 end with some

317 Jenkyns 1982:118.

318 Conrad 1965:237, ‘In Catullus the juxtaposition of adjectives is used not so much to drive home points of argumentation as to suggest moods and make vivid the scenes in his tableau.’ Thus v.163 quoted above, he translates: ‘Your bed I would strew with the very best, a purple cloth.’ (*ibid.* 238).

319 Conrad (1965:217) notes the pattern of separation of adjective and noun in the poem where the adjective falls before the B (penthemimeral) caesura, a pattern conditioned by metrical factors which ‘weighed much more heavily upon those poets who eschewed the practice of enjambement and preferred to write in single-sense units.’

kind of punctuation (63%). By contrast, there is a marked absence of internal pauses (about 13%).³²⁰ Line after line offers itself complete whilst stylistic features such as euphony and rhyme aid in unifying.³²¹

On the image of Ariadne unravelling in ekphrasis (vv.60-7), Theodorakopoulos comments, 'The regularity and control of the grammar in this passage appears to present a perfect picture of rigid enclosure, but the picture created by this rigid language focuses on the lack of 'enclosure' in Ariadne's appearance. She seems literally to be falling to pieces for the lack of boundaries, or frames, to contain her.'³²² I would suggest that the impression thus captured illustrates the structural design of the whole, that whatever the negotiations taking place between the voices and allusions of the poem, however many perspectives are summoned, the construction of the frame with its preponderance of polished end-stopped lines and predilection for languid rhythms provides a measure of constraint. There is 'give' to be sure, but the frame is apparent nevertheless, offering the reader assurances of 'enclosure'. The 'bars' might bend but they will not break.

To consider briefly the selection above, we have intratextual negotiation in Ariadne's maligning of Aegeus, recasting/anticipating as *saeva praecepta* the instructions ('mandata', v.232) which would make no mention, as far as what we are told, of foreign girls. Does she envision his father like her own, another Minos, another *rex inustus*? Or like Aeetes whom Medea feared? Was she fleeing with Theseus to escape her father? She does offer an alternate reason to that of love. She'd serve in his house after all, anything to be away from Crete. In the unorthodox application of *vestigia* for feet, is there an echo of Theseus' retracing his steps from the labyrinth (v.113) or a foreshadowing of Achilles on the hunt (v.341)? And then, there is the purple cover she would spread over the bridal bed of another, a coverlet like the one on which she is embroidered and from which her narrative and speech unfolded, a coverlet which itself recalls the golden fleece spread as the marriage bed for Jason and Medea in Phaeacia (A.R. 4.1141-8).³²³

Those are some of the perspectives raised within those verses. The closer we look, the more possibilities emerge, the faster the shapes shift, the harder they become to separate and define. But they are contained, by a frame regular in its patterns, assuring enclosure in its constructions, accessibility in its arrangement, pleasure in its melodies: 'Instead of the pressure of emotion forcing the sense across the natural pauses of the verse,

320 Newman 1990:402.

321 Consider esp. lines like 'spinosas.. curas' (v.72) or 'aeternum.. laborem' (v.310), adjective and noun separated to enclose the line. They are like rods waiting to be bundled.

322 Theodorakopoulos 2000:121.

323 A coverlet decorated 'priscis.. figuris' (v. 50) - Aegeus, 'prisci.. parentis'.

line after line presents itself individually and seems to ask, “Am I not admirable?” Above all, Catullus’ style makes itself conspicuous; this is a poem of display.³²⁴ To an extent I agree with Jenkyn’s assessment but consider the display not an end in itself but a crucial part of the design.

Fitzgerald has drawn attention to the importance of the gaze.³²⁵ But it is more than a theme and more than a gaze. Perception is fundamental to the poem as a demonstration of perspectives, perception of sight and sound. Spectacle and performance, viewers and audience. ‘Who is speaking? Who is watching? What are we hearing? What are we watching?’ Poetry is allusive but 64 is more than that; it is a demonstration of the fluidity of perspective achieved through allusive language, through variable voice, the one engaging the other to multiply the range of possibilities. All held within a consistent frame, the outer walls of the Labyrinth.

ii. The Never Ending Story

praesentes namque ante domos invisere castas
heroum, et sese mortali ostendere coetu,
64.384-5

This is a wedding poem without a wedding. When the Parcae end their song, the narrator ends his journey into myth. Like Ariadne pausing to reflect on her audience (v.164), he halts to survey his own in the present and concludes he cannot continue the tale. We don’t deserve to hear it! Such gatherings can no longer happen he informs us. The Thessalians filled the palace with their happy assembly (‘laetanti... coetu’, v.33) and once the gods used to attend such gatherings of men (‘mortali... coetu’, v.385) but now due to the immorality of the present, they can suffer such company no more (‘nec talis dignantur visere coetus’, v.406). He takes a firm stance, ‘omnia fanda nefanda malo permixta furore’ (v.405). Perhaps swayed by the insistent truthfulness of the Parcae, authority has returned: ‘The Catullus I argue for is able to describe a scene with conflicting emotional and intellectual responses toward it, but his intellectual judgement establishes itself in control

324 Jenkyns 1982:102. The style is not universally pleasing, e.g. Goold 1983:251, ‘his spontaneous and unaffected genius was ill-suited to the learned artificialities of the epyllion.’ With such a decorative liling surface there is a risk of overindulging the reader, as at times ‘even honey and the pleasant flowers of Aphrodite can bring tedium’, *Pi. N.* 7.53-4, trans. Morrison).

325 Fitzgerald 1995:140, ‘I argue that the gaze - satisfied, frustrated, or interrupted - is the main thematic thread of the poem, and that this theme reflects the problematic relation of a belated poet and his audience toward the beautiful but lost world of myth on which they long to feast their eyes.’

towards the end of the poem.³²⁶ Is the narrator's cover blown? Was his naïve voice of yearning a filter to temper a poet's moral message? Is this piety 'genuine'? Was his comment on the rites of Bacchus ('orgia quae frustra cupiunt audire profani'. v.260) intended not only to highlight the incongruity of sound and picture but also an address to the uninitiated? We are not worthy. Yet the perversions of the present are not, as critics note, out of place with the stories of the Heroic Age. Again, how we choose to align the relationship between narrator and author alters what we hear and see, affects our ability to interpret, and achieve resolution, assuming our decision-making has survived the voyage intact: 'These last lines also serve to erode our confidence in the possibility of a stable and coherent authorial point of view, and as a consequence undermine our confidence in our own readerly and interpretative abilities.'³²⁷ However, rather than wrestle with much discussed ambiguities, I would like to consider another effect of the postscript.

Viewing our narrator as a showman, he has brought the curtain down on the Parcae's song. We did not get the finale we anticipated but neither did we get the *Argonautica* we anticipated, and perhaps we should not have anticipated front row seats at the feast at all. The sins of the present have denied him and us. The gods no longer suffer the light of day - his final word on the matter: 'Many texts can be shown to deny the finality of their endings, but they have to end somewhere.'³²⁸ But night not light signifies closure. The gods do not visit us now but once they did. When was this? *Peliaco quondam prognatae vertice pinus...* What he regrets in closing is the loss of the world he has recreated in song, in conjuring the world of heroes and gods for which he yearns. When did man fall from grace? Was it when the first boat sailed? *Peliaco quondam prognatae vertice pinus...* The ending returns us to the beginning, to find solutions, to find our way back to myth. The performance is over but the show will run. And run.³²⁹

iii. Conclusion

In writing this paper, I became all too conscious of the number of occasions when

326 Peden 1987:101.

327 Theodorakopoulos 2000:118.

328 Sharrock 2000:20.

329 Cf. Zetzel 1983:261, 'it seems to have been a convention of Alexandrian and neoteric poetry to reverse beginnings and endings.' And note esp. *ibid.* n. 28, 'Catullus ends poem 64 with an allusion to the *opening* [my italics] of Hesiod's *Eoae* (fr. 1 M-W).' Also encouraged to reread, we might consider ourselves better equipped, e.g. Peden 1987:102, 'On a second reading, the reader will have a keener eye for these "ambiguities" of tone and attitude... what we are dealing with here is a Republican Roman poet's sensibility.'

struggling for expression, I clutched the knees of ‘suggest’. This is the effect of the poem - constant suggestion. ‘What do you see? Who do you hear? Who else? What else? Are you sure? How do you think about it now? Read it again...’ It is Thetis refusing to be pinned.

To reveal the design, I have explored the mechanism with different variations of the same approach. I have leaned towards certain interpretations of character and voice conducive to demonstrating the negotiations taking place within the poem. Thus the dominant *persona* of primary narrator has been that of the showman, complicit in the narrative design, assuming other *personae* (pious, incredulous, sympathetic etc.) as needed whilst steering the narrative course under the author’s command. It is a process by which the narrator can exaggerate rather than fake his emotional involvement. And by distancing himself to a degree from the narrator, the author can more effectively manipulate perceptions and perspectives. He presents an accomplished speaker, well versed in literary tropes and rhetorical flourishes, responsible for the artful construction of the narrative and for the texture of the surface song. And a narrator aware of his digressive nature, teasing his audience and delighting in the variations of his story is still reconcilable with an ignorance of the parallel activities worked on a more detailed intertextual level by the author e.g. the reworking of ἡδὲ ῥέεθρα | Φάσιδος (A.R. 2.1277-8) and Αἰήταο (2.1279) evident in ‘Phasidos ad fluctus et fines Aeetaeos’ (v.3). Thus the narrator can (if we choose) remain responsible for such innovations as Peleus’ first encounter with Thetis at the Argo’s launch, whilst the (misleading) intertextual foreshadowing is the craft of the author.

Ariadne, in her indictment, was perceived as an artist in her own right, interacting with the narrator on an equal footing (even though structurally subordinate), working with and against his narration and conscious in her usage of intertextual evidence to condemn Theseus. The father Aegeus, relegated to a subsidiary level, acted as her foil, a dupe to demonstrate how a different grading of character awareness altered the dynamic of the negotiation. The Parcae were treated differently again, as they became the incarnation within the poem of its artistic concerns; the selectivity of the insisted truth, the weaving of song from one spun thread equated to the creation of perspectives from a single strand. And with Ariadne in love, I adjusted her earlier setting, considered her more in harmony with the narrator’s perceptions and additionally that this time her use of allusion was not intended to lend weight to an argument but to imply emotions she was struggling to make explicit. Awareness of her condition combined with an understanding of the method then resulted in a moment of ‘lyric’ clarity as she made her final plea against the source of her

pain; a transformation from victim to victor, from erotic study to love poet.

Reworking the sources discussed in this paper, one could ‘turn up’ the Euripidean Medea, put greater emphasis on Ariadne’s vengeance, and make the maligned Aegeus a more sympathetic individual. The framework within which these relationships operate allows for this, encourages us to shift positions, look from different angles, apply different filters. We could ‘tweak’ Ariadne’s intertextual strategy, view her as being aware of those made in indictment but naïve concerning the implications of her erotic allusions, thus seeing her demands for vengeance motivated (and/or mitigated) by a subconscious passion. We know she’s in love, we see the signs, whilst she has yet to join the dots. The lyric outburst with which her complaint concludes could be viewed as the amalgamation of the two, awareness and expression. In this study, many intertexts have been passed over and their voices diminished; Lucretius, Cicero, Hesiod, Aratus... much of the Catullan corpus itself left in the field. Their substitution would change the content of this paper but not the method.³³⁰ The Labyrinth is full of twists and turns, but we do emerge in the end, each finding our own thread. The structure does not change, it is the path of subsequent journeys that is never quite the same.

Poetic language is allusive, but this, within the premise explored, is allusion as poetry, an attempt to relate and recast multiple tales simultaneously. ‘Correcting’ the Jenkyn’s quotation from the introduction, Catullus 64 ‘strives to say *and so* to be.’ It is through the negotiations of the poem’s voices with audiences, with one another and with the voices of past literature that its being is both revealed and secured: poetry of perspective, poetry as perspective. Perhaps not so much a poet’s poem, as a poem’s poem.

330 Cf. Sharrock 2000:25, ‘Intratextual part, text, intertext, and criticism are all “one” (to use the metaphor of wholeness) - not a seamless whole all nicely congruent, but rather a dynamic tension or a series of tensions all ultimately linked (and unlinked?) in the act of reading.’

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