

VIRGIL'S ARISTAEUS EPYLLION:

GEORGICS 4.315-558

MEIS PARENTIBUS CARISSIMIS

VIRGIL'S ARISTAEUS EPYLLION:

GEORGICS 4.315-558

by

KENNETH L. BELCHER, B.A., M.A.

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AUTHOR: Kenneth L. Belcher, B.A. (University of Western Ontario)
M.A. (University of Western Ontario)

SUPERVISOR: Professor P. Murgatroyd

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ABSTRACT

Virgil's Georgics has been the subject of a daunting number of articles, studies and commentaries. Of the many problems associated with the work perhaps the greatest difficulty has arisen in assessing the Aristaeus epyllion, G. 4.315-558. Numerous attempts have been made to interpret the passage and to explain its connection with the rest of Book 4 and with the whole of the Georgics. Many opinions have been expressed (quot homines, tot sententiae); however, none has been deemed completely satisfactory and none has been universally accepted. I have chosen not to add to the already vast body of scholarship dealing with these issues but to approach the epyllion from a different perspective.

Despite its importance - it is, after all, the only existing extended narrative by Virgil other than the Aeneid, which it predates - the Aristaeus epyllion has not been the subject of a single exhaustive study. I have attempted, therefore, to treat the passage in isolation, tacitly accepting that it is connected with the rest of the work. My study includes a reappraisal (with, I trust, fresh insights) of the relevant mythological background and structure of the piece. Its literary form, the epyllion, is also discussed and a more detailed examination of setting and character than has been undertaken previously is presented. Finally, I offer a detailed critical appreciation in which Virgil's

narrative technique, his use of literary models (especially, but not exclusively, Homer) and features of sound, rhythm and diction receive comment.

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PREFATORY NOTE ON TEXTS

The text used for the Georgics is that of R.A.B. Mynors (Oxford, 1990). For the Iliad, I have followed the text of the third edition by D.B. Monro and T.W. Allen (Oxford, 1920) and for the Odyssey, T.W. Allen's second edition (Oxford, 1917-1919).

All statements concerning rarity of diction have been confirmed by consulting OLD, TLL, *Concordances* (cited in the *Bibliography*) and *Ibycus*.

CHAPTER 1

THE MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The purpose of the following analysis is to establish (to the extent that the evidence provided by art and literature allows) the mythological background relevant to the Aristaeus epyllion¹ at Georgics 4.315ff. Particular emphasis will be placed upon the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, which is central to Virgil's narrative; Aristaeus and Proteus will be addressed first and will receive more cursory treatment. It is hoped that this examination will define the main components (and major variants) of the respective traditions and thereby allow an assessment of the way in which Virgil exploits certain elements while playing down others or even omitting some details altogether. In addition, it will be possible to evaluate the features of Virgil's narrative which appear to be novel or unusual. Such features are numerous, which means that the reader of Virgil's epyllion must have been constantly surprised and startled and have found his account unpredictable and engaging.

¹ "Epyllion" is used for convenience. The appropriateness of the term is discussed in Chapter 2.

PART A: ARISTAEUS AND CYRENE

Aristaeus was the son of Apollo and Cyrene. So Pindar (Pyth. 9.59ff.) relates, and there is remarkable unanimity about this in other ancient sources.² In Pindar's account Cyrene is the daughter of Hypseus, a Lapith king³, who shuns the more traditional feminine pursuits, preferring instead to hunt wild beasts upon the slopes of Mt. Pelion in Thessaly. Apollo sees her wrestling with a lion, falls in love with her and carries her off to Libya in his golden car, having first consulted Cheiron, who foretells that there Cyrene will bear to Apollo a son (Pyth. 9.59ff.):

τόθι παῖδα τέξεται, δν κλυτὸς Ἑρμᾶς
 εὐθρόνοις Ὠραῖσι καὶ Γαίᾳ
 ἀνελῶν φίλας ὑπὸ ματέρος οἶσει.
 ταῖ δ' ἐπιγουντίδιον θαησάμεναι βρέφος αὐγαῖς,
 νέκταρ ἐν χεῖλεσσι καὶ ἀμβροσίαν στάξοισι, θήσον-
 ται τέ νιν ἀθάνατον,
 Ζῆνα καὶ ἀγνὸν Ἀπόλλων', ἀνδράσι χάρμα φίλοις, ἀγ-
 χιστον ὀπάονα μῆλων,
 Ἄγρᾳ καὶ Νόμιον, τοῖς δ' Ἀρισταῖον καλεῖν."
 ὧς ἄρ' εἰπὼν ἔντυεν τερπνὰν γάμου κραίνειν τελευτάν.

Apollonius Rhodius at 2.500ff, where he gives an aetion for the Etesian winds, also names Thessaly as the birthplace of Cyrene and agrees

² E.g. Ap. Rhod. 2.500ff; Schol. Ap. Rhod. 2.498-527a (the scholiast, though he mentions that Pherecydes, Ariaethus, Agroetas et al. also handled the story, does not report any variants of Aristaeus' parentage); Diod. Sic. 4.81.1; Hyginus Fab. 161; Justinus 13.7; Nonnus Dionysiaca 5.216. It may be that Hesiod also named Cyrene and Apollo as Aristaeus' parents (see Servius on G. 1.14).

³ On the tradition that Cyrene was a daughter of Peneus see Schol. Ap. Rhod. 2.498/527a: τινὲς δὲ φασι τὴν Κυρήνην Πηνειοῦ θυγατέρα γενέσθαι, κακῶς.

with Pindar that she was carried off by Apollo to Libya where she bore him a son *ὄν καλέουσιν/ Ἄγρᾶ καὶ Νόμιον πολυλήιοι Αἰμονιῆες* (2.506-7).

However, Apollonius describes her not as a huntress but as a shepherdess tending her flocks by the river Peneus (2.500-1).⁴ After the birth of Aristaeus, Apollo makes Cyrene a nymph and a huntress and brings Aristaeus to the cave of Cheiron to be raised. Upon reaching manhood, Aristaeus is schooled by nymphs in the arts of prophecy and healing.

Hesiod (Theog. 977) tells the story that Aristaeus married Autoonē, one of the daughters of Cadmus. Others (e.g. Palaephatus De Incredib. 6 (3); Diod. Sic. 4.3-5; Ov. Met. 3.138ff.; Hyginus Fab. 181; Apollodorus 3.4.4; Nonnus Dionysiaca 5.287ff.) relate that their union produced a son, Actaeon, who was torn apart by his own hounds because of an affront to Artemis. According to Apollonius (4.1134-38) Macris, the daughter of Aristaeus, nursed Dionysus in Euboea:

κείνη δὴ πάμπρωτα Διδὸς Νυσηίων υἱᾶ
 Εὐβοίης ἔντοσθεν Ἄβαντίδος ᾧ ἐνὶ κόλπῳ
 δέξατο καὶ μέλιτι ξηρὸν περὶ χεῖλος ἔδευσεν,
 εὐτέ μιν Ἑρμεῖος φέρεν ἐκ πυρός· ἔδρακε δ' Ἥρη,
 καὶ ἐχολωσαμένη πάσης ἐξήλασε νήσου*

Diodorus Siculus (4.82.6) writes of the disappearance and apotheosis of Aristaeus:

⁴ It may be that Apollonius is alluding to/ blending two different traditions.

τὸ δὲ τελευταῖον μυθολογοῦσιν αὐτὸν εἰς Θράκην
 παραβαλόντα πρὸς Διόνυσον μετασχεῖν τῶν ὀργῶν, καὶ
 συνδιατρίψαντα τῷ θεῷ πολλὰ μαθεῖν παρ' αὐτοῦ τῶν
 χρησίων· περὶ δὲ τὸ ὄρος τὸ καλούμενον Αἴμον
 οἰκήσαντά τινα χρόνον ἄφαντον γενέσθαι, καὶ τυχεῖν
 ἀθανάτων τιμῶν οὐ μόνον ἐνταῦθα παρὰ τοῖς βαρβάροις,
 ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς Ἑλλησι.

His deification seems to have occurred as a result of the benefits which Aristaeus bestowed upon mankind, especially in the areas of agriculture and related activities, as the titles Ἄγρεύς and Νόμιος suggest.⁵ Diodorus Siculus (6.1.2) states that because of his contributions Aristaeus received divine honours like Heracles and Dionysus:

...ἑτέρους δὲ λέγουσιν ἐπιγείους γενέσθαι θεοῦς, διὰ δὲ
 τὰς εἰς ἀνθρώπους εὐεργεσίας ἀθανάτου τετευχότας
 τιμῆς τε καὶ δόξης, οἷον Ἡρακλέα, Διόνυσον,
 Ἄρισταῖον,...

As a benefactor of rural life and its pursuits Aristaeus was said to have introduced or to have been associated with apiculture (e.g. Schol. Pind. Pyth. 9.112; Ap. Rhod. 4.1132-33; Diod. Sic. 4.81.2; Ov. Ex P. 4.2.9; Nonn. Dionysiaca 5.242ff.), the cultivation of the olive (e.g. Schol. Pind. Pyth. 9.115b; Ap. Rhod. 4.1133; Diod. Sic. 4.81.2; Opp. Cynegetica 4.270; Nonn. Dionysiaca 5.258ff.), cheese-making (e.g. Diod. Sic. 4.81.2; Opp. Cynegetica 4.271), and hunting (e.g. Schol. Pind. Pyth. 9.115a, Nonn. Dionysiaca 229ff.). There is also

⁵ For the names Ἄγρεύς and Νόμιος see e.g. Servius on G. 1.14; Pindar Pyth. 9.65, Ap. Rhod. 2.507. For Aristaeus' identification with Zeus and Apollo and for his cult in Ceos, Thessaly, Boiotia, Arcadia et al. (reflecting Aristaeus' travels) see under Aristaios in PAULY-WISSOWA, vol.2, pp.853-54.

evidence that he was a herdsman (e.g. Schol. Pind. Pyth. 9.113a,113b,115a) and a keeper of sheep (e.g. Pind. Pyth. 9.64; Opp. Cynegetica 4.269). Finally Aristaeus was credited with bringing an end to the drought and/or pestilence on Ceos caused by Sirius; for he sacrificed to Sirius and to Zeus Icmæus, thereby causing the Etesian winds to cool the land for forty days (e.g. Ap. Rhod. 2.516ff.; Call. Aetia 3 fr.75.32ff.(Pf.); Diod. Sic. 4.82.1-3). Thereafter, the priests of Ceos offered sacrifices before Sirius' rising to ensure the winds' return.

The testimony of the ancient sources, therefore, stresses that Aristaeus was a patron of rural life. It remains to examine briefly where Virgil follows this aspect of the tradition and the broad outlines of the myth generally and where he apparently introduces major innovations.

Virgil clearly employs what may be called the standard version of the myth that Aristaeus was the son of Cyrene and he makes him refer rather petulantly to his father, Apollo: si modo, quem perhibes, pater est Thymbraeus Apollo (G. 4.323). He sets the story of Aristaeus in Thessaly. However he makes no obvious reference to the tradition that Cyrene was originally a mortal whom the god carried off from Thessaly to Libya; nor does he allude to her transformation by Apollo. It is possible, of course, that Virgil is following an unattested tradition according to which Cyrene was always a nymph or it may be that he is deliberately suppressing the detail that she was originally a mortal.

In either case, by emphasizing that Cyrene is a nymph, Virgil focuses upon the divine and the exotic. Furthermore, by presenting Cyrene as a nymph and including Aristaeus' lament to her at the head of the river Peneus, Virgil exploits the Homeric parallels of Achilles' laments (at Il. 1.348ff. and 18.79ff.) to his mother, the nymph Thetis. The erudite literary reminiscence fits well with the style of epyllia but requires that Aristaeus not know how to recover his lost bees and therefore necessitates the suppression of the prophetic ability traditionally assigned to him.

At Georgics 4.360ff., Virgil describes Aristaeus' descent to his mother's home beneath the water of the river and his reception there. It is possible that NORDEN⁶ was correct when he suggested that the literary impetus for this apparent innovation in the Aristaeus myth may have come from Bacchylides 16 (= CAMPBELL, Bacchyl. 17) where Theseus visits Amphitrite in Poseidon's palace beneath the sea: Theseus, in response to Minos' challenge that he prove his claim that he is Poseidon's son, dives into the sea to retrieve a golden ring; he is carried by dolphins to Amphitrite who gives to him a robe of purple and a wreath and, wearing these, Theseus returns to the surface. If NORDEN is right, Virgil's debt to Bacchylides is clearly restricted to the underwater descent, for there is little else in the two accounts which coincides

⁶ NORDEN (1966), p.482, and WILKINSON (1969), p.114, agrees. For a brief discussion of the treatment of Theseus' meeting with Amphitrite in art see JEBB, pp.225f.

and Virgil's is more detailed by far.

However that may be, Virgil accomplishes more by his description than literary reminiscence and novelty. Aristaeus' journey beneath the waves emphasizes again the exotic and divine elements of the setting for the aetion of the bugonia and is thematically parallel to the story of Orpheus' descent into the Underworld which Proteus tells at 4.463ff.

The surprising reason for the loss of Aristaeus' bees, it is revealed, is that he had incurred divine anger because he was indirectly responsible for the death of Eurydice. Here again Virgil introduces an apparent innovation, for in no other earlier extant source is Aristaeus so linked to Orpheus and Eurydice.⁷ It may also be surprising to the reader that the normally beneficent Aristaeus attempts to assault Eurydice sexually.⁸

Throughout his account Virgil generally plays down Aristaeus' role as a benefactor responsible for various agrarian inventions. He does, however, suggest Aristaeus' rustic associations. Virgil refers to him as Arcadius magister (G. 4.283) and pastor Aristaeus (G. 4.317) and does, within the context of Aristaeus' lament to Cyrene, indicate his involvement in other agricultural

⁷ The suggestion that Aristaeus was responsible for the death of Eurydice apparently does not occur again in extant literature until late in antiquity - e.g. Fulgentius 3.10 and Vat.Myth. 1.76, who are probably following Virgil closely.

⁸ Of course it may be argued that such an attack is not out of character for rustic deities (e.g. Pan).

pursuits (G. 4.329-32):

quin age et ipsa manu felicitis erue silvas,
fer stabulis inimicum ignem atque interfice messis,
ure sata et validam in vitis molire bipennem,
tanta meae si te ceperunt taedia laudis.

Further, Aristaeus is said to have been the first to perform bugonia, albeit unwittingly. Virgil's is the earliest extant account to associate Aristaeus with this bizarre method of producing bees.⁹ The fact that he chooses Aristaeus to undertake the procedure is in keeping with the tradition that linked Aristaeus with rural inventions generally and apiculture especially.

There are then surprises as well as literary reminiscences for the reader of the epyllion in connection with Aristaeus. His connection with bugonia and descent to Cyrene's home are intriguing; Proteus' revelation would have presumably come as a shock to the reader and the expansive inner story of Orpheus and Eurydice would, it seems, have been most unexpected.

PART B: PROTEUS

Virgil's primary model for Proteus must have been Odyssey 4.351ff.¹⁰ In Homer's account Menelaus, returning home from Troy, is

⁹ Reference to the procedure, though, is made in earlier authors: see R.D. WILLIAMS (1987) on G. 4.281-314, who lists occurrences in Philetas, Nicander and Varro, and see also BÖMER on Ov. Fast. 1.363.

¹⁰ Aeschylus' Proteus, the satyr play attached to the Oresteia, is clearly another possible source, but its influence upon Virgil cannot be adequately assessed without more information regarding the play's text. For the meagre fragments of the play see NAUCK, pp.70-2.

stranded on the island of Pharos off the Egyptian coast. There he meets Eidothea, the daughter of Proteus, who takes pity on him and tells him (Od. 4.384-90):

πωλείται τις δεῦρο γέρων ἄλιος νημερτής,
 ἀθάνατος Πρωτεύς Αἰγύπτιος, ὃς τε θαλάσσης
 πάσης βένθεα οἶδε, Ποσειδάωνος ὑποδμῶς·
 τὸν δέ τ' ἐμόν φασιν πατέρ' ἔμμεναι ἠδὲ τεκέσθαι.
 τὸν γ' εἶ πως σὺ δύναιο λοχησάμενος λελαβέσθαι,
 ὃς κέν τοι εἴπησιν ὁδὸν καὶ μέτρα κελεύθου
 νόστον θ', ὡς ἐπὶ πόντον ἐλεύσειαι ἰχθυόεντα.

At midday, she says, it is Proteus' custom to come with his herd of seals to the caves on the island to sleep. If Menelaus should catch him and hold on to him he will learn from Proteus who of the gods is angry and delays his return.

However she warns him (Od. 4.414-418):

τὸν μὲν ἐπὶν δὴ πρῶτα κατευνηθέντα ἴδησθε,
 καὶ τότε ἔπειθ' ὑμῖν μελέτω κάρτος τε βίη τε,
 αἴθι δ' ἔχειν μεμαῶτα καὶ ἐσσύμενόν περ ἀλύξαι.
 πάντα δὲ γινόμενος πειρήσεται, ὅσσ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν
 ἔρπετὰ γίγνονται καὶ ὕδωρ καὶ θεσπιδαῆς πῦρ·

Menelaus follows Eidothea's instructions and advice. He seizes Proteus, who changes into a lion, serpent, leopard and boar, then into flowing water and a tall tree. Even so, Menelaus does not release him from his grip. At length, Proteus returns to his former shape and reveals that Menelaus has neglected to sacrifice to Zeus and the other gods and that in order to effect his return he must make more appropriate offerings (Od. 4.475-480):

οὐ γὰρ τοι πρὶν μοῖρα φίλους ἰδέειν καὶ ἰκέσθαι
 οἶκον ἐυκτίμενον καὶ σὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,
 πρὶν γ' ὅτ' ἂν Αἰγύπτιοι, διπετέος ποταμοῖο,
 αὐτίς ὕδωρ ἔλθῃς ῥέξης θ' ἱερὰς ἐκατόμβας

ἄθανάτοισι θεοῖσι, τοῖ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσι·
καὶ τότε τοὶ δώσουσιν ὁδὸν θεοί, ἦν σὺ μενοινᾷς.

This brief review of the description of Menelaus' encounter with Proteus at Od. 4.351ff. highlights certain features which recur in subsequent ancient sources and may be said to form one of the traditions surrounding Proteus¹¹: he is an aged sea deity (e.g. Od. 4.365, Ov. Am. 2.15.10, Fast. 1.372, Hyginus Fab. 118, Servius on G. 4.402), associated with the island of Pharos off the coast of Egypt (e.g. Od. 4.351ff., Posidippus 11 in GOW and PAGE, Val.Flacc. 2.318, Nonnus Dionysiaca 1.13), a keeper of seals (e.g. Od. 4.404, Call. Supp.Hell. fr.254.6, Horace Carm. 1.2.7)¹² and able to change his shape (e.g. Od. 4.417-18, Ps.-Heraclitus 29 (Festa), Hedylyus in Athenaeus 8.344F, Horace Sat. 2.3.71, Epist. 1.1.90, Ov. Fast. 1.370ff.). In Homer, though Proteus is not specifically called a seer, he is described as νημερτής (e.g. Od. 4.384), he reveals why Menelaus is stranded on Pharos and how to effect his departure from the island (Od. 4.471ff.) and predicts that Menelaus will dwell in Elysium (Od. 4.561ff.). Testimony after Homer is more specific: Proteus is called μάντις (e.g. schol. Homer Od. 4.456, Conon 8 in JACOBY, FGrH) and vates (e.g. Ov. Met. 11.249, Fast. 1.371, Lucan 10.510).¹³

¹¹ Proteus also appears in e.g. Herodotus 2.112ff. and Euripides Hel. as an Egyptian king; see also under Proteus in ROSCHER, vol.3, pp.3173-74 and in PAULY-WISSOWA, vol.23.1, pp.951ff.

¹² I owe to THOMAS the Callimachean reference. See his note on G. 4.395.

¹³ For the ability of sea gods (Proteus, Glaucus, Thetis, Triton, Nereus) generally to be able to foretell the future see NISBET and HUBBARD on Hor.

While Homer is not the only influence upon Virgil, he is clearly the primary model for the treatment of Proteus within the *Aristaeus* epyllion. This is not to imply that Virgil merely imitates. He includes a number of minor variations on Homer (e.g. in Virgil *Aristaeus* uses chains to hold Proteus, in Homer Menelaus uses his bare hands) and also introduces major innovations. As noted, in Homer Proteus is said to dwell on the island of Pharos. In Virgil, however, he lives in the Carpathian sea and is a native of Pallene in Macedonia. Here Virgil is following a less well-known tradition (see Lycophron *Alex.* 115ff., Schol. Ap. Rhod. 1.598 and Call. *Victoria Berenices*)¹⁴, which he combines with the details in Homer (*contaminatio*) to incorporate a learned allusion consistent with the setting of the *Aristaeus* epyllion.¹⁵

A second major innovation is the association of Proteus with *Aristaeus* and more indirectly with the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. There are various possible reasons for Virgil's introduction of Proteus into his epyllion. He chooses to make Cyrene apparently unaware of the reason for the loss of *Aristaeus*' bees, and so an omniscient seer is an obvious source for this knowledge, and given that Cyrene is a water-nymph, Proteus, himself a sea-

Carm. 1.15.5 (p.192).

¹⁴ A brief discussion of the evidence is given by THOMAS in his note on G. 4.390-1.

¹⁵ A full analysis of the relationship between Virgil and Homer and other possible literary models is presented in Chapter 6.

deity, is a logical choice rather than some other divine agent.

It must be admitted that there is an element of the grotesque in the selection of Proteus to narrate the story of Orpheus and Eurydice but

WILKINSON¹⁶ has rightly pointed out that this feature is not unique to Virgil:

It may be complained that the beautiful story of Orpheus and Eurydice, told with such sympathy and compassion, is incongruous in the mouth of the captured, teeth-gnashing, eye-rolling old man of the sea. But what about the old crow in the Hecale? Or, if that was intentionally grotesque, what about Catullus' Ariadne?...The fact is that what interests the Neoteric poet is the interplay of moods, not the motivation or machinery that is contrived in order to effect it.

Despite WILKINSON's statement that the Neoteric poet is not interested in the "machinery" used to contrive the "interplay of moods", it is possible that there is a further literary impetus behind the selection of Proteus, namely Homer.

Aristaeus and the bugonia frame the digression on Orpheus and Eurydice.

Within this frame Virgil exploits several Homeric reminiscences (e.g. the laments of Achilles parallel the lament of Aristaeus, the catalogue of the nymphs at Il. 18.34 parallels G. 4.334ff.). It is not surprising therefore that he turns to Homer again in choosing Proteus and has Aristaeus confront Proteus just as Menelaus does in Od. 4. To this selection I would suggest a further subtlety is added. At Odyssey 10.490-492, Circe tells Odysseus that before he

¹⁶ WILKINSON (1969), pp.115-16. HUTCHINSON, too, pp.11ff., discusses the Hellenistic penchant for mixing moods and predilection for the grotesque.

can leave her island he must journey to the home of Hades and dread Persephone to consult the seer Teiresias. This Odysseus accomplishes. He then returns to Circe's island where she not only repeats much of the information which Odysseus learned from Teiresias but adds to it (Od. 12.1-141). Like Circe, Cyrene expands upon the information extracted from a seer and so there would be a blending (contaminatio) of Eidothea and Circe in Cyrene.

PART C: ORPHEUS

i) ORPHEUS AS PROPHET, MUSICIAN, ARGONAUT

The first extant literary reference to Orpheus is to be found among the works of the lyric poet Ibycus who, writing in the sixth century B.C., uses the phrase *ὄνομακλυτὸν Ὀρφεῖν* - "famous Orpheus" (PMG 306 = Ibycus 25). This not only implies that myths (and presumably literature) concerning Orpheus were well established by Ibycus' time but also invites the question: Why was Orpheus famous? The Ibycus fragment, since it is without context, provides no clue. It remains, therefore, to review the evidence provided by other ancient authors and artists.

Firstly, many of the ancients viewed Orpheus as a prophet¹⁷ and

¹⁷ The historicity of Orpheus need not be discussed in detail here. Cicero (De Natura Deorum 1.107), for example, states "Orpheum poetam docet Aristoteles numquam fuisse" (better translated "Aristotle tells that the poet, Orpheus, never

the "religion" to which the designation "Orphism" has been given was thought to have been invented by Orpheus. Herodotus (2.81.2) provides the earliest reference to "Orphic" practices¹⁸:

ὁμολογεύουσι δὲ ταῦτα τοῖσι Ὀρφικοῖσι καλεομένοισι καὶ Βακχικοῖσι, εὐοῦσι δὲ Αἰγυπτίοισι καὶ Πυθαγορείοισι. οὐδὲ γὰρ τούτων τῶν ὀργίων μετέχοντα ὄσιόν ἐστι ἐν εἰρινέοισι εἶμασι θαφθῆναι. ἔστι δὲ περὶ αὐτῶν ἰρὸς λόγος λεγόμενος.

Later in the fifth century B.C., Aristophanes credits Orpheus with the invention of religious rites (Ran. 1030-32)¹⁹:

σκέψαι γὰρ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς
ὡς ὠφέλιμοι τῶν ποιητῶν οἱ γενναῖοι γεγένηται.
Ὀρφεὺς μὲν γὰρ τελετὰς θ' ἡμῖν κατέδειξε φόνων τ'
ἀπέχεσθαι...

In addition, poetic works establishing the beliefs of this "religion" were attributed to Orpheus.²⁰ For example, Plato, in the Cratylus (402b),

existed" not "Aristotle tells that Orpheus was never a poet"). Still, many if not most, accepted that there was an actual "Orpheus". ROBBINS (1982), pp.11f., provides a useful survey of scholarly opinion. The assertion by MAASS, pp.138f., that Orpheus was a god is tenuous at best. GUTHRIE (1966), p.41, states "Orpheus was probably never, certainly scarcely ever, worshipped as a god".

¹⁸ For interpretation and analysis of the passage see LINFORTH, pp.39ff.

¹⁹ Other references to Orpheus and religious rites in the fifth century B.C. include Eur. Hipp. 943-57 and Rhesus 938-48. For texts and later references, and for Orpheus as founder of Bacchic rites, see KERN (1922), pp.26-30.

²⁰ Clement of Alexandria (Strom. 1.21.131; cited by LINFORTH, p.110) writing in the second century A.D. mentions four titles: Ἱερὸς λόγος, Πέπλος, Φυσικά and interestingly Εἰς Ἄιδου κατάβασις. On these works and their possible authorship see WEST (1983), pp.9ff. Orphic poems were said to have been written by Onomacritus (see GUTHRIE (1966), pp.13ff.). In addition Diogenes Laertius states that Ion of Chios (fifth century B.C.) in a work called Τριαγμοί

writes as follows:

λέγει δέ που καὶ Ὀρφεὺς ὅτι
 Ὠκεανὸς πρῶτος καλλιρροὸς ἦρξε γάμοιο,
 ὃς ῥα κασιγνήτην ὁμομήτορα Τηθὺν ὄπυιεν.

The tenets of "Orphism" and, in fact, its actual existence have been the subject of much scholarly debate but little agreement.²¹ The brief overview above has been included to show that some in antiquity believed that Orpheus was the founder of a "religion" and the inventor of certain τελεταί.

Orpheus' fame rested not only upon his reputation as a prophet but equally upon his poetic and musical ability.²² ROBBINS²³ states the following about what may be the earliest surviving representation of Orpheus:

A particularly tantalizing fresco from the Throne Room of the late Bronze Age Palace of Nestor at Pylos in the southwestern Peloponnese shows a seated bard, attired in a long garment, playing a five-stringed instrument and appearing to charm a large, winged creature. The excavator of this site, C.W. Blegen, himself suggested that this might be Orpheus.

Apart from the intriguing possibility that Orpheus may have been Mycenaean in

revealed that Pythagoras ascribed some of his own poems to Orpheus: Ἴων δὲ ὁ Χίος ἐν τοῖς Τριαγμοῖς φησιν αὐτὸν ἔνια ποιήσαντα ἀνενεγκεῖν εἰς Ὀρφέα (Diog. Laert. 8.8).

²¹ For detailed studies of Orphism see esp. GUTHRIE (1966), LINFORTH and BÖHME.

²² It is, of course, the standard view that the prophet Orpheus, who "invented" religious rites and the singer are one and the same; this despite Schol. Ap. Rhod. 1.23, Ἡρόδωρος δύο εἶναι Ὀρφεῖς φησιν, ὧν τὸν ἕτερον συμπλεύσαι τοῖς Ἀργοναύταις, which suggests otherwise.

²³ ROBBINS (1982), p.9.

origin²⁴, the fresco, if it does depict Orpheus, is the first of many references both in art²⁵ and in literature to the power of his music.

The earliest reference in literature to this power occurs in Simonides (PMG 567 = Simonides 62):

τοῦ καὶ ἀπειρέσιοι
 πωτῶντ' ὄρνιθες ὑπὲρ κεφαλᾶς,
 ἀνὰ δ' ἰχθύες ὀρθοῖ
 κυανέου 'ξ ὕδατος ἄλ-
 λοντο καλᾶι σὺν ἀοιδᾶι.

Aeschylus, too, (Agam. 1629-30), 'Ὀρφεῖ δὲ γλῶσσαν τὴν ἐναντίαν ἔχεις / ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἤγε πάντ' ἀπὸ φθογγῆς χαρᾶι, and Euripides (Bacch. 560ff.),

τάχα δ' ἐν ταῖς πολυδένδρεσ-
 σιν Ὀλύμπου θαλάμαις, ἐν-
 θα ποτ' Ὀρφεὺς κιθαρίζων
 σύναγεν δένδρεα μούσαις,
 σύναγεν θήρας ἀγρώτας.

refer to Orpheus' ability to charm wild beasts and to draw the trees with his song.²⁶

Orpheus, then, for the Greeks, was from an early date the founder of a religion and a singer and musician without peer. Around such a figure one

²⁴ However, WEST (1983), p.4 argues convincingly that Orpheus "entered Greek mythology, surely, not by way of Mycenaean saga, but at a later period from Thrace, or through Thrace from further north".

²⁵ A convenient collection of examples of Orpheus in art is found in ROSCHER, vol.3, pp.1174ff., under Orpheus.

²⁶ Other early references to Orpheus' musical power include Eur. Iph. Aul. 1211, Medea 543, Alc. 357ff. See also KERN (1922), pp.14-16, for later testimony.

might expect that many myths would revolve. Surprisingly, there are few.

Orpheus' parentage is well attested in ancient sources. Most frequently he is said to have been the son of Oeagrus, a Thracian king (or river god)²⁷ and the Muse Calliope.²⁸ In addition, it is generally agreed that he was born in Thrace²⁹ and lived several generations before Homer.³⁰ However, only three other incidents in his life are mentioned: his participation in the voyage of the Argonauts in search of the Golden Fleece, his descent into the Underworld to attempt to bring back his wife from the dead and finally his death, of which there are various accounts.

Obviously, of these, the last two are most relevant to Georgics 4. However, Orpheus' participation in the voyage of the Argonauts is the earliest attested incident of his life. A metope of the Treasury of the Sicyonians at Delphi depicts two musicians, one clearly identified by the inscription ΟΡΦΑΣ, on board a ship, presumably the Argo. The style of the sculpture in Linforth's

²⁷ See e.g. Plato Symp. 179d, Ap. Rhod. 1.23 and KERN (1922), p.8. For Apollo as the father of Orpheus see Pind. Pyth. 4.176 and scholion and KERN (1922), p.8.

²⁸ Calliope is most frequently named as Orpheus' mother; see e.g. Plato Symp. 179d and KERN (1922), p.9. For the variants Polymnia, Clio, Menippe see KERN (1922), p.9.

²⁹ See e.g. Eur. Alc. 967 and KERN (1922), pp.10-12. For Olympus and Pieria see KERN (1922), pp.12-13.

³⁰ Herodotus 2.53 though places him after Homer and Hesiod. Testimony pertinent to Orpheus' aetas and genus are given by KERN (1922), pp.3-8.

words "proves that its date was somewhat before the middle of the sixth century B.C.". ³¹ In literature, Pindar (Pyth. 4.176) provides the first certain reference to Orpheus' participation in the expedition. ³² Apollonius (1.23ff.) mentions him first in the catalogue of heroes who undertook the expedition and describes among other things how he overcame the influence of the Sirens by the sweetness of his own music (4.900ff.). ³³

ii) CATABASIS OF ORPHEUS

The available evidence for Orpheus' descent into the Underworld begins with Euripides. ³⁴ In the Alcestis (438 B.C.) at lines 357ff., Admetus

³¹ LINFORTH, p.1.

³² Simonides fr. 62 (quoted above in my main text) may refer to the expedition of the Argonauts.

³³ For Orpheus' participation in the voyage see also Val. Flacc. Argonautica 1.187, the "Orphic" Argonautica 77, Hyginus Fab. 14, Apollodorus 1.9.16 and 1.9.25 and KERN (1922), p.24.

³⁴ Pausanias 10.30.6 describes a painting by Polygnotus (usually dated to the mid-fifth century B.C.) showing Orpheus sitting in the Underworld holding a lyre and touching a willow tree. However, Eurydice is not included and therefore it seems to refer to a different aspect of the Orpheus myth (cp. Aen. 6.645). Of course, Orpheus is not the only mythological figure to descend into the Underworld. Heracles' journey to Hades to bring back Cerberus is mentioned by Homer at Il. 8.366ff. and Od. 11.623ff. (FRAZER, (1976), vol.1, p.232 n.1, lists later references). Dionysus brought back his mother Semele from the Underworld (Diod. Sic. 4.25.4 and see FRAZER (1976), vol.1, p.332 n.2) and in Aristophanes' comic parody of the descent motif in the Frogs, oversees the contest between Euripides and Aeschylus and escorts the victorious Aeschylus back to the world above. Theseus (Od. 11.631 and see FRAZER (1976), vol.1, p.234 n.3) and

says:

εἰ δ' Ὀρφέως μοι γλώσσα καὶ μέλος παρῆν,
 ὥστ' ἦ κόρην Διμήτρος ἦ κείνης πόσιν
 ὕμνοισι κηλήσαντά σ' ἐξ Ἄιδου λαβεῖν,
 κατήλθον ἄν, καὶ μ' οὔθ' ὁ Πλούτωνος κῶων
 οὔθ' οὐπι κώπη ψυχοπομπῶς ἄν Χάρων
 ἔσχον, πρὶν ἐς φῶς σὸν καταστήσαι βίον.

It is important to note here that Orpheus' wife is implied but not named and that, in the context of the play, the passage suggests that the reference is to a successful attempt by Orpheus to bring back his wife from the Underworld.³⁵ Also, it may be concluded from the way in which Euripides alludes to the story that his audience was quite familiar with it.

The second piece of evidence for Orpheus' descent into the Underworld is provided by copies of a sculptured relief (c.400 B.C.)³⁶ showing three figures identified on one of the copies as Orpheus, Hermes and Eurydice.³⁷ Unfortunately, the interpretation of this relief is problematic.

Aeneas (Aen. 6) both undertook catabaseis. Related is Od. 11, though Odysseus does not actually descend but summons up to the surface of the earth inhabitants of Hades. Very useful is CLARK's detailed study (1979) of catabaseis.

³⁵ Others, most recently CLARK (1979), pp.113ff., have argued that the early tradition (including the reference in Alcestis) was that Orpheus failed to recover Eurydice.

³⁶ LINFORTH, p.17.

³⁷ Since only copies of the original exist, it is impossible to be certain whether the names occurred on the original. See e.g. ROBBINS (1982), pp.16-17; LINFORTH, p.17; BOWRA, p.123.

Some³⁸ have suggested that the scene represents the moment of Eurydice's death: Orpheus is saying "goodbye" for the final time while Hermes is about to lead her away to the Underworld. Others, particularly HEURGON³⁹, have argued that Orpheus has just looked back and is about to lose Eurydice for a second time. Finally, there is the view, recently supported by ROBBINS, that the relief depicts the success of Orpheus and that "he has learned the secrets of the afterlife and is united to Eurydice, whom he is to escort back."⁴⁰ It may be said that this interpretation at least fits well with the tradition to which Euripides alludes in the Alcestis.

Isocrates in his discourse Busiris (c.390 B.C.), also refers to Orpheus successfully leading back the dead from the Underworld (Isoc. 11.8): ἄλλ' ὁ

³⁸ ROBBINS (1982), p.17 lists the various points of view.

³⁹ HEURGON, pp.34ff. RIDGWAY comments: "If this is indeed the second separation of Orpheus and Eurydike, it would be the earliest documentation of this version of the story, which we first learn from Vergil. In fact, it has been suggested that the plaque depicts the first parting, in order to reconcile the apparent discrepancy; but the language of gestures is unmistakable: Orpheus is removing the veil from his bride's face, to catch that glimpse of her which will spell her eternal loss. Since art often preserves themes unknown from contemporary written versions, there is no reason to doubt that this interpretation is correct, and future discoveries may give us the missing literary link." Her statements, however, do not adequately answer LEE (1964), pp.401ff., who objects that literary evidence does not support this interpretation and points out that what we have are late (Hellenistic or, more likely, first century) copies which may not adequately reproduce the fifth-century B.C. original. In fact, the original may have been altered under the influence of Virgil's treatment of the story.

⁴⁰ ROBBINS (1982), p.17.

[Ὅρφευς] μὲν ἐξ Ἄιδου τοὺς τεθνεώτας ἀνήγεν. LINFORTH⁴¹ comments:

The plural τοὺς τεθνεώτας and the imperfect ἀνήγεν suggest that this was a regular practice. But this form of expression may well be used, especially in the style of an encomium, to generalize the significance of a single incident; and since the only person whom Orpheus is supposed to have brought back from Hades is his wife, as far as we know from all the evidence of antiquity, we must assume that Isocrates has this instance in mind.

So far, the meagre literary evidence from the classical period, and, less certainly, the single relevant artistic representation tend to support the view that there was an early tradition that Orpheus, using the charm of his music, was able to persuade the deities of the Underworld to allow his wife to return to the upper world with him. However, there is the possibility that a second tradition, which recounted that Orpheus failed, existed as well.

Plato, in the Symposium (179d), usually dated c.384 B.C., assigns to Phaedrus the following (after saying that the gods released Alcestis' soul from the Underworld because of her heroism):

οὕτω καὶ θεοὶ τὴν περὶ τὸν ἔρωτα σπουδὴν τε καὶ ἀρετὴν μάλιστα τιμῶσιν. Ὅρφεα δὲ τὸν Οἰάγρου ἀτελεῖ ἀπέπεμψαν ἐξ Ἄιδου, φάσμα δειξάντες τῆς γυναικὸς ἐφ' ἣν ἦκεν, αὐτὴν δὲ οὐ δόντες, ὅτι μαλθακίζεσθαι ἐδόκει, ἅτε ὦν κιθαρωδός, καὶ οὐ τολμᾶν ἔνεκα τοῦ ἔρωτος ἀποθνήσκειν ὥσπερ Ἀλκίσις, ἀλλὰ διαμηχανᾶσθαι ζῶν εἰσιέναι εἰς Ἄιδου.

Here, then, is a version in which Orpheus fails. However, the significance of Plato's account and its relationship to an "established" tradition are not certain.

⁴¹ LINFORTH, p.21.

CLARK⁴² supports the view that in the Alcestis Euripides is referring to Orpheus' successful descent into the Underworld and to his success in acquiring the secrets of the after-life but not to his success in winning back his wife. CLARK argues that Plato may simply be following this "established" tradition (i.e. Orpheus failed).

Others agree that there was a single accepted tradition but think that in the established tradition Orpheus won back his wife; that Euripides is following this but that Plato is "deliberately giving the currently accepted version of the story a new twist."⁴³

Finally, there is a third possibility. It has been suggested that two separate traditions were already known before Plato wrote the Symposium. One held that Orpheus succeeded and the other that he failed in his attempt to recover his wife. The proponents of this view assume that Euripides is following the former and that Plato cannot have invented the latter because⁴⁴

with the legend of his [Orpheus'] success so clear in Euripides, Plato could not have bluntly said 'Orpheus failed' ('Ορφεύα ... ἀτελή) without explanation or apology, unless this version of the story too were already abroad.

⁴² CLARK (1979), p.115: "Nothing in the Euripidean version at any rate suggests that Orpheus was successful in his mission to bring back his wife from Hades."

⁴³ DRONKE, p.202.

⁴⁴ LINFORTH, p.19.

Of these suggestions, it seems to me that CLARK's is the least satisfactory because it undermines considerably the relevance of Alcestis 357ff. To choose between the other two is difficult. All that can be said with certainty is that Plato definitely refers to a failure, that his is the first and only unambiguous extant reference to a failure prior to the Georgics and that Plato's account is at variance with Virgil's in several key points (most importantly Plato makes no mention of the taboo against looking back).

The first substantial extant account of Orpheus' descent occurs in the Alexandrian poet Hermesianax (born c.300 B.C.)(Coll.Alex. Hermes. fr.7.1-14):

Οἴην μὲν φίλος υἱὸς ἀνήγαγεν Οἰάγροιο
 Ἄργόπην Θρησσαν στείλαμενος κιθάρην
 Ἄιδόθεν· ἐπλευσεν δὲ κακὸν καὶ ἀπειθέα χῶρον,
 ἔνθα Χάρων κοινήν ἔλκεται εἰς ἄκατον
 ψυχᾶς οἰχομένων, λίμνη δ' ἐπὶ μακρὸν ἀυτεῖ
 ῥεῦμα διέκ μεγάλων ῥυομένη δονάκων.
 Ἄλλ' ἔτλη παρὰ κῦμα μονόζωστος κιθαρίζων
 Ὀρφεύς, παντοίους δ' ἐξάνεισε θεούς,
 Κωκυτὸν τ' ἀθέμιστον ὑπ' ὄφρυσι μειδήσαντα·
 ἠδὲ καὶ αἰνοτάτου βλέμμ' ὑπέμεινε κυνός,
 ἐν πυρὶ μὲν φωνὴν τεθοωμένου, ἐν πυρὶ δ' ὄμμα
 σκληρόν, τριστοιχοῖς δειμα φέρον κεφαλαῖς.
 Ἐνθεν ἀοιδιάων μεγάλους ἀνέπεισεν ἄνακτας
 Ἄργόπην μαλακοῦ πνεῦμα λαβεῖν βιότου.

The poet specifically refers to Orpheus' success (lines 1-3, and 13). Not only is Orpheus' wife named - Argiope according to POWELL's text⁴⁵ - but also details are provided about his descent and a fuller description than

⁴⁵ The ms. reads Ἄργιδόπην (for a discussion of the text see HEURGON, pp.13ff.). In either case Hermesianax is the only extant source for this name.

previously attested of the power of his music and its effects upon the inhabitants of Hades is given.

Damagetus, in the late third century B.C., also includes a reference, albeit brief, to Orpheus in the Underworld (AP 7.9.7-8):

ὄς καὶ ἀμειλίκτοιο βαρὺ Κλυμένοιο νόημα
καὶ τὸν ἀκήλητον θυμὸν ἔθελξε λύρη.

Most scholars do not discuss this passage, perhaps because it is too allusive, but GOW and PAGE⁴⁶ state that it must be a reference to Orpheus' descent into the Underworld to recover his wife. If they are correct, the verb ἔθελξε suggests success.

It may be that the name Eurydice first occurs in literature in the Ἐπιτάφιος Βιώνος (122-124)⁴⁷ which is variously attributed to Theocritus (by whom it was almost certainly not written), to Moschus (c.150 B.C.) or to a later (c.100 B.C.) unknown Hellenistic author:

οὐκ ἀγέραστος
ἔσσειθ' ἄ μολπά, χῶς Ὀρφεὶ πρόσθεν ἔδωκεν
ἀδέα φορμίζοντι παλίσσυτον Εὐρυδίκειαν...

The passage is noteworthy not only because it offers the name Εὐρυδίκειαν but also because it suggests that Orpheus was successful in regaining her from

⁴⁶ GOW and PAGE (1965), p.225.

⁴⁷ Εὐρυδική does appear on a South Italian vase dating from c. third century B.C. (see LINFORTH, p.18, n.19). Not discussed in my main text is an undatable reference in Ps.- Heraclitus (21) in FESTA: Λέγεται ὡς Ἡρακλῆς κατελθὼν <εἰς Ἄϊδου> ἀνήλθεν ἀνάγων τὸν Κέρβερον, καὶ Ὀρφεὺς ὡσαύτως Εὐρυδικὴν τὴν γυναῖκα. LEE (1965), p.404 says that Ps.-Heraclitus may be late fourth century B.C. and if he is correct this would be the earliest mention of the name.

the Underworld.

The final reference to the Orpheus-Eurydice myth which precedes Virgil appears in Diodorus Siculus, who summarizes the main incidents of Orpheus' life (4.25.1-4). He mentions Orpheus' father Oeagrus, his Thracian race, his poetic and musical ability, his presence on the Argo and finally his successful descent into the Underworld (Diod.Sic. 4.25.4):

καὶ διὰ τὸν ἔρωτα τὸν πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα καταβῆναι μὲν
εἰς ἄδου παραδόξως ἐτόλμησε, τὴν δὲ Φερσεφόνην διὰ
τῆς εὐμελείας ψυχαγωγήσας ἔπεισε συνεργῆσαι ταῖς
ἐπιθυμίαις καὶ συγχωρῆσαι τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ
τετελευτηκυῖαν ἀναγαγεῖν ἐξ ἄδου παραπλησίως τῷ
Διονύσῳ·

From this evidence, though admittedly there is less than one would wish, the main elements of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice prior to the Augustan period may be stated as follows: Orpheus' wife dies (the cause of her death is not recorded in an extant source), Orpheus dares to descend into the Underworld to bring her back and by the charm of his music he is able to persuade either Persephone and Hades (implied at Eur. Alc. 358-9) or all of the nether gods (Hermesianax fr.7.8) or Persephone alone (Diod. Sic. 4.25.4) to return her. In every account, except that of Plato, he is apparently successful in bringing her back to the upper world.

It goes without saying that the myth is treated differently by the Augustan poets and their contemporaries (see below). Their accounts coincide generally with the version outlined above until the point of Eurydice's return

where the element of a second loss is introduced.⁴⁸

Virgil's treatment of the myth (Georgics 4 especially 453-529) is by far the most detailed and of later versions only Ovid's can compare in length.⁴⁹ Despite its familiarity, a synopsis of the account in Georgics 4 will be given in order to allow a comparison with other authors of the Augustan period (especially Ovid, Conon and the author of the Culex) and, where relevant, later writers as well.

Virgil presents the story within the framework of the Aristaeus epyllion. Aristaeus, the son of the nymph Cyrene, upon losing his bees comes to the head of the river Peneus in Thessaly, where he complains to his mother. His mother hears his lamentation as she sits with her companion nymphs in her abode beneath the water. Her sister Arethusa rises above the surface, sees Aristaeus and at Cyrene's request escorts him beneath the waves, where Aristaeus again makes his complaint. Prayers and libations are offered to Ocean, then Cyrene explains that Proteus, who knows all things, will provide

⁴⁸ Scholars have supposed that a Hellenistic epyllion was the model for this second loss. Various authors have been suggested, e.g. Philetus, Nicander or Euphoriion (see e.g. LEE (1965), p.404; KERN (1922), p.19; and BOWRA, p.125). BOWRA who in his article recreates the "outline" of the "lost" poem does not suggest an author but argues for a date after the Ἐπιτάφιος Βιῶνος.

⁴⁹ Although Ovid agrees with Virgil on many points, his emphasis is often different from Virgil's. In addition there are points at which his account does not coincide with that in Georgics 4. For a full analysis of the two passages see W.S. ANDERSON, pp.25-50 and SEGAL (1989), pp.73-94.

the means to recover his lost swarm. She warns Aristaeus that Proteus will change his shape but that he must hold the god firmly until he returns to his true form. At midday she leads Aristaeus to the cave where Proteus is accustomed to rest with his herd of seals. Aristaeus seizes Proteus. Proteus becomes first fire, then a terrible wild beast, and finally flowing water. He then reveals that Aristaeus has incurred divine wrath because he caused the death of Eurydice. She, trying to flee from the sexual advances of Aristaeus, stepped upon and was bitten by a snake.⁵⁰ At Eurydice's death nature laments.⁵¹ Orpheus mourns for her at length, then makes his way into the Underworld, where not only the shades but also inmost Tartarus itself is moved by his song (Georg. 4.481-4)⁵²:

quin ipsae stupuere domus atque intima Leti
Tartara caeruleosque implexae crinibus anquis
Eumenides, tenuitque inhians tria Cerberus ora,
atque Ixionii vento rota constitit orbis.

Now Orpheus and Eurydice are nearing the upper world when he, seized by a sudden madness, turns around; his agreement with the god of the

⁵⁰ The bite of a snake as the cause of Eurydice's death appears first in Virgil and later at Ov. Met. 10.10; Apollodorus 1.3.2; Schol. Eur. Alc. 357; Lucan fr.1; Schol. Stat. Theb. 8.59.

⁵¹ Contrast Ov. Met. 11.44-48 where nature laments the death of Orpheus.

⁵² Ov. Met. 10.17-46 not only gives Orpheus' song but also provides a fuller list of the inhabitants of the Underworld affected by it. In varying detail Conon Fab. 45, Culex 277ff., Seneca Herc. Fur. 572ff., Herc. Oet. 1061ff. all describe the effect of Orpheus' song on the inhabitants of the Underworld.

Underworld has been broken, three times a crash is heard.⁵³ Eurydice addresses her husband for a final time and fades from sight.⁵⁴ Orpheus tries to hold her but embraces only the darkness; again he wishes to pass into the Underworld but Charon prevents him.⁵⁵ For seven months he roams through Thrace and the regions to the north mourning Eurydice.⁵⁶

It is clear from the preceding summary of ancient testimony that Virgil's treatment of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice seems to contain several striking innovations. These innovations and the way in which Virgil introduces them have led many scholars to suggest that he must have modelled his account upon a work or works now lost: an epyllion by a

⁵³ Virgil only implies the condition of Eurydice's release. Conon Fab. 45 states vaguely: λαθόμενον τῶν ... ἐντολῶν. Ov. Met. 10.50-52 gives as the condition that Orpheus should not look back until he passed the valley of Avernus; Culex 289-291 implies that neither Orpheus nor Eurydice should look back and adds a condition against speech. (The author of the Culex makes Orpheus turn around because he desires a kiss.) Apollodorus 1.3.2 states that Orpheus was not to turn around until he came to his own house.

⁵⁴ At Met. 10.60ff., Ovid says that Eurydice made no complaint but spoke only a final farewell. Most accounts after Virgil agree that Orpheus lost Eurydice a second time e.g. Ov. Met., Culex, Hor. Carm. 1.24.13-18 (apparently), Conon Fab. 45, Seneca Herc. Fur. 589, and Herc. Oet. 1085-86, Apollodorus 1.3.2 (for a fuller list see LEE (1965), pp.404-5). Manilius Astr. 5.328 and possibly Lucian Dial. Mort. 23.2 seem to follow the tradition that he was successful in winning back Eurydice.

⁵⁵ Cp. Ov. Met. 10.72f.

⁵⁶ At Ov. Met. 10.72ff. Orpheus sits for seven days by the river Styx lamenting his loss, then returns to Thrace.

Hellenistic poet (cp. n.48 above) and/or *καταβάσεις εἰς Ἄιδου* attributed to various authors. There is no concrete evidence to confirm the contents of the latter or the existence of the former. Attempts at reconstruction are pure speculation. Moreover, there is no good reason for imagining that Virgil was incapable of innovating and was content with slavish imitation. The following summary of Virgil's debt to the traditional form of the myth and the novelties which he apparently brings to it will focus upon extant testimony.

As has been noted, Virgil is the first author to connect Aristaeus with Orpheus and Eurydice. That Eurydice dies when, fleeing from Aristaeus, she steps upon a snake is an apparent innovation⁵⁷, as are nature's lament and Orpheus' mourning because of her death.

Several earlier accounts focus upon the inhabitants and a river of the Underworld: Persephone (e.g. Euripides, *Hermesianax*, Diodorus Siculus), Hades, Charon, Cerberus (e.g. Euripides, *Hermesianax*) and Cocytus (*Hermesianax*). All these may be said to be traditional and all appear in Virgil's description of the Underworld. Virgil adds the nameless souls of men, women, youths and heroes⁵⁸ and Ixion's wheel. His description of the surroundings, in

⁵⁷ WILKINSON (1969), p.116, says that the snake bite was in the tradition but does not supply his source. Possibly, he believes that Schol. Eur. *Alc.* 357 predates Virgil. BÖMER, on Ov. *Met.* 10.9-10, says that it occurs first in Virgil and notes that NORDEN (1966), p.505, calls it an "überliefertes Motiv". See also n.50 above.

⁵⁸ Cp. *Od.* 11.36ff.

my view, is more vivid and terrifying than those in earlier treatments of the descent (G. 4.467-9):

Taenarias etiam fauces, alta ostia Ditis,
et caligantem nigra formidine lucum
ingressus...

The primary focus of most accounts prior to Virgil's is the power of Orpheus' song by which he persuades the gods of the Underworld to release Eurydice. Virgil also emphasizes the song's effect but abruptly shifts the scene from the depths of the Underworld to the edge of the upper world. He vaguely alludes to a condition set by Persephone that Eurydice follow behind. Then, Orpheus, seized by a sudden madness turns around and Eurydice is lost a second time. The haziness over the terms of Eurydice's release (see n.53 above) and the abruptness with which Virgil introduces the second loss have caused the greatest difficulty for commentators. Neither detail is attested in the tradition; nor does Plato, who says that Orpheus failed, speak of a condition and a second loss. Furthermore, Virgil implies that Orpheus lost Eurydice because he looked back; yet this taboo is not specifically mentioned. It is argued that Virgil's reference to a second loss is too allusive and obscure unless his readers knew of it from a previous work. There may have been such a previous work; but it is surely not too difficult to work out the condition and loss from lines 485ff., so that Virgil may indeed be responsible for an

innovation.⁵⁹ In either case, the story of Orpheus and Eurydice in Virgil is a tragic tale of love well suited to the epyllion as it was developed by Latin authors under the influence of Parthenius (cp. especially Catullus 64).⁶⁰

Obviously everything that occurs after the second loss of Eurydice - her complaint and Orpheus' second period of mourning - must be viewed as new material. Virgil's detailed description of them highlights the pathos and emphasizes the tragic tone.

So far, the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice has been examined from several different perspectives. It is now possible to define the basic story line as it appears in surviving literature and to break down the myth into its main components in order to show what Virgil stresses, what he plays down and the general effect of his treatment.

Not all of the elements appear in all versions but the following outline fairly represents the basic story-line: 1) Eurydice dies (depicted in Virgil and Ovid, or assumed), 2) Orpheus mourns (Virgil, Ovid), and 3) determines to go down into the Underworld to bring her back from the dead (assumed in all

⁵⁹ An abundance of scholarly reflection has not settled the question concerning the second loss. It is significant, I would argue, that Diodorus, an approximate contemporary of Virgil, unambiguously refers to Orpheus' success. Conon cannot be more securely dated (it can only be said that he dedicated his work to Archelaus Philopateris of Cappadocia 36 B.C.-A.D. 17), which is unfortunate, because he implies a second loss and is as vague as Virgil about the condition set by Persephone.

⁶⁰ See discussion of epyllia in Chapter 2.

accounts, though generally not stressed). 4) To form a background to Orpheus' descent, the features of Hades and its inhabitants may be given (Hermesianax, Virgil, Ovid, Culex, etc.). 5) Orpheus' music charms the inhabitants of the Underworld, even the nether gods (there is virtual unanimity on this point). 6) The outcome varies: Orpheus succeeds (Euripides, Isocrates, Hermesianax, etc.) or fails outright (Plato) or wins the release of Eurydice only to lose her a second time. With the last version, 6a) Eurydice is restored (Virgil, Ovid, Culex, etc.), 6b) on a condition (Virgil, Ovid, Culex, etc.) and 6c) Orpheus and Eurydice ascend to the upper world (Virgil, Ovid). 6d) The condition is broken (Virgil, Ovid, Culex). 6e) Eurydice is lost a second time (Virgil, Ovid, Culex, etc.) and 6f) Orpheus cannot return to the Underworld but can only mourn her second loss (Virgil, Ovid).

One criterion which may be used to determine what aspects of a story an author wishes to emphasize is simply length; the number of lines he assigns to each of the components of his narrative. In the Georgics, Virgil devotes some sixty-seven lines (4.453-520) to developing his version of the myth of Orpheus' descent into the Underworld. The following schema shows the number of lines he gives to each part of the basic story-line:

- 1) Eurydice's death - 3 lines (457-459)
- 2) Mourning (by Orpheus and others) - 7 lines (460-466)
- 3) The decision to descend - virtually suppressed
- 4) Underworld scenery - 18 lines (467-484)
- 5) Power of his music - briefly mentioned in 471

6) Outcome - 36 lines (485-520, dona querens)

Of the basic elements, four receive greater attention and of these four the last, the outcome, receives further emphasis by virtue of the fact that Virgil increases the length of the description of each successive element of the story, building, in effect a tetracolon crescendo.

First, Virgil describes the death of Eurydice, which introduces into the inner story the theme of loss and is parallel to the loss in the framing story - Aristaeus' bees. Rather than simply assuming Eurydice's death, as earlier authors do, Virgil provides some details of the scene. That he does so is dictated, in part, by the need to link the inner story of Orpheus and Eurydice with the outer story of Aristaeus. He achieves this by making Aristaeus responsible for Eurydice's death. Still, there is more to it than this. By depicting the violent circumstances of her death, Virgil also engages the reader's pity for the girl and evokes a sense of horror at the way in which she died and so heightens the tragedy. He does not however linger upon the description. To do so would overemphasize the first loss of Eurydice and upset the balance of the structure of the inner story. Rather Virgil moves rapidly to the reaction of Eurydice's companions, the Dryads.

He gives slightly greater emphasis to the mourning which attends Eurydice's death than he does to the actual circumstances of her death and, in fact, his is the first existing account that provides any detail at all in this

connection. That all nature laments stresses the magnitude of the loss, and Orpheus' insistent complaint is treated with pathos which deepens the mood of sorrow and again heightens the tragedy of his loss. Although the parallel with the lament of Aristaeus (321-331) is clear, the tone is in sharp contrast, for Aristaeus' words are petulant and self-centred. Again, Virgil does not upset the carefully balanced structure by overburdening the reader with too much detail. Within seven lines he creates a tricolon crescendo⁶¹ which concludes with the most important element - Orpheus' grief.

Virgil ignores the physical process of descending into the Underworld (contrast Aristaeus' descent beneath the waves 360-373). Rather he describes the scene in Hades at great length. He creates an impressionistic picture of the realm of Dis and the reaction of the inhabitants of the place (especially the nameless souls of the dead) to Orpheus' song. Virgil builds an atmosphere that blends horror and pity and by the nature of the details selected and the length of the description reinforces these two moods. Again, there is a contrast with an earlier scene in the framing story: Aristaeus' warm reception by Cyrene and the nymphs and the cheerful atmosphere of the feast, the blazing altars and the libation to Ocean (374-386).

Lastly, receiving the longest treatment, and therefore the greatest

⁶¹ Lament of the Dryads - 1 1/2 lines; lament of nature - 2 1/2 lines; lament of Orpheus - 3 lines.

stress, there is the outcome: the second loss of Eurydice and Orpheus' reaction to it. Besides receiving the greatest number of lines, the final element is further emphasized by its position and by the fact that everything builds up to it. Virgil focuses attention on the second loss and thereby suggests that this was even more tragic than the first. The overwhelming effect of the inner story of Orpheus and Eurydice is one of tragedy. The ultimate failure by Orpheus, the tragic outcome of his attempt to bring back his wife from the dead, provides a further contrast with the Aristaeus story, for, in the end, the result of Aristaeus' descent is success.

The description of the outcome admits further analysis and a schema of the final component reveals an interesting pattern of emphasis:

- 6a) Eurydice restored
- 6b) Orpheus and Eurydice ascend - 3 lines (485-487)
- 6c) Condition
- 6d) Condition broken - 4 lines (488-491)
- 6e) Second loss of Eurydice - 11 lines (492-502)
- 6f) Orpheus cannot return but can only mourn - 18 lines (503-520)

Again the pattern is a tetracolon crescendo, which places the greatest stress on the last element. Virgil dispenses with the first three elements of the final section quickly. It could be argued that the description of the release of Eurydice (because Persephone and Dis were so moved by Orpheus' song) and the setting of the condition attached to her release belong more naturally in the preceding section because logically both must have

occurred in the Underworld, before the ascent began. By postponing them Virgil creates, first, surprise (even greater surprise if Virgil is introducing the condition into the story for the first time), then suspense, because the reader must become uneasy upon learning that Eurydice's release was conditional. By treating the release, ascent and condition in only three lines, Virgil quickens the pace of his narrative, creates the impression that events are moving rapidly and inexorably to their conclusion.

Next, Virgil gives some emphasis to the breaking of the condition. In fact, he devotes four lines to this one small action. By so doing, Virgil highlights the drama and the significance of this moment. When Orpheus looks back, the tragic turning point is reached. He has failed to heed the will of the gods. His labor is wasted. That Orpheus is unmindful of the precepts of the gods will be recalled when Aristaeus, in contrast, follows the advice of Cyrene without question or delay (548).

However, it is the second loss and Orpheus' reaction to it that receive the greatest emphasis because they embody (in Virgil's account, at least) Orpheus' tragedy: he has lost his wife not once but twice. The immediacy of Eurydice's pathetic speech to her husband and Orpheus' vain attempts to catch hold of his wife (494-502) heighten the pathos of the loss. The second period of mourning is described in even greater detail than the first, again because the second loss is even more tragic than the first and Orpheus

is even more grief-stricken than he was the first time. He tries in vain to return to the Underworld but is helpless and finally withdraws to the chill solitude of Thrace. Virgil's long description focuses upon the desolation and loneliness of the region. There is a final tragic irony: his song, though it was of no avail when Orpheus tried to return again to the Underworld, still has the power to charm wild animals and trees (510). Again, because of Virgil's skilful handling of the narrative and the emphasis he achieves, the reader feels pity for Orpheus and a sense of horror at Orpheus' fate.

iii) DEATH OF ORPHEUS

It remains to discuss the third incident about Orpheus related in ancient sources, namely the manner of his death. That Orpheus was dismembered by Thracian women who scattered his limbs abroad (as in Virgil) is by far the most common version.⁶² However, the motive for the women's action requires investigation and comment.

⁶² Pausanias 9.30.5-6 refers to the alternative traditions that he committed suicide because of grief at the loss of Eurydice or that he was killed by a lightning bolt from Zeus -so too Ps.-Alcidamas Ulixes 24 (cited by LINFORTH, p.15): Μουσάων πρόπολον τηδ' Ὀρφέα Θρηήκες ἔθηκαν,/ ὄν κτάνεν ὑψημέδων Ζεὺς ψολόεντι βέλει. Strabo 7.330 fr.18 describes him as a musician and prophet who began to think too highly of himself and aimed at power. Some grew suspicious of him and killed him:

ἐνταῦθα τὸν Ὀρφέα διατρίψαι φασι τὸν Κίκονα, ἄνδρα γήητα ἀπὸ μουσικῆς ἅμα καὶ μαντικῆς καὶ τῶν περὶ τὰς τελετὰς ὀργιασμῶν ἀγυρτεθόντα τὸ πρῶτον, εἴτ' ἤδη καὶ μείζονων ἀξιοῦντα ἑαυτὸν καὶ ὄχλον καὶ δύναμιν κατασκευαζόμενον· τοὺς μὲν οὖν ἐκουσίως ἀποδέχεσθαι, τινὰς δ' ὑπιδομένους ἐπιβουλήν καὶ βίαν ἐπισυστάντας διαφθεῖραι αὐτόν.

The earliest literary reference to Orpheus' death occurs in a lost play of Aeschylus, the Βασσαρίδες. A report of the play is given by Ps.-

Eratosthenes (Catasterismi 24):

τὸν μὲν Διάνυσον οὐκ ἐτίμα, τὸν δὲ Ἥλιον μέγιστον τῶν θεῶν ἐνόμιζεν εἶναι, ὃν καὶ Ἀπόλλωνα προσηγόρευσεν· ἐπεχειρόμενός τε τῆς νυκτὸς κατὰ τὴν ἑωθινήν ἐπὶ τὸ ὄρος τὸ καλούμενον Πάγγαιον <ἀνιῶν> προσέμενε τὰς ἀνατολάς, ἵνα ἴδῃ τὸν Ἥλιον πρῶτον· ὄθεν ὁ Διόνυσος ὀργισθεὶς αὐτῷ ἔπεμψε τὰς Βασσαρίδας, ὥς φησὶν Αἰσχύλος ὁ τῶν τραγωδιῶν ποιητής· αἵτινες αὐτὸν διέσπασαν καὶ τὰ μέλη διέρριψαν χωρὶς ἕκαστον· αἱ δὲ Μοῦσαι συναγαγούσαι ἔθαψαν ἐπὶ τοῖς λεγομένοις Λειβήθοις.

Though interpretation of this testimony is problematic⁶³, it seems that Aeschylus not only named the Βασσαρίδες as Orpheus' killers but also gave the reason: they were sent by Dionysus who was offended by Orpheus' worship of Apollo.

In addition to this single literary reference from the fifth century B.C., there are a number of vases⁶⁴ from the same period which relate to Orpheus' death. On some he is shown fleeing from a group of women whose dress suggest that they are Thracian⁶⁵, on others he is being attacked by the women

⁶³ E.g. LINFORTH, p.14, argues that Aeschylus did not give the motive only the detail that the Βασσαρίδες killed Orpheus, but GUTHRIE (1966), p.32, and WEST (1983), p.11, with whom I agree, think that the passage allows the interpretation that Aeschylus also gave the motive as stated in my main text.

⁶⁴ GUTHRIE (1966), pp.64f., n.8 gives a convenient list.

⁶⁵ See GUTHRIE (1966), p.33 and LINFORTH, p.13.

who are variously armed with stones, spears, mallets and pestles (on none is he depicted being torn apart)⁶⁶, on others he is shown, seated upon a rock, playing the lyre surrounded by Thracian men.⁶⁷ The dress and weapons of the women on these vases which depict Orpheus' death do not suggest that they are followers of Dionysus. Therefore, it must be assumed that the painter(s) of these vases are following a tradition different from that in Aeschylus.⁶⁸

In the fourth century B.C. both Isocrates (11.38) and Plato (Symp. 179d and Rep. 10.620a) refer to the death of Orpheus. Isocrates says that poets have told blasphemous stories about the gods and that Orpheus, who was the worst offender, was killed by being torn to pieces: 'Ορφεύς δ' ὁ μάλιστα τούτων τῶν λόγων ἀπάμενος, διασπασθεὶς τὸν βίον ἐτελεύτησεν. However, Isocrates makes no mention of women being responsible for his death. Plato, on the other hand, specifies that Orpheus died at the hands of

⁶⁶ GUTHRIE (1966), p.33.

⁶⁷ LINFORTH, p.13.

⁶⁸ Pausanias may be alluding to this tradition at 9.30.5, where he records that some say that Orpheus was slain by Thracian women who plotted his death because he tried to persuade their husbands to follow him. Drunk with wine they committed the deed:

τὰς δὲ γυναῖκας φασὶ τῶν Θρακῶν ἐπιβουλεύειν μὲν αὐτῷ θάνατον, ὅτι σφῶν τοὺς ἀνδρας ἀκολουθεῖν ἔπεισεν αὐτῷ πλανωμένῳ, φόβῳ δὲ τῶν ἀνδρῶν οὐ τολμᾶν· ὡς δὲ ἐνεφορήσαντο οἴνου, ἐξεργάζονται τὸ τόλμημα...

women but gives no motive⁶⁹: ἐποίησαν [οἱ θεοί] τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ
 [᾽Ορφέως] ὑπὸ γυναικῶν γενέσθαι (Symp. 179d); ἰδεῖν μὲν γὰρ ψυχὴν ἔφη τὴν
 ποτε ᾽Ορφέως γενομένην κύκνου βίον αἰρουμένην, μίσει τοῦ γυναικείου
 γένους διὰ τὸν ὑπ' ἐκείνων θάνατον οὐκ ἐθέλουσαν ἐν γυναικί γεννηθεῖσαν
 γενέσθαι· (Rep. 10.620a).

In the Hellenistic period Phanocles agrees that Orpheus was killed
 by Thracian women but provides a different motive (Coll.Alex. Phanocles fr.1.7-
 10):

τὸν μὲν Βιστονίδες κακομήχανοι ἀμφιχυθεῖσαι
 ἔκτανον, εὐήκη φάσγανα θηξάμεναι,
 οὐνεκα πρῶτος ἔδειξεν ἐνὶ Θρήκεσσιν ἔρωτας
 ἄρρενας, οὐδὲ πόθους ἦνεσε θηλυτέρων.

That the women of Thrace killed Orpheus because he introduced homosexual
 love there is later echoed by Ovid (Met. 10.83-85)⁷⁰:

ille etiam Thracum populis fuit auctor amorem
in teneros transferre mares citraque iuventam
aetatis breve ver et primos carpere flores.

⁶⁹ Plato does imply that because Orpheus lacked courage the gods caused him to meet his death at the hands of women.

⁷⁰ Ovid treats the death of Orpheus in great detail at Met. 11.1-66 and includes some details unparalleled in earlier extant accounts, e.g. that the weapons hurled by the women of Thrace at first "refused" to strike Orpheus because they were charmed by his singing (when the women drowned out Orpheus' song with their Bacchic celebrations, the weapons hit the mark); also that Orpheus ultimately is reunited with Eurydice in the Underworld.

Conon (Fab.45) tells that Orpheus was killed by the women of Thrace and Macedonia whose anger he incurred because he refused to allow them to participate in religious rites:

τελευτᾷ δὲ διασπασαμένων αὐτὸν τῶν Θραικίων καὶ
Μακεδόνων γυναικῶν, ὅτι οὐ μετεδίδου αὐταῖς τῶν
ὀργίων, τάχα μὲν καὶ κατ' ἄλλας προφάσαις·

I conclude this discussion of Orpheus' death with Virgil's account (G. 4.516ff.)⁷¹: Orpheus, faithful to Eurydice and still mourning her death, avoids the company of women and refuses to wed again; the women of Thrace become angry because he scorns them and one night, while celebrating the rites of Bacchus, kill Orpheus and scatter his limbs over the fields; his head calling out Eurydice's name⁷² is swept away by the river Hebrus.

The causes and circumstances of Orpheus' death are the most fluid aspect of the myth. It may be said that Virgil follows the most common version

⁷¹ The main outline of the story of Orpheus' death in earlier sources has been shown to be that he was killed and dismembered in Thrace by Thracian women; however their motive is variously given. See KERN (1922), pp.31-41, for further texts relating to his death.

⁷² Cp. Ov. Met. 11.52-53 where Orpheus' head and lyre are both carried off by the river Hebrus. See LINFORTH, pp.125ff., and GUTHRIE (1966), pp.33ff., for the talking head and its oracular power. The head of Orpheus is represented in art in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.; that it sings after death is noted by Virgil, Ovid, Conon Fab. 45 and Lucian Adv. Indoc. 109-111. The head or lyre (or both) was most commonly said to have come to Lesbos, e.g. Phanocles Coll. Alex. fr.1,15f., Ov. Met. 11.55, Hyginus Astron. 2.7, but Conon Fab. 45 says that it was found at the mouth of the river Meles and buried in Thrace. Finally it should be noted that the lyre of Orpheus was set in heaven: e.g. Ps.-Eratosthenes Catasterismi 24, Manilius Astron. 1.324.

which held that Orpheus was killed by the women of Thrace; further that they killed him while they were celebrating the rites of Bacchus, which emphasizes the horror of the deed.⁷³ To this Virgil adds that the anger of the Thracian women was originally aroused because Orpheus rejected them and remained devoted to Eurydice even after her death. This detail, attested first in Virgil, heightens the pathos for the circumstances of Orpheus' death. Virgil concludes with a reference to the tradition that Orpheus' head, even after it had been torn from his body, continued to speak. Here again, Virgil exploits a traditional element (the singing head) and adds his own pathetic touch - that Orpheus, even in death, called out "Eurydice".

⁷³ WEST (1983), p.12, in his summary of Aeschylus' Bassarai suggests convincingly that the Bassarids killed Orpheus at the end of their "nocturnal revels". If WEST is right, Virgil, by adopting a motif from Aeschylus, heightens the tragedy of Orpheus' death even more.

CHAPTER 2
LITERARY BACKGROUND

PART A: SCHOLARLY OPINION ABOUT THE EPYLLION

Since the last half of Georgics 4, the Aristaeus episode, has frequently been called an epyllion, it is necessary that any discussion of the literary background of the passage first address the appropriateness of the term and the question of whether it may be said to define an established literary genre in which ancient poets consciously attempted to write. If it could be shown that such a form did in fact exist, it would seem to be a relatively simple matter to examine examples of it, to define its characteristics, to identify these characteristics in Virgil's work and to point out instances where he adapts or changes the conventions. Such an analysis would provide a strong foundation for the development of a cogent interpretation of the Aristaeus episode. Unfortunately, there are difficulties with this method. Scholars have been unable to agree upon the basic characteristics of the form and some have denied that it existed at all.

The longest and most comprehensive study of the epyllion is still CRUMP's work¹, first published in 1931, which has been criticized (rightly, in my view) on various grounds. Most fundamentally, she does not question the appropriateness of the term epyllion and seems simply to assume (without argument) that the ancients called a specific literary genre epyllion.

Other scholars have been more cautious. It has been noted that although the term epyllion is ancient², its application to a literary genre is modern and there is no surviving evidence that the word was ever so used by the ancients.³ Of course, the question of terminology is minor and the difficulty would be removed if it could be shown that there exists a number of poems displaying the same or similar characteristics. It could then be argued that these poems belonged to a recognizable literary genre to which the ancients gave a name, now lost or, possibly, which they left unnamed. The latter was essentially the view of C.N. JACKSON, who argued that the ancients invented and developed literary forms without necessarily devising names for them.

¹ GUTZWILLER in her recent (1981) study of the epyllion restricts her discussion to Greek examples.

² For a discussion of the history of the term see REILLY.

³ Though linguistically there would seem to be no objection to the meaning "little epic" for epyllion, REILLY, p.111, observes that of its seven extant appearances (five Greek, two Latin) it is never so used. He notes e.g. that Hesychius defines epyllion as "a versicle or scrap of poetry" and that Aristophanes uses the word three times, Ach. 398, Pax 532, Ra. 942 to describe the tragedies of Euripides.

However, to quote JACKSON, "they were particular in following the conventions adopted in these forms and in giving to each form its distinctive character".⁴

Of extant or partially extant poems the following have been thought to display an adherence to a set of "conventions" and therefore have been classed together under the label epyllion⁵: Theocritus Id. 13, 24, 25, Callimachus' Hecale and Hymn to Demeter, Moschus' Europa, the Epithalamium of Achilles and Deidameia attributed to Bion, Catullus 64, the Aristaeus episode, the pseudo-Virgilian Culex and Ciris, the Moretum and various portions of Ovid's Metamorphoses. In addition, BRIGHT in his book on later epyllia (e.g. Dracontius' Hylas et al.) speaks of elegiac poems "which share with the epyllia all essential characteristics except meter. One thinks of Propertius' Hylas (1.20) or Tibullus (1.7) on the exploits of Messalla".⁶

It must be noted that there is no unanimity among scholars in deciding which poems from this list should be deemed to be epyllia. This is due in part to vagueness in the definition of the genre - a vagueness which has

⁴ JACKSON, p.39.

⁵ In addition to those listed it is suggested that epyllia may have been written in Greek by Philetas, Nicias, Alexander Aetolus, Euphorion, Nicaenetus, Nicander and Parthenius and in Latin by Valerius Cato, Licinius Calvus, Cornificius and Helvius Cinna. See JACKSON, p.39.

⁶ BRIGHT, p.4.

allowed examples from other genres (e.g. hymns, portions of epic and even elegy) to be classed as epyllia.

It is not out of place here to provide two early representative attempts at defining the genre:

1) epyllia are short narrative poems in hexameters, on mythological subjects, in a serious vein, complete in themselves, and about one book long.⁷

2) An epyllion is a short narrative poem. The length may and does vary considerably, but an epyllion seems never to have exceeded the length of a single book, and probably the average length was four to five hundred lines. The subject is sometimes merely an incident in the life of an epic hero or heroine, sometimes a complete story, the tendency of the author being to use little-known stories or possibly even to invent new ones. The later Alexandrians and the Romans preferred love stories and usually concentrated the interest on the heroine. The style varies; it may be entirely narrative, or may be decorated with descriptive passages of a realistic character. The dramatic form is frequently employed, and it is usual to find at least one long speech. So far the only distinction between the epyllion and the narrative hymn consists in the subject. A hymn always tells the story of a god, whereas an epyllion deals with human beings; gods may appear as characters, but there is no emphasis on their divinity. There is, however, one characteristic of the epyllion which sharply distinguishes it from other types, namely the digression.⁸

⁷ JOHANNES HEUMANN, *De epyllio Alexandrino* (Leipzig diss., Koenigsee, Selmar de Ende, 1904) cited in ALLEN, pp.1-2, n.2.

⁸ CRUMP, pp.22-3. Both CRUMP and HEUMANN apparently mean by a "book" one book of Homer but this is not very helpful since few of the poems generally regarded as epyllia meet this criterion and the length of a book of Homer varies. Also, it is not particularly clear what CRUMP means by "dramatic form".

Furthermore, CRUMP states that the style of epyllia is "that of all Alexandrian poetry, formal, allusive, learned."⁹

In 1940, ALLEN attacked systematically and at some length this notion of the epyllion. It is not necessary to repeat all of ALLEN's arguments in detail. A brief review of his main points, however, is in order.

First, having reviewed the existing evidence, he reached the inevitable conclusion that the word epyllion was never used by the ancients to define a literary type. He expressed doubts about the existence of a literary quarrel between Apollonius and Callimachus¹⁰ and concluded that while Callimachus did quarrel with other people about literature, the "remarks about literature in the prologue to the Aetia would certainly not justify our regarding the Hecale as a polemical manifesto."¹¹

⁹ CRUMP, p.24. Also CRUMP argues that the epyllion was introduced in the Alexandrian period, though she admits that it is virtually impossible to determine precisely when it was invented. According to CRUMP, p.19 "the three poets, Theocritus, Callimachus and Apollonius were jointly responsible for the birth of the Alexandrian epyllion. It is true that Apollonius devoted himself to grand epic, but it was his challenge to Callimachus and his consequent defeat, which resulted in the acceptance of the Hecale as the model of the Alexandrian epic school". The epyllion, then, in her view, arose as a result of Callimachus' refusal to write Homeric epic and his literary quarrel with Apollonius of Rhodes. This, in essence, is also the view of JACKSON, p.37: "In Alexandria, this reaction [against "classicism"], headed by Callimachus, as well as a counter-reaction under Apollonius of Rhodes, assumed various forms and aspects."

¹⁰ Much has been written about this supposed quarrel. HUTCHINSON, pp.85ff., with whom I concur, expresses doubts about the existence of the quarrel.

¹¹ ALLEN, p.14.

ALLEN further argued that statements concerning the style of epyllia (see e.g. CRUMP's definition above) were so vague that the "conclusion ... is that the style of an epyllion can be, in the main, either descriptive, narrative, or dramatic."¹² He also pointed out that the digression, frequently described as a standard feature of the epyllion, occurred also in Homeric epics, hymns, Pindar's odes etc. and that only a minority of so-called epyllia contain "striking" digressions.¹³ Finally, Allen drew attention to the fact that the length of extant examples of epyllia belies the notion that an epyllion is about one book long.¹⁴ In fact, the length varies from seventy-five lines (Theoc. Id. 13) to at least five hundred and forty-one (Ciris).¹⁵

In brief, ALLEN rejected the existing notion of epyllia and concluded that it was more satisfactory

to regard these poems as results of the Alexandrian fondness for mixed poetic genera and to say simply that they were written under strong influence from the

¹² ALLEN, p.14.

¹³ ALLEN, p.17.

¹⁴ ALLEN, p.18.

¹⁵ The length of the Hecale is in doubt. It is assumed to have been between 700 and 1800 lines. HUTCHINSON, p.56, argues for a length of about 950 lines. HOLLIS, pp.337-40, discusses the question and concludes cautiously: "while the usual estimate of 1,000 lines for the Hecale perhaps has most to be said for it, there are other indications compatible with a longer poem."

Hesiodic, as opposed so [sic] the Homeric, tradition of epic poetry.¹⁶

ALLEN's article has caused later commentators to be more cautious in their application of epyllion as a technical term but many still use it as a convenient term to refer to certain short poems. GUTZWILLER, most recently, does so, after attempting to refine its definition. She confines her discussion to Greek examples¹⁷ citing the following basic similarities among the poems: brevity, the use of dactylic hexameter, a story being told in the "leptotic style advocated by Callimachus" and characterized by the "subversion of the archaic ideal".¹⁸ While GUTZWILLER does clarify some of these general observations, her attempt to refine the definition of the epyllion remains, in my view, too broad for specific application to the poems in question and does not prove that the form actually existed.

¹⁶ ALLEN, p.1. ALLEN, p.24, expands briefly upon what he means by "mixed poetic genera" but in my view the notion remains too vague to be particularly helpful. CLAUSEN (1987), p.184 agrees that Callimachus viewed Hesiod as imitable (unlike Homer) and so a more appropriate literary model: "Hesiod's poems were relatively short as, in Callimachus' judgment, poems should be; and they recounted no long, involved tales of heroes and battles."

¹⁷ GUTZWILLER considers Theoc. Id. 13,24,25, Call. Hymn to Demeter and Hecale, Mosch. Europa and Bion Epithalamium of Achilles and Deidameia to be epyllia.

¹⁸ GUTZWILLER, pp.2-9. In order to clarify what she means by "the subversion of the archaic ideal", GUTZWILLER adds (p.5) "Although each epyllion narrative is based on an episode in the life of a hero or heroine, the story is told in such a way as to undercut or even mock the conventional heroic interpretation of this episode."

Is it necessary, then, to consider valid ALLEN's complete rejection of the notion of the epyllion? Clearly some of his criticisms of earlier attempts to define the genre have merit. However, all his arguments do is criticize (reasonably) earlier attempts to define the genre; they do not establish that such a genre did not exist, and ALLEN himself admitted that there is "the feeling, which any reader experiences, that the poems are somewhat similar."¹⁹ To explain these similarities as simply the result of a fondness for "mixed genera" is less than satisfactory since it is difficult to imagine ancient authors, particularly poets so conscious of literary precedent, working within a tradition so vaguely defined.

It seems to me that the question of the existence of the epyllion calls for a slightly different approach. Previous attempts to define the genre seem to begin with a variable number of poems and struggle to identify features which these poems share, or start with a definition and try to force certain poems to fit. I shall begin with a single poem, the Hecale of Callimachus - not because I assume that it was the first example of a new genre (that, in any case, would be impossible to prove²⁰) but because the Hecale can be demonstrated to be

¹⁹ ALLEN, p.24.

²⁰ It is unclear whether the Hermes of Philetas, often said to be an epyllion, was of the same style as the Hecale. As for Theoc. Id. 13 which I believe to be of the same type, it is impossible to say with certainty that it preceded the Hecale. In general, HUTCHINSON's view that Callimachus, Theocritus and Apollonius were roughly contemporary (p.5) is attractive.

a reaction against the type of epic produced by imitators of Homer and because Callimachus, as has been widely acknowledged, exerted a great influence upon later poets, both Greek and Roman.²¹ I shall attempt to point out the basic features of the Hecale and then identify contemporary and later poems which display the same or similar fundamental qualities. If only one or two poems do so, then the Hecale may be dismissed as an experiment; but if it can be shown that a number of later authors followed Callimachus, then I think that it may be reasonably argued that their works begin to conform to the conventions of a literary type. This approach does not demand that the type remain static but allows for the development of the genre within its basic form.

PART B: CALLIMACHUS AND THE HECALE

Before treating the Hecale I shall review briefly statements made elsewhere in Callimachus' extant works which establish his aesthetic principles, that is, his views regarding length, style, subject matter etc. The two longest relevant passages are the prologue to the Aetia (Aet. fr.1) and the concluding lines of the Hymn to Apollo.²² Each of these passages presents specific

²¹ See HOLLIS, pp.26ff.

²² HOPKINSON, pp.86ff., cites other relevant passages: AP 12.48, an epigram in which Callimachus disapproves of "cyclic" epic; fr.398 (Pf.), Λύδη καὶ παχὺ γράμμα καὶ οὐ τορὸν; fr. 465 (Pf.), Καλλιμάχος ὁ γραμματικὸς τὸ μέγα βιβλίον ἴσον ἔλεγεν εἶναι τῷ μεγάλῳ κακῷ.

problems of interpretation. Still, it is possible to draw general conclusions from them.

In the prologue to the Aetia, Callimachus defends the notion that shorter, highly polished poetry is as valid as or even superior to long, tumid epic. In the opening lines, he writes that his critics grumble at him because he has not written one continuous poem thousands of lines long, relating the exploits of heroes and kings (i.e. traditional epic) (Aet. fr.1.1-5):

.....]ι μοι Τελχίνες ἐπιτρύζουσιν ἀλοιδῆ,
 νήιδε,ς οἱ Μούσης οὐκ ἐγένοντο φίλοι,
 εἴνεκεν οὐκ ἐν ἄεισμα διηνεκῆς ἢ Βασιλ[η
]ας ἐν πολλαῖς ἦνυσα χιλιάσιν
 ἦ.....].ους ἦρωας, ἔπος δ' ἐπὶ τυτθὸν ἐλ[ίσσω

The Aetia is, in fact, a poem of epic length²³ but it is written in elegiacs and its extant fragments suggest that it was not a single, continuous narrative (ἐν ἄεισμα διηνεκῆς) but presented a series of short (ἔπος δ' ἐπὶ τυτθὸν ἐλίσσω) episodes, linked thematically. Furthermore its subject matter - the origins of Greek customs, rituals, etc. - allows the author to display his erudition but is not a major interest of traditional epic.

At line 2 Callimachus dismisses his critics and, having noted the reasons for their disapproval, proceeds to praise shorter poems (Aet. fr.1.9-12),²⁴ and says that poetry should be judged by τέχνη not by length (Aet.

²³ Approximately 4000-6000 lines (see HOPKINSON, p.85), in four books. Cp. the Argonautica of Apollonius of Rhodes - four books, 5834 lines.

²⁴ The lines refer to short poems by Mimnermus and Philetas, but their precise sense is unclear. Either the short poems of Mimnermus and Philetas are deemed

fr.1.17-18). In an apparent rejection of traditional epic, he says that he refuses to "thunder", for that is the province of Zeus: βροντᾶ ν οὐκ ἐμόν, ἀλλὰ Διός (Aet. fr.1.20 (Pf.)). Rather, he implies, he has chosen to follow the advice of Apollo to keep his Muse "thin", λεπταλέην (Aet. fr.1.24), and to keep to a path that is as yet unworn (Aet. fr.1.25ff.).

At the end of the Hymn to Apollo (105-112), there occurs a brief dialogue between Phthonos and Apollo:

ὁ Φθόνος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπ' οὖατα λάθριος εἶπεν
 'οὐκ ἀγαμαι τὸν ἀοιδὸν ὃς οὐδ' ὄσα πόντος ἀεῖδει.'
 τὸν Φθόνον Ἀπόλλων ποδί τ' ἤλασεν ὠδὲ τ' εἶπεν·
 Ἕσσυρτοῦ ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλὰ
 λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ' ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἔλκει.
 Διοῖ δ' οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδαρ φορέουσι μέλισσαι,
 ἀλλ' ἤτις καθαρὴ τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει
 πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβάς ἄκρον ἄωτον.'

F. WILLIAMS has stated that this is "possibly the most controversial passage in the extant works of Callimachus".²⁵ The basic comparison, however, is fairly straightforward: "the huge but polluted Euphrates (length, unity, magnitude, access for all and sundry...) and the individual droplets from the purest spring

HOPKINSON, p.93.

²⁵ F. WILLIAMS, p.86. WILLIAMS provides a select bibliography of most recent (since 1955) discussions. Debate has centered upon the interpretation of πόντος. WILLIAMS, pp.86ff., argues convincingly that πόντος refers to Homer, who is therefore the source of both longer and shorter poetry. Callimachus is not rejecting Homer but is suggesting that Homeric epic is inimitable and opposes its sterile imitators. To write refined poetry on a smaller scale in the manner of Callimachus is "to emulate and recreate Homer in a more meaningful and original way...".

(polish, refinement, exclusivity, discontinuity).²⁶ Thus the same principles outlined in the prologue to the Aetia are repeated here. According to Callimachus, poetry should be short, polished, very stylish, learned and so appeal to an exclusive audience. He also advocates that poets not simply follow the established literary traditions of epic but seek a new direction.

The relevance to the Hecale of these statements concerning poetry and poetic technique is clear. It is unlikely that Callimachus would abandon his stated principles when he decided to compose a narrative poem in hexameters. The Hecale then is a "positive manifesto, showing how a smart modern poet should handle traditional epic subject matter".²⁷ It remains to define the basic features of the Hecale as far as they may be determined from its extant fragments and from other ancient testimony.

First and most important, it is a narrative poem which has a relatively uncomplicated story-line, succinctly described in an epigram by Crinagoras (AP 9.545):

Καλλιμάχου τὸ τορευτὸν ἔπος τόδε· δὴ γὰρ ἐπ' αὐτῷ
 ὄνηρ τοῦς Μουσέων πάντας ἔσεισε κάλους.
 αἶδει δ' Ἐκάλῃς τε φιλοξείνοιο καλιῆν
 καὶ, Θησεῖ Μαραθῶν οὖς ἐπέθηκε πόνους·
 τοῦ σοῖ καὶ νεαρὸν χειρῶν σθένος εἶη ἀρέσθαι,
 Μάρκελλε, κλεινοῦ τ' αἶνον ἴσον βιότου.

²⁶ HOPKINSON, p.87.

²⁷ HOLLIS, p.4.

The poem describes one of the labours of Theseus, the capture of the bull of Marathon and relates how the hero, on the way to complete his task, takes shelter from a rainstorm in the humble cottage of Hecale, a poor old woman. She provides him with such comforts as her meagre means allow. Theseus leaves Hecale's home and successfully captures the bull but on his return discovers that the old woman has died. Theseus repays her hospitality by founding the deme of Hecale and establishing the cult of Zeus Ἐκάλειος. In addition, the poem includes a digression in which the story of Erichonius and the daughters of Cecrops is narrated by a crow.²⁸ The narrative, then, treats a mythological subject and its main characters are human (e.g. a hero), not divine.

The second basic feature of the poem is its metre -dactylic hexameter. While it is true that hexameter had been used in didactic and catalogue poems, hymns and pastoral poetry and that Erinna, in the fourth century B.C., had used it in a lament²⁹, clearly the Hecale belongs to none of these categories. Rather, the metre, subject matter and, to a certain extent, the language suggest epic³⁰ - but a type of epic different from the "traditional" epic of Homer and his imitators.

²⁸ For the length and substance of the digression see HOLLIS, pp.224ff.

²⁹ For a brief discussion of the expanded use of hexameter see HUTCHINSON, p.16.

³⁰ A more detailed discussion of subject matter, language and diction appears in HOLLIS, pp.5ff.

An obvious major difference is that the Hecale is of smaller scope and much shorter than "traditional" epic.³¹ There is no need to say more than this. It is not, in my view, particularly helpful or pertinent to note that the poem is approximately of a length to fit on one papyrus roll or that it is the length of a single book of Homer (which, in any case, is true only for some books of Homer as they were divided by Alexandrian scholars).³² In view of Callimachus' statements about length in the prologue to the Aetia, it is the Hecale's relative brevity that is significant. Secondly, although the subject matter is traditional epic fare (a labour of a hero), "Callimachus' very title shows that he is adopting an untraditional stance".³³ The poem is named for the old woman, not the hero, and Callimachus began and probably ended his work with her.³⁴ It must be admitted that an "untraditional" stance toward epic is not unique to the

³¹ Due to the fragmentary nature of the text, the exact length must remain in doubt (see n.15). The scholiast on Call. Hymn 2.106 says that Callimachus felt compelled to write the Hecale in response to the criticism that he could not compose a μέγα ποιήμα: ἐγκαλεῖ διὰ τούτων τοὺς σκώπτοντας αὐτὸν μὴ δύνασθαι ποιῆσαι μέγα ποιήμα, ὅθεν ἠναγκάσθη ποιῆσαι τὴν Ἐκάλην. There is, of course, no reason to accept the scholiast's assumption concerning Callimachus' motive in composing the Hecale. However, given the supposed length of the poem, one must question the sense of the phrase μέγα ποιήμα. He may be using μέγα as a relative term and comparing the length of the Hecale to Callimachus' other works. If this is the case he must be considering the Aetia to be a collection of short narratives not as ἐν ᾧσιν ἀεισμοὶ διηγεκῆς (which the Hecale is). It is also possible that he is using the phrase as a circumlocution for epic (perhaps picking up on Callimachus' statement (fr.465 (Pf.): see above n.22).

³² And would not be true if the Hecale were 1700 lines as some suppose.

³³ HOLLIS, p.6.

³⁴ HOLLIS, p.6.

Hecale. Lyric poetry and Euripidean tragedy, for example, often take the same point of view. It is, however, significant that the Hecale does so in the metre associated with epic.

Stylistically, the Hecale displays the recondite learning and high polish that is associated with Callimachus³⁵ and other poets of the Alexandrian period. In addition it displays all of the features of Hellenistic narrative technique, noted by FORDYCE:

The narrative poem which the Alexandrians developed in their reaction against the more spacious forms of poetry is distinguished from epic not only by its smaller scale, achieved by deliberate selection of episodes, but also by the subjective, sentimental and romantic handling of its theme. The poet...relieves his narrative with personal turns of phrase - exclamations, apostrophes, or questions - and courts the interest of the cultivated reader by giving a novel twist to his story or embellishing it with conceits of language.³⁶

Although these stylistic features are not unique to the Hecale, nor to Callimachus nor, for that matter, to the poetry of the Alexandrian period, they are worth noting because they reflect Callimachus' aesthetic principles and their

³⁵ HOLLIS, pp.8ff., gives a number of examples of Callimachus' erudition: references to local religious cults; Hecale herself was not particularly well-known; the reference (fr.85) to the fact that the Athenians celebrated the Anthesteria to Dionysus of the Marshes rather than Dionysus Eleuthereus, etc.

³⁶ FORDYCE, p.272. FORDYCE points out that these features are not confined to short Alexandrian epics but occur in narrative elegies and the narrative portions of hymns as well. Although FORDYCE does not mention it, these features are found in other earlier authors as well. LYNE (1978), pp.25ff., refers to FORDYCE with approval and comments upon style and narrative technique with specific reference to the Ciris.

combination in a single work is remarkable. It is likely that later authors who imitated the form of the Hecale would tend to follow Callimachus' style as well.

It remains to identify other Greek poems which share the fundamental qualities of the Hecale: a relatively short (compared with traditional epic) narrative poem, in hexameters, highly polished and learned, treating a mythological subject and dealing with human protagonists, with subject matter suitable for "traditional" epic but treated in an unconventional manner. Since one must omit elegies on metrical grounds and hymns because, by definition, they deal with the gods, the list of extant poems is fairly short: Theocritus Id. 13, 24, 25, Moschus' Europa and the fragmentary Epithalamium of Achilles and Deidameia attributed to Bion. The three idylls of Theocritus³⁷ are all short (75 lines - 281 lines) narrative poems dealing with incidents in the life of Heracles. In Id. 13 Heracles is a participant in the voyage of the Argo to retrieve the Golden Fleece - a setting suitable for "traditional" epic. However, Theocritus adopts an unconventional stance to his subject. He does not stress Heracles' heroic feats but focuses instead upon a minor incident and the hero's reaction to the loss of his beloved Hylas. Id. 24 may be incomplete but what survives suggests that the poem had a tripartite structure. First the myth of the infant Heracles strangling two snakes sent by Hera to destroy him is told. Then

³⁷ The question of the authorship of Id. 25, discussed by GOW, pp.439ff., need not be addressed here.

the seer Teiresias, when consulted by Alcmena, predicts that Heracles will complete twelve labours and after his death will marry Hebe and dwell among the gods. Finally, the education and youth of Heracles are summarized. Again, the poet adopts an unconventional stance to his subject, as GOW has suggested:

In general T. follows the narrative of Pindar in his first Nemean ode but he is at pains to reduce it from a heroic to a domestic level.³⁸

Id. 25 also divides into three parts: 1) Heracles approaches the realm of Augeas in company with a rustic who describes the scene, 2) Heracles, together with Augeas and his son Phyleus, inspects the flocks and herds of the king and is attacked by a bull which he overpowers, 3) Heracles tells Phyleus how he killed the Nemean lion. The poem places the hero in a rustic setting and the poet concentrates upon this setting and the characters who reside in it rather than the heroic feats of Heracles, which seem almost incidental.

The Europa is a short (166 lines) narrative poem and, like the Hecale, is named for its female protagonist. The story-line treats the rape of Europa by Zeus and is uncomplicated: Zeus sees Europa in a meadow gathering flowers with her young companions and is overcome by love and desire. He takes the form of a bull, coaxes the maiden onto his back and carries her off to Crete, where he makes her his bride. Instead of developing

³⁸ GOW, p.415.

the story, the poet includes descriptions of disproportionate length (e.g. Europa's dream, Europa's basket) which do little to advance the plot and which may be considered digressions. Instead of naming the heroic offspring of Europa's union with Zeus (Minos, Rhadamanthus and, in some accounts, Sarpedon) the poet focuses upon the maiden's bemused reaction to her abduction (Europa 135-140):

ἴπῃ με φέρεις θεόταυρε; τίς ἔπλεο; πῶς δὲ κέλευθα
 ἀργαλέ' εἰλιπόδεσσι διέρχεαι οὐδὲ θάλασσαν
 δειμαίνεις; νηυσὶν γὰρ ἐπίδρομός ἐστι θάλασσα
 ὠκυάλους, ταῦροι δ' ἄλιην τρομέουσιν ἀταρπὸν.
 ποῖον σοὶ ποτὸν ἠδύ, τίς ἐξ ἄλλος ἔσσειτ' ἔδωδή;
 ἦ ἄρα τίς θεὸς ἔσσει;...'

Of the Epithalamium of Achilles and Deidameia only a 32 line fragment remains. The poem is in the form of a dialogue between two rustics, Myrson and Lycidas, and the latter tells how Achilles dressed as a woman and hid when the Greeks were gathering their forces for the war at Troy. If the rest of the poem conforms with the tone and unconventional treatment of the most heroic of Greek warriors, then the Epithalamium should be classed with the poems already discussed.

All of these poems display the features of Alexandrian narrative technique noted by FORDYCE (see above) and all share the basic qualities of the Hecale and appear to be of the same type. Of course, the authors do not slavishly imitate Callimachus. Each incorporates differences which advance the

form, and it is noteworthy that the subject matter of the last two poems is amatory.

As has been stated, the list of extant poems which fit the definition is short. However, circumstantial evidence suggests that Euphorion and Parthenius wrote poems in a style similar to that of the Hecale (see below) and possibly others did so as well. Still, it must be admitted that evidence for a developing genre would not be strong were it not for the fact that the Roman poets of the first century B.C. became interested in the form.

PART C: THE LATIN EPYLLION

Unfortunately, direct evidence that a number of Latin poets wrote epyllia is not available. However, circumstantial evidence suggests that there was a group of poets who did so. Cicero writing to Atticus in 50 B.C. (Att. 7.2.1) speaks of οἱ νεώτεροι and composes a line of hexameter which, he implies, would appeal to the taste of these poets: flavit ab Epiro lenissimus Onchesmites. LYNE makes the following comments:

The antonomasia, the euphonic sibilance, and the mannered rhythm (the five-word line with fourth foot homodyne; the spondaic fifth foot) are all prominent in Cicero's hexameter. The line is a humorously concocted example of affected and Grecizing narrative. But it is also a line which, Atticus is to suppose, οἱ νεώτεροι would value;³⁹

³⁹ LYNE, CQ (1978), p.167.

He argues further that Cicero is referring to a group or "school"⁴⁰ of poets who shared common literary views and identifies members of the group as Helvius Cinna, Caecilius, Licinius Calvus, Valerius Cato and most importantly Catullus. All of these poets, LYNE argues, were committed to Callimachean principles and followed Callimachus' narrative style and all wrote short, narrative, hexameter poems: Cinna, the Zmyrna (praised by Catullus in poem 95); Caecilius, a "learned" poem about Cybele (see Catullus 35); Calvus, the Io; Cornificius, the Glaucus; Cato, the Diana or Dictynna; and finally Catullus, poem 64 on the marriage of Peleus and Thetis. The titles of the poems and external evidence (i.e. Catullus' comments upon some of them) suggest that all of these poems were similar in form and style. Unfortunately most of them survive only in fragments - the single exception being Catullus 64.

A detailed reading of this complicated poem cannot be undertaken here. However, it is important to note that it meets all of the criteria set out above to define the Hecale: a relatively short (408 lines) narrative poem, in hexameters, dealing with a mythological subject, treated in a non-epic fashion, dealing with human protagonists, characterized by a polished style and heavily learned. In addition, it displays the features of Alexandrian technique described by FORDYCE (see above).⁴¹ All of this strongly suggests that Catullus 64 has

⁴⁰ LYNE, CQ (1978), p.167.

⁴¹ FORDYCE, pp.274f., provides specific examples of exclamation, apostrophe, learned allusion, etc. in the poem.

a close connection not only with Callimachus, especially the Hecale, but also the other Greek poems discussed above. Further support is given to this conclusion by the outstanding structural feature of Catullus' account of the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, namely the so-called digression. The notion that the digression on the desertion and rescue of Ariadne seems to upset the balance of the poem has received much attention and has been the subject of lengthy debate. The interpretation of this structural "imbalance" is not germane to the question at hand. However, it is significant that the Hecale had a "substantial"⁴² digression on Erichthonius and the daughters of Cecrops. I would argue that Catullus used this technique in imitation of Callimachus.⁴³

The subject matter of Catullus 64, like that of the Europa and Achilles, is amatory. It depicts the wedding of Peleus and Thetis and, in the inset story, the unhappy love affair between Ariadne and Theseus. Perhaps this would not be remarkable were it not for the statement made by Parthenius in his prefatory remarks addressed to Gallus in the Περὶ Ἐρωτικῶν Παθημάτων that he will offer material suitable for ἔπη καὶ ἐλεγείας. Since I agree with both LYNE⁴⁴ and HOLLIS⁴⁵ that by ἔπη Parthenius is referring to

⁴² HOLLIS, p.25.

⁴³ Digressions do appear in other genres as well, including Homeric epic, lyric (Pindar) etc. For their connection to epyllia see below.

⁴⁴ LYNE, CQ (1978), p.185.

the kind of short hexameter poem under discussion, and since the stories told by Parthenius treat unhappy love, there must have been a shift to this theme by some writers of these short (epic) poems. It is possible, for example, that Parthenius himself wrote poetry of this type.⁴⁶

Finally, I wish to address briefly a second reference by Cicero also discussed by LYNE. In 45 B.C. Cicero referred to hi cantores Euphorionis (Tusc. 3.45). LYNE believes that Cicero has in mind, if not the same poets, at least the same type of poets as οἱ νεώτεροι:

A neoteric's Callimacheanism should or could have endeared him to Euphorion. Although the directness of the relation between Callimachus and Euphorion is debatable, it is clear that the latter's aesthetic sympathies would have been with Callimachus...Indeed in many ways...he seems like an extreme version of Callimachus.⁴⁷

If LYNE is correct, it is tempting to speculate that Euphorion and the cantores Euphorionis also wrote, narrative hexameter poetry.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ HOLLIS, p.25.

⁴⁶ See CROWTHER (1976), p.66.

⁴⁷ LYNE CQ (1978), p.185.

⁴⁸ See CLAUSEN (1987), p.191 and HOLLIS, p.24 for the style and type of Euphorion's poetry suggested by the extant fragments.

PART D: CONCLUSION

The Hecale of Callimachus is an early, if not the first, example of a different type of epic verse. Theocritus, Moschus, Bion and Catullus wrote works which shared the same basic features with Callimachus' poem. In addition, circumstantial evidence suggests that Euphorion, Parthenius and those poets whom Cicero calls οἱ νεώτεροι and cantores Euphorionis did so as well.⁴⁹ The number of examples argues for a developing literary type and since these poems may be described as short epics, the term epyllion can, for convenience, be applied to them.

Before turning to the Aristaeus episode, I shall summarize the characteristics of the epyllion and suggest which features are constant (i.e. appear in all examples) and which occur either frequently or occasionally and may therefore be considered as optional.

All epyllia are narrative poems, written in hexameters. Compared with traditional epic, they are (relatively) short and it is unlikely that any example was substantially longer than one thousand lines (the shortest is Theoc. Id. 13 - 75 lines). Their subject matter is ostensibly suitable for traditional epic, drawn from myth and dealing with human protagonists. However, the treatment of the subject matter is untraditional - subjective and

⁴⁹ Mention should be made of later Latin "epyllia" - the Ciris, Culex, and the Hylas, etc. of Dracontius - to show that interest in the genre continued.

sentimental rather than objective. The story is kept relatively simple in scope (as one would expect, given the length) compared to epic, and this allows the author to incorporate colourful descriptions or to focus upon the depiction of the emotional reactions of his characters. Epyllia display the various features of Hellenistic narrative technique noted by FORDYCE (see above) and display the polished style, allusiveness and erudition characteristic of the period.

As the genre develops, there seems to be an increased interest in amatory subject matter (Europa, Achilles, etc.) and frequently the focus is upon a heroine, rather than a hero and her reaction to a love affair, often an unhappy love affair (e.g. Catullus 64, Parthenius). As well, the poets show a predilection for obscure incidents in the lives of their characters or even invent details (apparently) to increase the effect of novelty and surprise.

With increasing frequency epyllia contain a digression or story set within the main narrative (Europa, Catullus 64, etc.) and the digression is often linked only tenuously to the main story. Occasionally, the digression takes the form of a description of a work of art (e.g. Europa, Catullus 64). Sometimes the gods appear but are not the main focus of attention (e.g. Europa, Catullus 64).

PART E: THE ARISTAEUS EPYLLION

At Georgics 4.315ff., after a transitional passage of some thirty-five lines (Georg. 4.280-314) in which he introduces the method of producing bees

known as bugonia, Virgil addresses the Muses and asks who introduced this procedure among men. In what follows, the genre shifts from didactic to epyllion and Virgil offers a short (241 lines, Georg. 4.317-558) narrative in hexameters on a mythological subject with human protagonists as an aetion for bugonia. The plot of the story is relatively simple. Aristaeus has lost his bees and comes to the river Peneus to complain of his loss to his mother, Cyrene. She directs him to Proteus who reveals that Aristaeus caused the death of Eurydice and has therefore incurred the wrath of Orpheus. Cyrene then tells Aristaeus to offer four bulls and four heifers to appease Orpheus. This Aristaeus does and in nine days he finds that bees have been generated from the rotting flesh of the slaughtered animals. Set within this main story is a digression, a tale of unhappy love. Proteus tells of Orpheus' descent into the underworld and his ultimately unsuccessful attempt to bring back Eurydice from the dead.

Into his narrative Virgil incorporates picturesque description (e.g. Cyrene's bower 334ff.), and focuses upon the emotions of his human characters - Aristaeus' anger (e.g. in his speech to Cyrene at 321ff.) and the grief of both Orpheus and Eurydice within the inset story (483ff.). In addition many, if not all, of the other features identified as characteristic of epyllia are present: erudition (e.g. the catalogue of rivers ll.363-373, the adaptation of Homer's lament of Achilles to the lament of Aristaeus ll.321ff.), exclamations

(e.g. immemor, heu l.491), interjected questions (ll.504-505), polished style (e.g. alliteration l.370, golden line l.417; see detailed critical appreciation below passim), and the inset story of Orpheus and Eurydice, in particular, is treated in a subjective and sentimental manner. Finally, Virgil appeals to the taste of a cultivated audience by introducing novelty or, at least, employing obscure versions of myth: e.g. he is apparently the first to link Aristaeus with bugonia and with the death of Eurydice (see Chapter 1).

Of course, it is impossible to state with certainty that Virgil set out consciously to write an epyllion as a conclusion to the Georgics. However, the Aristaeus episode displays so many of the features which define the genre that it seems plausible to conclude that he did.

Having said that, I would point out that Virgil introduces into his epyllion features which make it different from previous examples. There are a number of minor but seemingly novel details which would intrigue a learned audience. Virgil is apparently the first to present an epyllion with an agricultural connection and which includes a descent into an underwater kingdom, and a parallel descent into the Underworld. He is also the first to portray the violent death of one of the protagonists. It was suggested above that the inset story, when it occurs, has only a tenuous link with the outer frame. Virgil, in contrast, takes great care to forge connections between the two - the parallel descents of Aristaeus and Orpheus and their parallel losses etc. Finally, Virgil's is the only

extant example of an epyllion which does not stand as an independent poem but is part of a larger work, a most unexpected and bold innovation.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ I cannot agree with CRUMP's statement (p.147) concerning Apollonius' Argonautica: "The Argonautica, in fact, is little more than a collection of epyllia...". For example, she considers the Hylas episode (Ap.Rhod. 1.1207ff.) to be an epyllion. However, the story of Heracles and Hylas is intricately linked with the rest of the poem and, more importantly, is a narrative within a narrative. The Aristaeus epyllion, though linked with the rest of the poem is clearly set off from the rest of the poem in a number of ways: it comes at the end of the work and is marked by the invocation to the Muses but the most obvious difference is the fact that Virgil changes from didactic to narrative form and this alone invites us to consider the lines as a separate unit. Likewise many of the stories in Ovid's Metamorphoses have been classed as epyllia and, stylistically, the poem does display similar qualities. However, Ovid clearly states his purpose in the opening lines (Met. 1.1-4):

In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas
corpora: di, coeptis (nam vos mutastis et illas)
adspirate meis primaque ab origine mundi
ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen.

The stories he tells are all linked by theme and none is so obviously dissociated from the rest of the work as Virgil's epyllion.

CHAPTER 3
STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

The place and function of the Aristaeus episode in the Georgics as a whole and the fourth book in particular have been much discussed.¹ However, since it is set off from the rest as an epyllion, the passage invites a separate structural analysis. The following discussion will examine the structure of the piece from different angles. Two schemata will be presented - one for the epyllion as a whole, a second for the inset story of Orpheus and Eurydice². Recurring themes and motifs will be noted and the contrasts and correspondences between the inner and outer stories will receive comment.

A few scholars, most notably OTIS³, have presented schematic analyses of the passage and have illustrated some of the balances and correspondences which occur between the sections of the narrative. It is not

¹ THOMAS, vol.2, p.202, says that the Aristaeus episode and its relationship to the rest of the Georgics is "perhaps the most difficult exegetical problem in Roman poetry". GRIFFIN, pp.163-64, lists 17 earlier interpretations.

² I offer these schemata despite WILKINSON (1969), p.75 (echoed by THOMAS, vol.1, p.12): "Tabular schemes are useful but unreadable" - a view with which I have some sympathy.

³ OTIS, pp.190-192.

my intention simply to reiterate their findings; however, in order to facilitate the discussion and for the convenience of the reader, I include the following schema which offers justifications for the suggested divisions (something which previous scholars have not done):

315 - 316 (2 lines)

The formal address to the Muses and the two one-line questions posed to them I treat as a bridge passage to the epyllion.

1) 317 - 332 (16 lines)

The loss of Aristaeus' bees and his complaint to Cyrene begin the narrative. The section begins with agricultural loss - Aristaeus' bees (amissis ... apibus, 319) - and ends with implied agricultural loss as Aristaeus sarcastically suggests that Cyrene destroy his crops, vines, etc.

2) 333 - 360, inferret (27+ lines)

The second section includes the description of the activity in Cyrene's thalamus and the catalogue of nymphs and concludes with Cyrene's instructions to Arethusa that she bring Aristaeus to her. The beginning of the section is clearly indicated by at (333) which marks the shift from Aristaeus, standing at the sacrum caput ... amnis (319), to Cyrene in her thalamus beneath the river. The ring-composition (fluminis alti, 333 and alta...flumina, 359-60) sets the lines off as a unit.

3) 360, at - 386 (26+ lines)

Aristaeus enters Cyrene's thalamus where he sees the source of all the rivers of the world. The feast in Cyrene's thalamus and the libations to Ocean are described. Again Virgil uses at (360) to mark the beginning of a section and again the lines are set off by a ring-composition with reference to liquids at the beginning (unda, 361 and amnem, 362) and at the end (liquido ... nectare, 384).

4) 387 - 414 (28 lines)

Cyrene tells Aristaeus to seek the advice of Proteus but warns that Proteus must be captured and held as he undergoes his various transformations before he will offer ulla praecepta. The shift to direct

speech clearly denotes the beginning of the section and Cyrene's whole speech forms a natural unit. It is important to note too that her speech is surrounded (though outside the section) by the formulae sic incipit ipsa (385) and haec ait (415) and by the verbal echoes liquido ... perfundit (384) and liquidum ... defundit (415).

5) 415 - 424 (10 lines)

Cyrene prepares Aristaeus for his encounter with Proteus by covering him with ambrosia. She stations him in Proteus' cave (on which there is a brief descriptive digression) to await his return. Again there is ring-structure: Cyrene (415f.), Aristaeus (416-8), the cave (418-422), Aristaeus (423), Cyrene (423f.).

6) 425 - 452 (28 lines)

Proteus returns to his cave. Aristaeus attacks him and holds him fast. After Proteus returns to his proper form Aristaeus questions him. The transition to this section is effected by the temporal adverb iam (425). Also it is set off by ring composition - the heat and light of the sun (425ff.) and the flashing anger in Proteus' eyes (451). Note ardebat (426) and ardenti (451) and sol igneus (426) and lumine glauco (451).

7) 453 - 527 (75 lines)

Proteus tells the story of Orpheus' descent into the Underworld to bring back Eurydice. (For the structure of this, the inset story, see below).

8) 528 - 547 (20 lines)

Cyrene interprets the story related by Proteus. She tells Aristaeus that he must appease Eurydice's companions - the nymphs, and make offerings to Orpheus and Eurydice. The section begins with the formulaic Haec Proteus (cp. 415) and forms a natural unit in that it contains Cyrene's instructions (in direct speech).

9) 548 - 558 (11 lines)

Aristaeus promptly carries out Cyrene's instructions and after nine days bees appear from the flesh of the oxen offered to the nymphs. The section which begins with the temporal expression (cp. 425) haud mora (548) contains the execution of the instructions and thus is a natural unit.

This outline, though developed independently, is similar to that given by OTIS.⁴ Of course minor differences occur.

Even a cursory reading of this schema reveals the care with which Virgil has structured his narrative. There is a balance between the lament of Aristaeus (section 1) and the speech of advice given by Cyrene (section 4) in that both include direct speech. The two intervening sections (2 and 3) are mainly descriptive and each contains a catalogue. Furthermore, sections 2 and 3 are very nearly the same length while sections 4 and 6 are, as OTIS also remarks⁵, exactly 28 lines. These two sections are further linked by verbal reminiscences (e.g. at 401ff. and 425ff. and 406f. and 441f.). In addition, Cyrene twice gives instructions (sections 4 and 8) and twice Aristaeus acts upon her instructions (sections 6 and 9) and just as 4 and 6 include verbal correspondences so do 8 and 9 (e.g. 538 and 550, 544f. and 553f.). These verbal correspondences are very precise but Virgil also uses words and motifs more subtly to link adjoining sections. The following example illustrates this technique:

⁴ OTIS actually presents two schemata, pp.190-2. One, more detailed, is similar to mine. In the second he joins together some of his smaller sections and concludes that there are eight major divisions. NORDEN (1966), p.478, also offers a schema with eight sections. See also SAINT-DENIS, p.xxxix and RICHTER, p.412. For discussion of "Numerical Schematism in the Georgics", see WILKINSON (1969), Appendix 2.

⁵ OTIS, p.192.

pastor Aristaeus fugiens Peneia Tempe,
amissis, ut fama, apibus morboque fameque,
tristis ad extremi sacrum caput astitit amnis
multa querens, atque hac adfatus voce parentem:
(317-320)

tristis Aristaeus Penei genitoris ad undam
stat lacrimans, et te crudelem nomine dicit.
(355-356)

There is not exact correspondence but the repetition of words and motifs links the two passages together. In both Aristaeus' name appears in the same position in the line, Penei recalls Peneia and tristis is repeated (at the beginning of a line). Also both contain references to Aristaeus' tearful lamentation beside the river where he stands calling to Cyrene.

OTIS points out, as have numerous other scholars, that the centrepiece of Virgil's narrative is the story of Orpheus and Eurydice which is "framed" by the material dealing with Aristaeus. THOMAS defines more precisely this "frame" or ring structure:

The whole sequence unfolds as a progressive series (Aristaeus, 315-32; Aristaeus and Cyrene, 333-414; Aristaeus and Proteus, 415-52; Orpheus, 453-527...), which then briefly retraces itself (Proteus, 528-9; Aristaeus and Cyrene, 530-47; Aristaeus, 548-58)...⁶

I am somewhat sceptical of this analysis because the reference to Proteus at 528-9 does not really include Aristaeus but refers only to his departure from the scene which leaves Cyrene to interpret the story of Orpheus

⁶ THOMAS, vol.2, p.201.

and Eurydice. Also, Aristaeus is apparently not alone at 548-58 as the verb aspiciunt (555) makes clear. I do agree, however, that there is a ring structure and tentatively suggest the following: sections 8 and 9 are balanced by and form a ring with section 1 - Aristaeus' lament. Cyrene's speech, interpreting Proteus' words and instructing Aristaeus about the course of action to be taken, parallels and, in effect, answers Aristaeus' speech in section 1 (note the opening words of their respective speeches: mater, 321 and nate, 531) and the restoration of his bees in section 9 recalls their earlier loss (cp. apibus, 318 and apes, 556; sacrum caput, 319 and sacrum cruorem, 542).⁷

In his discussion of ring-composition, CAIRNS defines the term in both a major and a minor sense:

In its minor sense it refers to the poet's return at the end of a poem or section of a poem to the initial theme or words of that poem or section. In its major sense ... it refers to a mode of composition in which, within a poem or section of a poem, a number of themes are handled until a central point is reached; then the same themes are rehandled in reverse order. This gives a pattern of the type A1 B1 C1 D1 E D2 C2 B2 A2. Many variations are possible within rings. For instance, ... the order of two items may be reversed, e.g. A1 B1 C1 D1 E D2 B2 C2 A2.⁸

⁷ THOMAS, vol.2, pp.201-2, e.g. points out that the final section also balances 281ff. in that both deal with bugonia. WILKINSON (1969), p.113, notes that the form of sacrifice given by Cyrene (538-43) is much simpler than the method described at 295-314.

⁸ CAIRNS (1979), p.193.

If my suggestion concerning the ring-composition of the whole episode has merit, it would seem that the epyllion exhibits, to use CAIRNS' term, a "minor ring-composition".

There is, however, a "major ring-composition" in the inset story of Orpheus and Eurydice, as the following schema shows⁹:

- A1 453-456 Orpheus' emotional reaction to Eurydice's first death (note miserabilis, 454 and Orpheus' anger and desire for revenge).
- B1 457-459 Eurydice's death (note illa quidem, 457 and vidit, 459).
- C1 460-466 Mourning for Eurydice (note the northern setting, the references to mountains and to a river, flerunt, 461 and solo 465).
- D1 467-470 Orpheus' descent into the Underworld (note nescia ... mansuescere corda, 470).
- E 471-484 The effect of Orpheus' song upon the inhabitants of the Underworld.
- D2 485-491 Orpheus' ascent with Eurydice (note scirent si ignoscere Manes, 489).
- B2 491-506 Eurydice's second death (note illa quidem, 506 and vidit, 502).
- C2 507-520 Second mourning for Eurydice (note the northern setting, the references to mountains and to a river, flet, 514 and solus, 517).
- A2 520-527 Orpheus' death and his emotional concern for Eurydice (note miseram, 526 and the anger of the Thracian women and their desire for revenge).

⁹ OTIS, p.199, offers a much different schema. See also NORWOOD, pp.354-5, whose schema is discussed by WILKINSON (1969), pp.327f.

It will be noticed that the order of two of the items in the schema is reversed. This not only varies the pattern but seems to emphasize the content of the two - the second loss and the second mourning.

Although the inset story has a definable structure apart from the whole, Virgil is (so far as we can tell) more careful to link it with the outer story than other authors of epyllia (see Chapter 2). This he accomplishes in several ways. First, a number of themes and motifs which appear or recur in the Aristaeus frame are also present in the description of Orpheus' attempt to bring Eurydice back from the underworld. Secondly, Virgil suggests a number of parallels between the situations of Aristaeus and Orpheus which help to link the two parts. Finally, there are certain features in the inner and outer stories which stand in sharp contrast.

In the first section of the epyllion - Aristaeus' loss and lament - a number of themes are introduced, some of which recur in the Aristaeus section and the Orpheus and Eurydice section, some of which reappear only in the latter:

- 1) The theme of "flight" is introduced at 317, fugiens Peneia Tempe and is repeated at 443, verum ubi nulla fugam reperit fallacia (of Proteus), at 457, dum te fugeret per flumina praeceps (of Eurydice's flight from Aristaeus), at 500, fugit diversa (of Eurydice's shade), and at 526, anima fugiente (of Orpheus in death).

- 2) "Loss" (i.e. death) appears first at 318, amissis ... apibus and is prominent in the Orpheus/ Eurydice story: the first and second loss of Eurydice (457ff., 491ff.), the dead in the Underworld (471ff.), and the simile of the nightingale (amissos queritur fetus, 512) and the death of Orpheus (520ff.).
- 3) References to water occur throughout.¹⁰ Aristaeus comes to the river Peneus to complain to Cyrene (sacrum caput ... amnis, 318) and both of Orpheus' laments take place beside water (465 and 502ff.). Eurydice dies near water (459) and both the Cocytus and Styx figure in the description of the Underworld (479f.). Orpheus' severed head is carried along by the river Hebrus (524) which is also named as one of Eurydice's mourners (463). Finally both Cyrene and Proteus as sea deities are closely associated with water.
- 4) There are five laments. At 320 (multa querens), Aristaeus complains to Cyrene. In the inset story Orpheus laments after Eurydice's first and second death (464ff. and 507ff.), Eurydice's speech to Orpheus becomes a lament for her own death (494ff.), and in the simile at 511ff. the nightingale mourns for her lost young (note especially queritur, 512).
- 5) The theme of love is important in both the outer and inner stories. At 324-5 Aristaeus asks Cyrene quo tibi nostri/ pulsus amor? In fact, throughout the outer story Cyrene's love and concern for her son motivates her actions in helping Aristaeus achieve a successful outcome. In the inset story, Orpheus' love for Eurydice is clear from the depth of his grief - ipse ... solans ... aegrum ... amorem (464) - and from his willingness to descend into the Underworld for her and, tragically, it is his love which ultimately causes his failure: cum subita incautum dementia cepit amantem (488).

¹⁰ CRABBE discusses in detail the connection between Catullus 64 and Virgil's Aristaeus. She traces the appearance of water and water imagery in both. She notes (p.344) the following structural pattern in the Aristaeus episode: "The sequence of flight, loss, lament by water, and descent returns three times, first of Aristaeus after the loss of his bees, then of Eurydice fleeing from Aristaeus and lost to Orpheus who weeps and descends in search of her, and finally with Eurydice's second flight the series begins a third time and Orpheus' second loss and lament follow."

- 6) The theme of wasted labour is introduced in Aristaeus' lament to Cyrene (326ff.) and appears again at 492 when Orpheus turns back and his efforts come to naught (effusus labor).

In addition to these I would suggest there are other motifs and words which help to connect the inner and outer stories and to bind together the whole narrative: the adjective altus (in its various senses) occurs nine times (333, 359, 368, 459, 462, 467, 528, 533, 541); there are three references to entrancing song (345ff., 471f., 510ff.); liquids other than water are mentioned at 356, 461, 505, 509 (tears), 379ff. (wine), 415 (ambrosia) and 555 (liquefacta boum per viscera); Cyrene and the Nymphs appear in the Aristaeus section and in the inset story the Dryads (460) are Eurydice's companions and are responsible for Aristaeus' loss (532f.); lists containing geographical names are given at 367ff., 421ff. and 517ff.; gods play significant roles in both narratives - Cyrene and Proteus in the Aristaeus frame and Dis and Proserpina in the Orpheus/ Eurydice story; transformations are undergone by Proteus, Eurydice (as she disappears back into the Underworld) and the rotting flesh of the sacrificed oxen (into bees).

Besides these linking themes and motifs, there are clear parallels between the circumstances of Aristaeus and Orpheus. Both have experienced a loss, both undertake "descents", and each faces a trial - Orpheus must overcome the powers of the Underworld, Aristaeus struggles with Proteus.

Finally, I would suggest, there occur a number of contrasts between the inner and outer stories which help to link them together:

- 1) Aristaeus' loss is recognized to be relatively unimportant - nati fletus cognovit inanis/Cyrene (375-6) - compared with Orpheus' tragic loss.
- 2) While both Aristaeus and Orpheus are alone when they make their laments, Aristaeus has a willing and sympathetic helper in Cyrene, Orpheus has no such person or god.
- 3) Orpheus' descent into the Underworld, as noted, parallels Aristaeus' descent to Cyrene's thalamus. However, Aristaeus' descent is aided by Cyrene and the Nymphs whereas Orpheus must descend unaided into the dreadful realm of Dis. There is contrast too in the warm glow of the fires and the hospitality of the nymphs (374ff.) and the bright colours included in the description of Cyrene's home (e.g. 335, 337, 347) with the chill (e.g. 506, 509), dark (e.g. 468, 478, 497) and inhospitable (e.g. 471, 489, 492) surroundings of the Underworld.
- 4) Aristaeus meets with success, he recovers his bees; Orpheus fails. There is the suggestion that Aristaeus succeeds because he carefully follows Cyrene's instructions and that Orpheus fails because he does not follow divine instructions.

In addition to these contrasts, I refer to OTIS¹¹, who has discussed in detail the objective Homeric style of the Aristaeus frame and the subjective, emotional tone of the Orpheus and Eurydice story and the contrast in mood between the two - the latter is tragic, the former ends happily.

¹¹ OTIS, pp.290ff. See also e.g. R.D. WILLIAMS, p.212.

CHAPTER 4

SETTING

Setting is an important element of narrative which so far has been almost entirely neglected by critics of the Georgics. The setting of the Aristaeus epyllion is not static. In the framing story the action shifts from the source of the river Peneus to Cyrene's thalamus deep beneath the river to Proteus' cave in Macedonia and concludes in a grove the precise geographical location of which is left vague. The inset story includes the cold wasteland of Thrace and the North and the dreadful landscape of the Underworld. The detail which Virgil provides concerning these diverse settings also varies. In some instances few details are given and the setting seems only to be included as a backdrop for the action, in others the description is full, vivid and colourful. By manipulating the different settings Virgil creates shifts in mood and atmosphere, slows or quickens the pace of the narrative and through contrasting elements heightens the effect and the emotional impact of certain scenes.¹

¹ While recognizing that Virgil's narrative operates on several different levels, I will not address (e.g.) the effect of literary reminiscences, particularly Homer, upon the tone and mood of the epyllion here except when such reminiscences are directly related to setting (see rather Chapter 6). There are a number of quite recent discussions of the function of setting in narrative. See (e.g.) CHATMAN, pp.138ff., FOWLER, pp.38-41, RIMMON-KENAN, pp.66-70, TOOLAN, pp.103-11,

In the first lines of his epyllion, Virgil offers the basic details of the first two settings. The story begins in Thessaly. Aristaeus' farm is located in the valley of Tempe (4.317) described at (327-31). Tempe is appropriately idyllic for Aristaeus as pastor² but the notion of loss introduced into the pastoral world is unsettling³ and, it is important to note, Virgil stresses that Aristaeus, in despair, is leaving this world behind. The adjective extremi (4.319) suggests the remoteness of the Peneus' source, on Mt. Pindus⁴, and reinforces the notion that Aristaeus is far from his home and so evokes some sympathy for his plight.

Aristaeus, then, is leaving the valley of Tempe and comes to the source of the river Peneus where he complains to his mother Cyrene. At first glance, the setting for Aristaeus' lament seems merely to add a touch of verisimilitude to the account and more importantly to provide necessary background for the action. If, as has been suggested, Virgil is the first to associate Aristaeus with bugonia, this information is required to orient the reader.⁵

143-45, and BAL, pp.43-5, 93-9.

² On the idyllic beauty of Tempe MYNORS, on 317, notes: "the wooded valley through which the Peneius flows eastwards between Olympus and Ossa to the sea, famous for its beauty (Hor. Carm. 1.7.4, Ov. Met.1.568-73)". See also NISBET and HUBBARD (1970), pp.96f.

³ Cp. Ecl. 1 & 9 on the land confiscations.

⁴ See PAULY-WISSOWA, vol.19, p.458, s.v. Peneios 2.

⁵ Even if one assumes that Virgil is following a lost earlier account of the story, Aristaeus is not the most familiar of figures and the details of setting would, I would suggest, still be needed.

Still, there are one or two touches to arouse the reader's interest. The choice of setting (i.e. the borders of Thrace, Macedonia and Epirus), it becomes clear, is dictated by the plot - Cyrene's home is there. By placing Cyrene in this region, Virgil seems to be adapting the traditional myth⁶ which makes her a huntress who was carried off from Thessaly to Libya by Apollo. It is surprising also because Aristaeus is called Arcadius magister (4.283) and keeps some of his cattle on the island of Ceos (1.14).

Having established the situation and the initial setting, Virgil keeps the reader in suspense by pausing to offer a vivid description of the scene in Cyrene's thalamus (4.333ff.). Its precise location is not yet specified. Rather, at 333, Virgil uses the adjective altus and reveals that Cyrene can only hear the sound of Aristaeus' voice, not his actual words to emphasize only that it is deep beneath the water. This detail lends an air of mystery to the narrative, while the very idea of a subaquatic dwelling and the presence of nymphs (which is heavily stressed by the relatively long -8 lines- list of their names at 336ff.) introduce a supernatural element.

While the picture which Virgil draws is colourful and rich, the atmosphere is one of peaceful tranquillity and "unearthly calm".⁷ The nymphs

⁶ At least the story told by Apollonius and Pindar (see above Chapter 1, Part A).

⁷ WILKINSON (1969), p.214.

are engaged in a domestic activity - spinning wool - while Clymene recounts stories of the love affairs of the gods but the catalogue of their names, all Greek, some attested nowhere else⁸, adds an exotic touch. The richness of the description is enhanced by the emphasis upon colour: the nymphs' hair, caesariem effusae nitidam per candida colla (337), flava Lycorias (339), Arethusa ... summa flavum caput extulit unda (351f.), their dress, ambae auro, pictis incinctae pellibus ambae (342) and their thrones, vitreisque sedilibus (350). All of the colours are bright and so together with the domestic scene, contribute to the overall atmosphere of cheerfulness. Even the fleeces which the nymphs are working are, like their thrones, glass-green (335) - a delicately humorous touch (since Milesian wool which would be scarlet on land has taken on the colour of the sea)⁹. By the addition of the detail that the fleeces are Milesian (334), Virgil deftly suggests their high quality.¹⁰

This vivid description is in part included for its own sake - such description being a feature of epyllia - but the cheerful domestic scene also contrasts with Aristaeus' despair and flight from his home. Equally important is the fact that it slows the pace of the narrative and builds anticipation so that

⁸ See THOMAS, vol.2, pp.207-10.

⁹ For the colour of the wool under the water, hyali=glass-green, and for evidence that Milesian wool was scarlet in colour on land see MYNORS, on 334.

¹⁰ MYNORS, on 334.

when the mood is broken by Aristaeus' second cry, the startled reaction of Cyrene and the other nymphs and the dramatic effect of Aristaeus' descent are even more forceful, juxtaposed as they are with this scene.

At 351ff. the focus of the action shifts back briefly to the world above. Arethusa surfaces and, hearing Aristaeus' second (or third?) cry of lamentation, calls to Cyrene. Now Cyrene acts. Aristaeus is surrounded by a wall of water and carried down to Cyrene's home. The supernatural aspect implicit in the earlier description of Cyrene's thalamus becomes more pronounced as Aristaeus is admitted to the subaquatic world in which she dwells. Above, on land, the water curves in montis faciem at Cyrene's command. Almost at once Aristaeus has come to the depths of the river and further details of Cyrene's world are provided. Of course it is very wet (in 362ff. Virgil uses a number of different words for water and moisture to underscore this impression) but it apparently has its own air and atmosphere. There are pools and underground groves ringed by caves and around these the water roars and echoes (364f.), and, as a climax, Aristaeus gazes upon the subaquatic source for all the rivers of the world. This final extraordinary detail is given textual prominence by the list of geographical names (for the technique cp. the list of names of the nymphs). The impact of this vivid scene is powerful. It is a supernatural and marvellous setting and Aristaeus is overwhelmed by what he sees (mirans, 363; stupefactus, 365).

Once Aristaeus enters Cyrene's thalamus the atmosphere, in contrast with the scene which immediately precedes, is again calm and peaceful. The vaulted roof, pendentia pumice tecta (374), of the chamber suggests that it is actually inside a cave and so protected. Again, the nymphs are engaged in a domestic activity providing food and wine to Aristaeus. The emphasis upon the warmth and brightness of the fires upon the altar (379, 384f.) adds to the overall cheerful effect of the scene.

The setting remains unchanged as Cyrene reveals what Aristaeus must do, then it shifts from Cyrene's underwater home to Proteus' cave in Macedonia.¹¹ The general location of the cave has already been established and how it has come about that Proteus is there has been explained (390f.). Virgil omits the journey from the source of the river Peneus to Pallene and instead offers a vivid description of the appearance of the cave from the outside (418ff.). This ecphrasis slows the pace of the narrative and delays the description of the confrontation between Proteus and Aristaeus. It is an attractive picture, the spot is a locus amoenus, and the detail that the inlet in which the cave is situated has, in the past, served as a statio tutissima nautis

¹¹ The precise location of Proteus' cave is not specified. Virgil may have left its location vague intentionally to create an air of mystery. THOMAS, on 390-1, notes that Callimachus in the Victoria Berenices (SH fr.254.5) called Proteus the seer from Pallene and that Lycophron (Alex. 126-7) also associated Proteus with the western peninsula of Chalcidice. The use of this tradition suits the northern setting of the epyllion and Virgil may have chosen it as a learned allusion (doctrina).

(421) removes any impression that the area is dangerous or threatening.

Although Cyrene and Aristaeus are concealed inside the cave where it is dark, outside the midday sun is shining brightly and the brightness of the sun and the searing heat (425ff.) contrast with the cool darkness of the cave, thus stressing the attractiveness of the latter. Again Virgil places Aristaeus in a pleasant setting.

The framing story concludes in an attractive setting as well - in the grove of the nymphs where Aristaeus carries out the sacrifices which lead to the restoration of his bees. Here the setting is almost completely secondary to the action and the grove is described only as "leafy" (frondoso, 543) and having alta...delubra dearum (541).¹²

Before an examination of the Orpheus/Eurydice portion of the narrative is undertaken, one or two general observations about the Aristaeus story are in order. First, the various settings associated with Aristaeus are

¹² The precise location of this grove is problematic. Cyrene tells Aristaeus that he must select four bulls and four heifers from his herd which is grazing on Mt. Lycaeus. All commentators duly point out that Lycaeus is in Arcadia but no one, it seems, has satisfactorily explained why Aristaeus must journey all the way to Arcadia to complete the required sacrifices when he has cattle in Tempe. MYNORS, on 539, seems to suggest that the reference need not be specific: "No doubt the word [Lycaeus] never loses all its Arcadian colouring, but it has started on the road successfully travelled by Tempe, and can be used of mountain pastures quite generally...". This is not very convincing. Throughout his narrative, Virgil is quite precise and deliberate in setting the geographical location of the actions and it is difficult to disregard the specific reference here. See further Chapter 6, Section 8.

pleasant and this accords well with the eventual happy outcome and the overall optimistic mood. As well, the supernatural and the marvellous - the nymphs, the underwater world in which Aristaeus, a mortal, can survive - play a prominent role. However, in the Aristaeus story, this supernatural element is seldom threatening but, for the most part, benign.

The mood and tone of the inset story are dramatically different and the setting, the North and the Underworld, reflects this difference. The narrative begins with the death of Eurydice. While Virgil does not specify that Eurydice died in Thrace, the fact that Thrace is associated with Orpheus and the list of geographical names (461ff.) suggest that she did. The main detail of setting is that she died in or near a river. The association of death with a river is repeated at the end of the Orpheus and Eurydice story when Orpheus' head is swept along by the river Hebrus (523ff.) and also rivers are part of the landscape of the Underworld (479, 480, 506).

The importance of rivers in the inset story recalls the fact that the Aristaeus episode begins beside the river Peneus and that water is an important setting throughout. However, there is a major point of contrast: in the Aristaeus episode, rivers and water are not associated with death (in fact when Aristaeus comes to the river Peneus he begins a process which leads ultimately to the restoration of his bees).

The list of geographical names at 460ff. recalls the list of names of

rivers at 367ff. Here the place names clarify the location of Eurydice's death. In addition, the opening scene, like several of the settings of the Aristaeus story, contains supernatural elements: there are nymphs (460) (who unlike the nymphs in the outer story are in mourning) and the pathetic fallacy of the mountains and territories of Thrace in tears (461ff.).¹³

Finally, Orpheus, like Aristaeus, makes a lament beside water (464ff.), he too is apparently alone (solo, 465) but unlike Aristaeus has no one beneath the surface of the water to help him in his despair.

Like Aristaeus, Orpheus descends into a subterranean world¹⁴ but, as noted, he is alone and the difference in atmosphere at the end of their respective descents is immediately obvious. Orpheus comes to a grove (cp. the underwater groves outside Cyrene's thalamus). The location of this grove is vague, which contributes to the eerie, other-worldly atmosphere, and the description of it is chilly, gloomy and mysterious: caligantem nigra formidine

¹³ The pathetic fallacy itself stresses the sadness that followed Eurydice's death and the list of geographical and proper names further emphasizes the point. The fact that even mountains weep is particularly effective since the mountains are presumably rocky and rocks were proverbially associated with hard-heartedness (see e.g. Aesch. P.V. 244). As well, Virgil chooses the epithet mavortia (=war-like) to describe the land of Rhesus and the notion that such a land would weep suggests the depth of sorrow at Eurydice's death. Finally, the length of the list in which reference is made to the mountains, the land, the rivers and peoples of the region heightens the perception that the sorrow was pervasive.

¹⁴ Orpheus' descent into the Underworld must have required a journey south to Laconia. Virgil obviously omits this and so speeds up the pace of the narrative to reach the important descent.

lucum (468). Orpheus meets not nymphs but the inhabitants of the Underworld: Manisque adiit regemque tremendum (469), then the pitiful (see especially 476f.) and insubstantial (472) shades who flock in their thousands, attracted by Orpheus' song, the Eumenides (whose hair, unlike Arethusa's, is not golden, 482), Cerberus and Ixion. The description of the inhabitants of the place creates a picture that is at once supernatural, pitiful and horrible. The landscape also contributes to this overall mood and atmosphere. Instead of a chamber bright, warm and colourful, the landscape of the Underworld is dark, unattractive, and evokes terror: limus niger, deformis harundo/ Cocyti, palus inamabilis (478f.). In short, it is a terrible place and one of the main impressions Virgil emphasizes is its darkness (see 468, 472, 478, 482, 497), which contrasts not only with the brightness of Cyrene's thalamus but also with the midday setting of Aristaeus' confrontation with Proteus.

As Orpheus and Eurydice ascend, the setting is almost completely ignored and the journey upward is left to the reader's imagination. Virgil concentrates instead on the climactic second loss of Eurydice.

After Eurydice has disappeared back among the shades, Orpheus, it seems, returns briefly to the Styx (502f.) but is forbidden to cross. Now the setting shifts back to Thrace where it began (507ff.). Whereas Aristaeus' quest to restore his bees ends in a pleasant, leafy grove in Arcadia, for Orpheus there is loneliness (deserti ad Strymonis undam, 508; flesse sibi, 509; the list of

geographical names, 517ff. all in Thrace and the far north; solus, 517) and cold (gelidus, 509; glacies, 517; nivalem, 517; pruinis, 518; frigida, 525), which stress his isolation and so contribute to the mood of pathos and reflect not only Eurydice's second loss but also Orpheus' death and so suit the unrelentingly tragic nature of the inner story.

CHAPTER 5
CHARACTERIZATION

To my knowledge, no one has yet presented a formal and systematic analysis of characterization in the *Aristaeus* epyllion.¹ Yet one need only think of the complexity and subtlety of many of the characters of the *Aeneid* to recognize the skill and sensitivity which Virgil brings to this element of his narrative. Of course the scope, length and nature of the epyllion form are less well-suited than epic to highly developed characterization. However, this does not mean that it is or should be ignored. The epyllion, I have suggested (see Chapter 2), is a Hellenistic invention. HUTCHINSON has argued convincingly that "Hellenistic poets commonly derive their effects and their impact from piquant combinations of, or delicate hovering between, the serious and the

¹ It goes without saying that the body of scholarship on the *Georgics* as a whole and on the *Aristaeus* epyllion, especially, is vast. Many interpretations have been offered, none universally accepted. To a greater or lesser extent scholars have commented upon characterization in the course of their arguments. No one has undertaken the kind of analysis presented here (which I believe includes fresh insights). The views presented by others, especially concerning *Aristaeus* and *Orpheus*, vary in accordance with how the epyllion is interpreted. GRIFFIN, pp.163-4, (to whom I referred briefly above - see Chapter 3, n.1) provides a brief but invaluable summary of opinions (up to 1979). As GRIFFIN notes, some have seen the *Aristaeus* episode as political propaganda, others see a moral point to the passage, still others a religious significance, etc.

unserious, the grand and the less grand."² He has also identified their predilection for the bizarre.³

One element of narrative that may reflect these interests is characterization and my assessment of the characters in Virgil's *epyllion* will rest, in part, upon the recognition of this. Of equal, if not more, importance is Virgil's text. My analysis of the characters in the *epyllion* will also incorporate and apply to the text principles derived from various narratological studies.⁴ For the sake of clarity, I shall summarize the criteria to be applied: 1) first impressions are important - details of character initially brought to the reader's attention have impact; 2) points of character are stressed through repetition; 3) the analysis of nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs can be of great assistance in developing a reading of character (e.g. active verbs may imply that a particular character is vigorous); 4) emotions are important for depicting character and engaging the reader (emotions can be conveyed by simple description or by revealing the character's thoughts, by the character's speech or action); 5) contrasts, especially between characters, heighten the impact of the contrasting items and create interest.

² HUTCHINSON, p.11.

³ HUTCHINSON, pp.13ff.

⁴ See e.g. BAL, pp.25-36, 79-83; CHATMAN, pp.107-145; RIMMON-KENAN, pp.29-42, 59-70.

PART A: ARISTAEUS

The protagonist of the epyllion is Aristaeus. The entire outer story revolves around his loss and the process by which he recovers his bees, and it is Aristaeus who provides the link between the inner story of Orpheus and Eurydice and the outer story of bugonia.

Before the question of the character of Aristaeus in the epyllion is addressed, the two earlier references to him in the Georgics require comment. In neither instance is he specifically named. At 1.14f. he is described as cultor nemorum, cui pingua Caeae/ ter centum nivei tondent dumeta iuveni,⁵ and at 4.283f. Virgil, introducing advice about what one must do if one's bees have been lost, writes tempus et Arcadii memoranda inventa magistri/ pandere.⁶ In the first instance, Virgil places Aristaeus among the rustic deities whom he invokes to show favour to the composition of his song. In the second reference, Aristaeus is Arcadius magister. The phrase recalls the notion that Aristaeus is a εὐρετής: an inventor of agricultural techniques who so benefitted mankind that he was worshipped as a god.⁷ In short, these allusions, though

⁵ For the identification of Aristaeus as cultor nemorum see Servius, on G. 1.14. To my knowledge no subsequent commentator has questioned the identification.

⁶ Again, for the identification see Servius, on G. 4.283.

⁷ Aristaeus, it must be admitted, is not the most familiar of mythological characters and the question of his divinity requires comment. He is the son of a god, Apollo, and a nymph (although Cyrene's nature varies) - see Chapter 1 Part A. His parentage, therefore, does not assure him divine status. PEASE,

brief, are in keeping with accounts and myths in earlier authors and, though this is not spelled out, Aristaeus would seem to be a revered, august figure.

The epyllion is introduced by two one-line questions addressed to the Muse (315-16):

Quis deus hanc, Musae, quis nobis extudit artem ?
unde nova ingressus hominum experientia cepit?

MYNORS comments upon these lines: "a new and exciting topic is marked by a direct appeal to the Muse, a Homeric device".⁸ THOMAS remarks that "The sudden elevation, with the theme presented through a question addressed to the Muse, initiates a Homeric tone ...".⁹ The comments of both are quite valid. However, neither MYNORS nor THOMAS, nor (so far as I have been able to ascertain) any other commentator suggests how this relates to the opening lines of the epyllion.¹⁰ Given that Aristaeus is represented as a deity or

commenting upon Cic. N.D. 3.45, notes that A.D. NOCK thinks "Aristaeus originally a minor god, who ... was transformed by myth into a human being and then redefined on the basis of his supposed benefits to the human race". See also Diod.Sic. 4.82.6 and Chapter 1 Part A for the apotheosis of Aristaeus. I would argue that Virgil seems to adhere to the view that Aristaeus was a mortal who received divine honours because of his inventions.

⁸ MYNORS, on 315-16.

⁹ THOMAS, on 315.

¹⁰ MYNORS, on 317, states "pastor: is important. In 1.14 Aristaeus was a deity; in this story he is a shepherd and still mortal (though with expectations), and no association with Jupiter or with Apollo Nomius is suggested." W.B. ANDERSON, p.42 n.3, also points out that Aristaeus has not yet achieved divine status. However, neither develops the point. The allusions to Aristaeus' divine

magister earlier in the Georgics and given the elevated tone and its suggestion that a god was responsible for the process whereby bees are born miraculously from the flesh of oxen, Virgil's response to the question Quis deus etc. (i.e. pastor Aristaeus, with pastor emphatically placed) comes as a complete surprise. This answer gives the first indication that Aristaeus has not yet achieved divine status at the time of the events described (note also vitae mortalis in 326). In fact there may be a hint that the discovery of bugonia occurred early in Aristaeus' career when he was still a shepherd (and so possibly he is only a youth).

In the first section of the epyllion (317-332) Virgil reinforces this first impression in his description of Aristaeus' actions and his reaction to the loss of his bees. First, he is fleeing from Tempe (fugiens, 317), second, he is saddened by the loss of his bees (tristis, 319) and, finally, he laments over and over to his mother (multa querens, 320). By the end of Aristaeus' speech (332), the reference fugiens Peneia Tempe (317) has been explained: Aristaeus had a farm there. His response to the loss of his bees, then, is to abandon his farm - an irresponsible act or, at the very least, an immature reaction to adversity which does not accord well with an image of him as a resourceful farmer and inventor. His sorrow at the loss of his bees is

parentage at 4.325 and 4.358f. may be subtle hints of his eventual divinity or simply intimate that he is of divine descent.

understandable and by emphasizing it (tristis is placed at the beginning of 319) Virgil engages the reader's sympathy; however, it does not provide a solution to his loss. Finally, there is his lament. Virtually every recent commentator¹¹ has noted the Homeric parallels for Aristaeus' lament to his mother Cyrene (Achilles' laments to Thetis at Il. 1.348-56 and Il. 18.79-83). In addition, many scholars have reacted favourably to OTIS' insight that these parallels reflect the epic objectivity with which the Aristaeus portion of the epyllion is presented.¹² This view has much to recommend it but I wonder whether or not Virgil, by this literary reminiscence, is not subtly suggesting how one is to react to Aristaeus' character. Surely he is not implying that Aristaeus is a great hero like Achilles.¹³ Achilles is a Homeric hero - a proud warrior to whom honour is paramount. Aristaeus, on the other hand, has not yet reached even full heroic status (and Virgil has emphasized this - pastor is the first word of the epyllion), though he will in the future; rather, Aristaeus is simply a shepherd. For him his

¹¹ See e.g. THOMAS, on 315-32 and R.D. WILLIAMS, on 321.

¹² OTIS, pp.190f. See also R.D. WILLIAMS, on 315-424.

¹³ For an opposing view of the relevance of the literary reminiscence see MILES, p.257: Aristaeus is "no ordinary shepherd"; and p.260: "The obvious parallels between that passage [Il. 1.348-56] and Aristaeus' lament to his own divine mother clearly help to reconfirm Aristaeus' status as a hero." MYNORS, on 319-20, on the other hand, seems to take a much more negative attitude toward Aristaeus: "this tearful creature, who can only do what he is told, is far removed from the competent inventor and benefactor of the Aristaeus-legend." The former seems to me to miss the point of pastor, the latter seems a bit too harsh on Aristaeus.

agricultural accomplishments are vitae mortalis honorem (326). I would tentatively argue, therefore, that it is incongruous, even rather amusing, that Aristaeus should be depicted like Achilles and that the opening lines of the epyllion after the solemn introductory couplet are mock-epic in tone.¹⁴

The lament itself is sarcastic and petulant.¹⁵ In the opening lines of the epyllion Virgil has offered some surprising revelations concerning Aristaeus' character and now, by giving the actual words of the lament, he adds to the overall impression. Aristaeus begins impudently, addressing his mother by name¹⁶ and questioning whether or not Apollo is really his father (323). There follow a series of indignant questions and the sarcastic suggestion that Cyrene destroy the other fruits of his labour since his bees have been lost (329ff.). Aristaeus accepts no responsibility for his loss but seems to suggest that Cyrene is somehow at fault because as a deity she could have protected his bees but did not (326-28):

¹⁴ If one accepts that one of the characteristics of an epyllion is the "un-epic" treatment of a subject suitable to epic, then the mock-epic treatment of Aristaeus is completely in keeping with the form.

¹⁵ WILKINSON (1969), p.214, discusses the passage in question and makes the interesting observation that the "precedent for this sarcasm in Homer is uttered by Thetis to Zeus, not by Achilles to her (*Il.* 1.515-16)". He also comments upon Aristaeus' petulance, but does not specify whether he thinks that Aristaeus is despicable because of his petulance or simply rather immature but harmless. I would argue for the latter since it is unlikely that Virgil would want his readers to be hostile to his protagonist.

¹⁶ See Servius, on 321: invidiosum est nomine parentes vocare.

en etiam hunc ipsum vitae mortalis honorem,
quem mihi vix frugum et pecudum custodia sollers
omnia temptanti extuderat, te matre relinquo.

Aristaeus' reasoning reflects his immaturity - "since I have lost my bees, even though you are my mother, I abandon all my crops and herds. You might just as well destroy them as well."

To sum up: In the first sixteen lines of his epyllion, Virgil introduces the protagonist of the piece. There are several surprising details in the presentation of Aristaeus which heighten the impact of his character and engage the reader's interest. In the first place, he is not yet a deity nor has he even reached full heroic status. Instead, he is a shepherd and farmer; and not a particularly resourceful farmer at that. Virgil describes Aristaeus' reactions to the loss of his bees - flight and lamentation. He reveals the thoughts of his protagonist not through direct description (except tristis) but through Aristaeus' address to his mother. The petulant and sarcastic tone of his lament adds to the emerging picture of Aristaeus' character as a rather immature, yet on the whole harmless young shepherd. The cumulative effect of the details which Virgil chooses to highlight reinforces this impression of the character of Aristaeus. Finally, Virgil uses gentle humour and a mock-epic tone in describing Aristaeus' situation and thereby both lightens the mood and avoids alienating the reader from his protagonist.

After the long description of Cyrene's thalamus (333-348), Aristaeus

repeats his complaint: iterum maternas impulit auris/ luctus Aristaei (349-50).

Now Arethusa rises to the surface of the river and calls out to Cyrene (354-56):

Cyrene soror, ipse tibi, tua maxima cura,
tristis Aristaeus Penei genitoris ad undam
stat lacrimans, et te crudelem nomine dicit.

Aristaeus is still standing by the side of the river, still weeping. It is not uncommon even for Homeric warriors to burst into tears - Achilles does so at Il. 1.349, for example -but by repeating and therefore stressing that Aristaeus continues his lamentation, Virgil may be suggesting that Aristaeus is over-reacting. In addition, he reinforces the impression that Aristaeus is inexperienced and unable to provide a solution to remedy his loss.

Instead, it is Cyrene who takes control. In all that follows, consistent with the picture of him that Virgil has drawn, Aristaeus acts only in accordance with Cyrene's instructions and is aided by her in every trial that he faces.¹⁷ Virgil's description of Aristaeus' descent beneath the river Peneus (359ff.), I believe, helps to demonstrate my point. At Cyrene's command, the waters part and Aristaeus finds himself in his mother's domain. There is no suggestion that Aristaeus would have acted of his own volition.¹⁸ Virgil emphasizes Aristaeus' astonishment (mirans, 363) as he enters the subaquatic world and his bewilderment (stupefactus, 365) at the roar of the subterranean rivers. ibat

¹⁷ Curiously, SEGAL (1989), p.45, states that Aristaeus is a "man of work and action". Apart from extuderat (328), I can find no evidence in the text to support this assertion.

¹⁸ Contrast, e.g., Theseus who, at Bacchyl. 17.94 (CAMPBELL) leaps into the sea of his own accord in response to Minos' challenge that he prove himself to be the son of Poseidon.

(365) and spectabat (367) also contribute to the picture of Aristaeus' bemused reaction to what has happened since neither verb suggests that Aristaeus is vigorously attempting to take charge of the situation. His response to what he sees and hears, it may be argued, is not unnatural - the world he has entered is after all strange and mysterious. Even so, I think it is fair to say that Virgil seems subtly to be reinforcing (though with less humour) the initial impression that Aristaeus is something less than a heroic figure¹⁹ and one of the ways in which he achieves this is through the cumulative effect of the participles and verbs used to describe Aristaeus' actions.

Virgil elliptically suggests that Aristaeus, once he has entered Cyrene's cave, tearfully repeats the whole tale of his plight: nati fletus cognovit inanis/ Cyrene (375f.).²⁰ Again Aristaeus weeps and again Cyrene takes

¹⁹ One wonders how a hero of the stature of Heracles or Achilles, for example, would have reacted if he were to find himself in a situation similar to Aristaeus'.

²⁰ On inanis MYNORS, on 375, comments: "not baseless (his sufferings were real enough), nor ill-directed (who [sic] could he appeal to except his mother?), nor unnecessary (to say with Heyne that the cure for his troubles was 'facilis et parata' is to contradict the whole context), but fruitless because they do no good, being unaccompanied by action...". Certainly the interpretation "fruitless" fits the context and would be consistent with Aristaeus' character. However, I am not convinced that MYNORS' view takes into account Cyrene's character (see below). She is deeply concerned for Aristaeus and it is unlikely that she would have a feast prepared for him if she did not believe Aristaeus' sufferings were easily remedied. Therefore, HEYNE's suggestion is more attractive. Cyrene recognizes that Aristaeus' complaint is "unnecessary" because she has a plan of action to solve his problems. Rather than contradicting the context, as MYNORS would have it, this interpretation seems entirely consistent with it.

control of the situation. She orders that libations be poured to Oceanus (380f.) and prays to Oceanus and the Nymphs (381ff.). She then sets out the course of action that Aristaeus must take. She instructs him about the capture and questioning of Proteus (387ff.) and prepares him for the confrontation (415ff.) and positions him in Proteus' cave (423f.). After his implied speech, Aristaeus says nothing and apparently does exactly as he is told, without question. His passive role is particularly in evidence at 415ff. Cyrene is subject of the verbs perduxit (416) and conlocat (424) and so it is she who is in charge. Aristaeus, on the other hand, is the grammatical object - he undertakes no action.

With the introduction of Proteus, Virgil again uses Homer as his model in what is the longest sustained literary reminiscence in the epyllion: the confrontation between Menelaus and Proteus at Od. 4.351-570.²¹ Scholars have pointed out where Virgil's account coincides with Homer's and where it diverges.²²

One point where Virgil's treatment differs from Homer's is the way in which Cyrene uses ambrosia and, in my view, the significance of this change

²¹ The epyllion is, of course replete with other briefer literary reminiscences (see Chapter 6 for a full discussion). I am assuming that the inset story is, for the most part, Virgil's own creation and not borrowed from an earlier source (see Chapter 1, Part C).

²² THOMAS, on 415, 425-28, 433-36, notes the main differences between the two accounts: 1) Cyrene's use of ambrosia; 2) Virgil's emphasis upon the midday heat (425ff.); 3) Virgil's expansion of the simile which compares Proteus to a shepherd (cp. Od. 4.411ff. and G. 4.433ff.).

and its importance for understanding the character of Aristaeus has been overlooked. At Od. 4.441ff., Menelaus tells how Eidothea placed ambrosia beneath the noses of himself and his companions to combat the stench of the seal skins with which the heroes were covered to escape Proteus' detection. Cyrene, on the other hand, uses it to prepare Aristaeus for his attack on Proteus (415-18):

Haec ait et liquidum ambrosiae diffundit odorem,
quo totum nati corpus perduxit; at illi
dulcis compositis spiravit crinibus aura
atque habilis membris venit vigor.

No commentator has satisfactorily explained the reason why Virgil makes this change.²³ In addition to variatio, the change suggests that Aristaeus (unlike e.g. Menelaus) is incapable of facing Proteus without the divine aid of ambrosia to make him strong enough for the task²⁴ (and Cyrene herself is aware of

²³ MILES, p.268, and THOMAS, on 415, simply comment upon the adaptation of Homer and the efficacy of ambrosia in making Aristaeus more vigorous; SAINT-DENIS, p.72 n.1, and MYNORS, on 415-18, remark that Virgil's account lacks the "realism" of Homer's; WILKINSON (1969), p.218, says: "Virgil omits the naively amusing but unromantic trick of Eidothea and her deodorant activities: Homeric magic serves instead." OTIS, p.197, observes: "Obviously, Virgil is trying to select an exotic, a hardly human portion of Homer and to heighten its exotic character while preserving due decorum (hence the omission of the seal-skins, their smell &c.)". None of these commentators gives Virgil his due.

²⁴ Such intervention by a goddess on behalf of a favourite mortal is not unparalleled. THOMAS, on 415, cites Od. 8.18-23 where Athena makes Odysseus appear taller, etc. (but she does not use ambrosia to accomplish this). At Aen. 12.418-19, Venus applies a potion which has ambrosia as an ingredient to Aeneas' wound.

this). With this detail Virgil subtly adds to the picture of Aristaeus that he has created - a young and not particularly resourceful pastor and certainly not a hero in the mould of Achilles or Menelaus.

Finally comes the moment when Aristaeus must act. Proteus returns to his cave and, after counting his seals, settles down to sleep. There may be a hint that Aristaeus barely allows enough time for Proteus to fall asleep (note vix defessa, etc. at 438ff.) before he attacks. Perhaps Virgil intends to imply by the adverb vix that Aristaeus is over-anxious or perhaps only that he is eager to carry out his mother's instructions. Either interpretation would fit and enhance the impression that Aristaeus is an inexperienced young shepherd faced with a daunting task.²⁵

When Proteus' changes of shape have been of no avail and he has returned to his original form, he questions Aristaeus (445-46):

nam quis te, iuvenum confidentissime, nostras
iussit adire domos? quidve hinc petis?

²⁵ W.B. ANDERSON, p.40, makes the observation that in Homer Menelaus and his three companions rush at Proteus with a loud shout and that in Virgil Aristaeus attacks cum clamore magno. He argues that the shout by Menelaus and his companions is well-motivated since, outnumbering Proteus, they have reason to expect that they can frighten him and that he cannot escape them. The fact that Aristaeus should cry out and alert Proteus in advance of his attack (a detail used by some earlier scholars as evidence of hasty compilation to support the view that the Aristaeus episode replaced the laudes Galli) is viewed by ANDERSON as suggestive of Aristaeus' impetuous youthfulness. I would agree with ANDERSON that Virgil is likely consciously reworking Homer for effect but I feel that it is more likely that Aristaeus is over-anxious rather than impetuous.

The fact that Proteus addresses him as iuvenum confidentissime provides further confirmation of Aristaeus' youth.²⁶ The use of confidentissime by Proteus to describe Aristaeus requires comment. HUXLEY (seconded by R.D. WILLIAMS) remarks upon "the humorous use of this remarkable polysyllable [sc. confidentissime] to 'cut Aristaeus down to size'."²⁷ There may be a hint of irony as well. While it is true that confidens often has the sense "presumptuous", the word can also mean "confident" (OLD s.v.1). The repetition scis, Proteu, scis ipse (447) may suggest that Aristaeus is taken aback by Proteus' questions and is anything but confident that he has the old man under control.²⁸ In any case, the brief scene involving Proteus and Aristaeus adds to the overall impression of the latter as a simple young shepherd.

²⁶ MURGATROYD, on Tib.1.8.31-2, notes that though iuvenis can be applied to a male up to the age of 45, it can describe someone as young as 16. It seems to me, that within the context of the epyllion and based upon the preceding arguments concerning Aristaeus' character, his age is far less than the upper limit.

²⁷ HUXLEY, on 445 and R.D. WILLIAMS, on 445. THOMAS, ad loc., comments upon the rarity of the superlative form of confidens and notes further that "This is the only instance in the poem of a word extending from the third-foot caesura to the end of the fifth foot; the effect is one of great weight." Both the rarity and length of the word make for stress.

²⁸ For a different view see PERKELL (1989), p.72: "Proteus, having endured his [sc. Aristaeus'] assault, addresses him as iuvenum confidentissime ... Yet his aggression is not represented as daring or courageous, for Eurydice is an undefended female, and Proteus, another figure of nature, an exhausted old man". Among other things, this misses the humour of the phrase as does SEGAL's comment (1989, p.45): "[confidentissime] perhaps points retrospectively to that same quality of boldness, enterprise, trust in his power to act and compel that led him to pursue Eurydice ..."

If one accepts this view that Aristaeus is, at times almost a comic figure, somewhat immature yet on the whole rather harmless, then the impact of Proteus' revelation concerning Aristaeus' responsibility for the death of Eurydice is heightened. This new information comes as a complete surprise. Moreover, the treatment of Aristaeus creates an interplay of moods between the outer and inner (tragic) stories. As a corollary to this, the contrast between the serious and unserious is stressed. This is precisely what one would expect in an epyllion. These factors, I believe, lend further credibility and support to the reading of Aristaeus' character offered so far.

It still remains, however, to address the difficult problem of how to explain Aristaeus' attempted rape and how this affects one's view of his character. The interpretation of Aristaeus' action and his subsequent atonement is directly related to the problem of the whole epyllion and its place in the Georgics and there are as many views as there are commentators. Out of this at times bewildering array of opinions WENDER gives a most succinct appraisal of the difficulties.²⁹ First, she rightly points out that the crux of the problem lies in Proteus' statement: magna luis commissa (454). She offers four possible interpretations for the phrase:

- 1) the magna commissa could be Aristaeus' attempted rape of Eurydice (but as WENDER herself argues, the actual rape is given little prominence by Virgil).³⁰

²⁹ WENDER, pp.429-432.

³⁰ The Roman legal attitude towards rape was quite severe - the lex Julia de vi publica (possibly introduced during the dictatorship of Julius Caesar) made

2) it could be that he has "inadvertently" caused the death of Eurydice and ultimately Orpheus' death. WENDER rejects this: "If, however the gods are going to punish men for the indirect results of every inadvertent or careless act, they are behaving more maliciously than if their behavior were pure caprice".

3) it may be that Aristaeus' crime is "excessive confidence" i.e. "the large demands he makes on the gods" and "his desire for rewards beyond the normal human allotment". WENDER correctly notes the main difficulty with this interpretation is that it has nothing to do with Orpheus and Eurydice.

4) magna commissa may refer to "the repeated violations of nature (including the attempted violation of Eurydice ...), which are the necessary results of the farmer's way of life ...".

WENDER approves of the last interpretation. I cannot agree with her conclusion, if only because the same criticism she levels against the third possibility also applies to the fourth: it has little to do with the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, particularly with Orpheus' descent to the Underworld and his own death. Also I cannot understand how farm work can be deemed a violation of nature. Even if it were, it is difficult to see why Orpheus should be concerned with this. Surely, the most reasonable explanation is the second. WENDER's

stuprum per vim a capital offence (see GARDNER, pp.118ff., and also EVANS-GRUBB, especially pp.69f.). The attitude toward rape in literature could be quite different. Chaerea's rape of Pamphila offstage in Ter. Eun. seems to be viewed with leniency (see e.g. DUCKWORTH (1971), p.292, and cp. also Deidamia in Ov. A.A. 1). As well there are numerous instances of rustics and rustic divinities engaging in rape: Pan and Syrinx (GOW, p.566); Pan and Luna (G. 3.391ff.); Priapus' attempted rape of Vesta (at Ov. E. 6.319ff.) which is treated rather humorously (see FANTHAM (1983), pp.185ff.). Even nymphs rape handsome youths - e.g. Hylas in Theoc. Id. 13, Propertius 1.20; see also Callimachus AP 7.515 (and GOW and PAGE, vol.2, p.193). It is important to note that in G. 4, Aristaeus only attempts rape, he does not actually succeed.

criticism that this implies that the gods are capricious will not withstand closer examination. First, it is not capricious gods who demand atonement and have exacted punishment, it is the nymphs (532ff.) apparently at Orpheus' instigation (454ff.), who were deeply affected by Aristaeus' actions. Secondly, the main reason for Orpheus' anger seems to be Eurydice's death: rapta graviter pro coniuge saevit (456). The rape attempt receives only brief mention at 457 as explanation. Thirdly, if Aristaeus is not to be held accountable for the results of his actions, why does Virgil place so much stress upon the results? Proteus' entire story from line 458 pertains to the chain of events set in motion by Aristaeus' attempted rape. It is my view, then, that Aristaeus' attempted rape of Eurydice should not necessarily be taken as an indictment against his character. Rather, it is the thoughtless act of a youth. The outcome, Eurydice's death (of which Aristaeus is apparently ignorant) is more important and her death, though tragic, is an accident for which Aristaeus must atone.

It remains to consider what conclusions are to be drawn about Aristaeus' character from his reaction to Proteus' story. MILES³¹ and PERKELL³² feel that he is without remorse, that he simply goes through the ceremonies and sacrifices prescribed because it is practically expedient. I would disagree. I would argue that, while some of the qualities with which Virgil

³¹ MILES, p.270.

³² PERKELL (1989), p.73.

has endowed Aristaeus may not be overly endearing, he has certainly not made him utterly heartless and despicable. It seems likely that Virgil intends us to assume that Aristaeus' reaction to Proteus' story is surprise and remorse (just as is the reaction of those who read the story). Indeed, this can be supported from the text. First, Cyrene instructs Aristaeus (534-6):

tu munera supplex
tende petens pacem, et facilis venerare Napaeas;
namque dabunt veniam votis, irasque remittent.

He must offer munera to the nymphs in order to win their forgiveness. The fact that Aristaeus scrupulously follows Cyrene's advice and instructions in every detail in order to appease the nymphs and win their forgiveness, implies, it seems to me, that he feels remorse. Also Cyrene gives no indication that the propitiatory sacrifices to the nymphs and the funerary offerings to Orpheus and Eurydice will lead to the restoration of his bees, yet Aristaeus carries them out anyway.³³

PART B: ORPHEUS

Most commentators would agree, I think, that without the Orpheus episode, the Aristaeus epyllion would be far less successful than it is.³⁴ The

³³ It is, of course, possible that Aristaeus carries out the propitiatory sacrifices only because he fears further punishment but it seems to me that this suggestion would be inconsistent with his character as Virgil presents him. He is not completely without feeling, rather simply a somewhat self-indulgent youth.

³⁴ See e.g. WILKINSON (1969), p.118 and NORDEN (1966), p.520.

place of the story of Orpheus' descent into the Underworld in the structure of the narrative has already been discussed and many of the contrasts and correspondences between the inner and outer stories have received comment. Turning to an examination of the character of Orpheus, I would point out first that in narratological terms, he performs an important role in the plot mechanism, namely that of "opponent" to the protagonist, Aristaeus.³⁵ In addition Orpheus acts as Aristaeus' foil. Virgil describes the reaction of both characters to a loss but Orpheus' loss is far more serious and, unlike Aristaeus, he undertakes actions alone and on his own initiative to remedy his loss. These points of contrast contribute to the interplay of moods between the inner and outer stories and heighten the effect of both. Also, the contrasts between the two characters make both more vivid.

In assessing the character of Orpheus, I shall apply the same criteria used in the preceding discussion of Aristaeus. As noted earlier, points of character initially brought to the reader's attention are important because they have impact. The first reference to Orpheus is actually chronologically "misplaced". Proteus, responding to Aristaeus' request for oracula, tells of Orpheus' anger at the death of Eurydice (453-56) but, it becomes clear, he is

³⁵ BAL, pp.30f., states that without "helpers" and "opponents" a story "would end very soon: the subject wants something, and either gets it or not. Usually the process is not so simple. The aim is difficult to achieve. The subject meets with resistance on the way and receives help ... It is the presence of helpers and opponents which makes a fabula suspenseful and readable."

describing Orpheus' reaction after his own death. His anger is justified, given Aristaeus' responsibility for Eurydice's death. Also this detail is required by way of explanation of the loss of Aristaeus' bees. As the narrative proceeds, Virgil makes no further reference to Orpheus' anger. Instead, he focuses upon the pitiable elements in Orpheus' story and character implied by Proteus' description of him as miserabilis (454).

Immediately after Eurydice's death, Orpheus was grief-stricken (464-66):

ipse cava solans aegrum testudine amorem
te, dulcis coniunx, te solo in litore secum,
te veniente die, te decedente canebat.

There are several points here which indicate Orpheus' character. In contrast to Aristaeus at the beginning of the epyllion, Orpheus' direct words are not specified. Still, by allowing the reader to imagine for himself Orpheus' lament, by employing the second person and by the repetition of te, Virgil actually heightens the impact of the lament and makes it stronger and sadder than Aristaeus'. The participle solans, the epithet aegrum, the emphasis upon Orpheus' solitude (solo in litore secum), and the detail that he continues his song of lamentation day and night all contribute to the pathos. By representing Orpheus' emotions in such a way, Virgil engages the reader's sympathy. Aristaeus was completely self-absorbed but there is only a suggestion that Orpheus feels self-pity (464). The emphasis is clearly upon Eurydice and his

feelings for her, and this is reinforced at the end of the inset story when, even in death his thoughts are for Eurydice, not for himself (525ff.)³⁶. While Aristaeus' sorrow for his lost bees leads to his petulant rebuke of his mother, Orpheus shows no anger at this point, though his loss is greater, only grief. A further contrast between Virgil's presentation of the two characters is the emphasis he places on Orpheus' emotions. Of Aristaeus Virgil tells us only that he was tristis. The description of Orpheus' reaction to the death of Eurydice seems designed to engage our profound sympathy.

Virgil is also, I believe, implicitly contrasting the characters of Aristaeus and Orpheus in the description of Orpheus' descent into the Underworld. As noted above, when Aristaeus entered his mother's underwater domain, his actions were guided and facilitated by Cyrene. Unlike Aristaeus, Orpheus acts alone and unaided. Moreover, the adverb etiam (468) complements the description of the horrible Underworld setting to underline the

³⁶ Since Orpheus is Thracian and Thracians generally were considered war-like and cruel (a tradition to which Virgil himself alludes in 462 - Rhesi Mavortia tellus), such sensitivity of feeling is perhaps unexpected. JOHNSTON, p.114, correctly notes that although Virgil never specifically calls Orpheus Thracian, he draws attention to his Thracian origins by means of the geographical allusions at 461ff. Citing LOVEJOY and BOAS, she proceeds to suggest that Virgil may view Orpheus as a "noble savage". However, LOVEJOY, discussing G. 3.349ff., himself notes (p.332 n.35), "that Virgil's sympathies were not, on the whole, with the idyllic sort of primitivism seems clear from another passage in the Georgics, II,121ff." (N.B. I believe that the reference should read G. 1.121ff.) Therefore, I would question whether Virgil would intentionally undercut the sympathy he creates for Orpheus by presenting him as a "noble savage". The contrast between Orpheus' birthplace Thrace and his character seems more to the point.

immensity of his undertaking. Implicit, too, is his devotion to and love for Eurydice because he is willing to face "even" Taenarias fauces, etc. for her.

After Eurydice's release from the Underworld has been won, as they move towards the light of the upper world, Orpheus looks back and she is lost a second time. It is Orpheus' tragedy that the very love which drives him to enter the Underworld causes her second "death": cum subita incautum dementia cepit amantem (488). It is the negative aspect of love, its furor (cp. G. 3.242ff.) which overwhelms his reason (victus animi, 491) and makes him "forget" (immemor, 491) Proserpina's condition, and causes him to turn around.³⁷

Virgil employs a tricolon to emphasize Orpheus' powerlessness and confusion and frustration at what happened (504-5):

quid faceret? quo se rapta bis coniuge ferret?
quo fletu Manis, qua numina voce moveret?

The unspoken answer to all of these questions is that he can do nothing.

There is a great pathos in the fact that Orpheus, who would act, can take no action - at least no action to win back Eurydice. He can only weep in solitude

³⁷ SEGAL (1989), p.46, believes that Orpheus is partly responsible for his own sufferings because, overcome by furor, he turns around and loses Eurydice forever. It seems to me that if Virgil had wished to imply Orpheus' culpability, he would have made this clearer. In fact, Orpheus could not be expected to overcome furor and dementia. Also, if Aristaeus had not caused the death of Eurydice in the first place, Orpheus would not have been compelled to try to win her back.

(flesse sibi, 509) - an act as useless as Aristaeus' tears for his lost bees - and his song which charmed the spirits and terrible gods of the Underworld can now be used only to charm tigers and oak trees. For seven long months he weeps and sings his song (507ff.). The detail indicates the depth of his sorrow and perhaps, too, contains a hint of his devotion to Eurydice and his unwillingness to accept the inevitable.

Now Orpheus' second tragedy is described. It is his dedication and his inability to accept the loss of Eurydice which are responsible for his own death. In the simile at 511ff., the devotion of Orpheus is compared to that of the nightingale who, because her young have been killed, continues to sing her plaintive song - to no avail. This touching simile heightens the sympathy one feels for Orpheus. It is his devotion which compels him to live in solitude (solus, 517) and to entertain no thought of love or marriage: nulla Venus, non ulli animum flexere hymenaei (516). His refusal to accept what is lost³⁸ is implicit in 519-20: raptam Eurydicen atque inrita Ditis/ dona querens. This dedication to his dead wife offends the women of Thrace and so leads to his own death (520ff.). Yet, even in death he is unchanged. His head, as it is swept along by the river Hebrus, still cries out Eurydice's name (525ff.).

Orpheus' main characteristics, then, are his dedication and

³⁸ NISBET and HUBBARD, on Odes 1.23.13, state that "the uselessness of lamenting inevitable loss is a commonplace from Homer on (cf. Il. 24.550 ...)". A major difference between the situations of Aristaeus and Orpheus is that the former's loss can be remedied, the latter's cannot.

unwavering devotion to his wife. Virgil selects details which stress Orpheus' actions and emotions, and highlights these through repetition. His character is not overly developed but adequate for his functions in the epyllion. He is introduced as the "opponent" of Aristaeus and the depth of his emotion and feeling stand in contrast to the youthful and self-indulgent Aristaeus. Orpheus' determination, resourcefulness and self-reliance not only invite comparison with Aristaeus but also seem designed to engage our sympathy since these are the qualities which drive Orpheus to refuse to accept and to struggle against the inevitable.

PART C: MINOR CHARACTERS: CYRENE, PROTEUS AND EURYDICE

MYNORS summarizes well Virgil's depiction of Cyrene:

V. is highly selective and does not mention her prowess in hunting, the details of her liaison with Apollo and her home in Cyrenaica. She is no more than an essential intermediary in the story; and yet the poet contrives to make her a real person.³⁹

I will argue that Proteus, like Cyrene, is essential to the story and that his character is developed sufficiently for the role he must play. Eurydice, on the other hand, is less well defined and her function is mostly mechanical. None of these minor characters is intrusive; rather, each one complements the narrative and contributes to the reader's appreciation and enjoyment of the story.

³⁹ MYNORS, on 321.

Between the minor figures, especially Cyrene and Proteus, there are contrasts and correspondences which add a further dimension and interest to the epyllion. In some instances, as well, their actions, reactions and characteristics affect the way in which the two major characters are perceived.

In a technical sense, Cyrene performs two main functions. Her character is essential to the development of the story-line and also contributes to the atmosphere and tone of the outer story. Her importance to the plot is obvious. It is she to whom Aristaeus appeals when he is in difficulty and she provides information about the means to capture Proteus and instructs Aristaeus in what he must do to appease the spirits and deities he has offended. However, she is also a nymph and Virgil exploits her divine status to add a supernatural element to his epyllion. Using the two criteria that first impressions have impact and that points which are repeated have a cumulative effect, one can see that Virgil clearly stresses Cyrene's supernatural nature. First, there is the long description (in which she is formally introduced) of her subaquatic environment - her marvellous home beneath the sea (333ff.). Secondly, she has the power to cause the river to part to allow Aristaeus to descend to her home (359ff.). Finally, since she is a goddess, she can use ambrosia to strengthen Aristaeus before his confrontation with Proteus (415ff.). All of these supernatural touches add drama and excitement to the outer story

and contribute to what WILKINSON calls its "fairy-tale" quality.⁴⁰

At the beginning of this chapter, the point was made that the epyllion does not offer the same scope for character development as other narrative forms and since Cyrene is only a minor character in the story to make her too complex would be inappropriate. Hence, it is not surprising that Cyrene, as Virgil presents her, has only two dominant traits. First, she is a caring and devoted mother and this is stressed in the opening lines of the epyllion through the repetition of the word mater (321, 333, 357, and 380) and by the phrase maternas ... auris (349). This characteristic is developed when Arethusa, addressing Cyrene, calls Aristaeus tua maxima cura (354) and by the fact that Cyrene is beside herself with fear that something terrible may have happened to her son: percussa nova mentem formidine mater (357). Cyrene's concern for her son adds a touch of verisimilitude to her character and brings her to life (for the contrast between Cyrene and Proteus and their reaction to Aristaeus, see below). Once she is satisfied that Aristaeus' problem can be remedied (fletus ... inanis - see note 20), she is ready and willing to assist. Now her second dominant trait, her competence, asserts itself. She takes control of the situation and after pouring libations etc., she directs all of Aristaeus' actions which lead ultimately to the recovery of his bees. First, she describes how to capture Proteus (385ff.), and when Proteus appears events turn out, for the

⁴⁰ WILKINSON (1969), p.220; cf. also OTIS, p.211, though I cannot agree completely with him that Aristaeus "remains a shadowy and unsubstantial figure".

most part, as she indicated they would. At 415ff, Cyrene is in charge of the preparations for Proteus' capture. It is, I think, important to notice that Cyrene's active role is reinforced by the fact that she is subject of the verbs perduxit (416) and conlocat (424). After Proteus has told his story, he leaps into the sea (528), but Cyrene remains to give further advice which proves to be sound. The accumulation of these details is striking and suggests that Virgil wishes to highlight Cyrene's competence. One reason for this emphasis, I would argue, is to draw attention to the contrast between her activity and Aristaeus' inactivity; and if this is so, it lends support to the reading of Aristaeus' character presented above.

Before discussing Proteus' character, I shall address the problem of his role in the narrative. Many scholars have felt that he is superfluous because he never does tell Aristaeus what he must do to recover his bees - this task is left to Cyrene and according to some commentators Cyrene must have known what to do all along.⁴¹ If that is true, the argument proceeds,

⁴¹ NORDEN (1966), pp.498ff., SEGAL (1989), p.42 and others have expressed this or a similar view. W.B. ANDERSON, pp.42ff., discusses the problem at some length and concludes that Proteus is not superfluous; he may speak "in riddles ... but the information is all there for those who understand". ANDERSON also addresses the difficulty of the apparent contradiction between Proteus' statement at 454ff. that Orpheus is responsible for Aristaeus' punishment and Cyrene's revelation at 532ff. that it is the nymphs. He concludes that there is no contradiction present because "Proteus never said that Orpheus was the cause of the plague". Although I agree with ANDERSON that Proteus is not superfluous, I find his explanation for his presence unsatisfactory (see my main text,below). Furthermore, I would argue that there is no contradiction between 454ff. and 532ff., since I believe that Proteus means only that Orpheus encouraged the

Cyrene herself could have explained the reason for the loss as well.

I would argue that the answer to the second question is that Cyrene, at least as Virgil presents her, does not have prophetic power, does not know quae sint, quae fuerint, quae mox ventura trahantur. On the contrary, it is clear from 353ff. that Cyrene does not know the reason for Aristaeus' lament and does not discover the reason until he tells her (375f.); nor is the information she provides concerning Proteus' capture offered as a prediction. Instead, as a nymph who "venerates" Proteus (391), it is natural that she is aware of Proteus' ability to change shape and so can advise Aristaeus about counteracting this power. She does not need prophetic knowledge. Prior knowledge and common sense allow her to provide sound advice. Cyrene, therefore, does not know the reason for Aristaeus' loss and so Proteus is necessary to reveal this information. Her choice of Proteus instead of another prophetic character is easily explained: since he is a sea deity and venerated by the nymphs, he is Cyrene's logical and natural choice.

The solution to the first problem is provided in part by WILKINSON⁴² who points out that Cyrene only knows that Aristaeus must make atonement for the tragic consequences of his actions; she does not in fact realize that his atoning sacrifices will lead to the recovery of his bees. This

nymphs to punish Aristaeus (note suscitat can mean "call forth" - see OLD s.v.4). See also OTIS, pp.209f. and WILKINSON (1969), p.113.

⁴² WILKINSON (1969), p.113.

suggestion is surely correct but it does not account for Proteus' sudden disappearance (on which see below).

Proteus' main function, therefore, is to relate the story of Orpheus and Eurydice.⁴³ The incongruity of placing this touching story in the mouth of Proteus is well explained by WILKINSON:

It may be complained that the beautiful story of Orpheus and Eurydice, told with such sympathy and compassion, is incongruous in the mouth of the captured, teeth-gnashing, eye rolling old man of the sea ... The fact is that what interests the Neoteric poet is the interplay of moods...⁴⁴

I would add that there is an element of the bizarre and grotesque in Virgil's choice of narrator and that this may be intentional since these features appealed to Hellenistic/Neoteric tastes.

In Cyrene's instructions to Aristaeus (387ff.) two main characteristics

⁴³ Most recently FARRELL, pp.264ff., has attempted to show that Virgil's treatment of Proteus is central to understanding the Aristaeus epyllion. FARRELL states correctly that Proteus alone of the characters from Od. 4 appears in Virgil's narrative: "One character only - and somewhat ironically, perhaps, in view of his ever-changing nature - maintains his individual identity in both poems. I refer to Proteus ...". FARRELL sees Proteus as central to the theme of "rebirth" in both the Odyssey and the Georgics (see especially p.265). Moreover, since Proteus, in particular, was interpreted allegorically in antiquity (e.g. FARRELL cites Heraclitus Quaestiones Homericæ 67.2-4), FARRELL believes that the other "Homeric" episodes in G. 4 are to be read allegorically and concludes that Virgil has chosen passages which reveal Homer to be "a poet concerned not just with the legends of heroic saga, but with the very grandest of philosophical themes, the creation of the universe" and that by "selecting these episodes as the basis of his synechdochic imitation of Homer's epics, Vergil clearly aligns himself with the tradition that regarded Homer in this light."

⁴⁴ WILKINSON (1969), pp.115f.

of Proteus are introduced and stressed: he does not offer advice willingly, and he uses trickery and deception in order to avoid giving advice. Cyrene warns Aristaeus that Proteus, although he is a vates (387) and has accurate knowledge of past, present and future (392f.), will give praecepta only if he is captured and held fast. This warning is stressed by the repetition of forms of vincla/ vincula, capio and vis at 396ff. (and the requirement of force recurs at 405 and 412). After Aristaeus has captured Proteus, the old man impatiently addresses the youth (445-46):

nam quis te, iuvenum confidentissime, nostras
iussit adire domos? quidve hinc petis?

He then rolls his eyes, gnashes his teeth and begins to tell the story of Orpheus. These details vividly suggest Proteus' irascible nature and confirm Cyrene's warning that he will give advice only under duress.

Cyrene also advises Aristaeus to beware of Proteus' trickery. At 400, she states that his doli can only be overcome by force. The vivid description of his trickery, his shape-shifting (406ff.), includes the verb eludent. At 443 fallacia is applied to Proteus' attempt to escape. Again, the cumulative effect of these points is to reinforce the treacherous aspect of Proteus' character. Once this is recognized, his disappearance immediately after he completes the story of Orpheus and Eurydice ceases to be a problem. I would argue that the fact that Proteus slips away at the first possible opportunity is

completely consistent with his character (Cyrene warned after all that he practises deceits).⁴⁵

Between Proteus and Cyrene there are certain contrasts and correspondences which create interest and make both more vivid and memorable. Both are marine deities and both therefore bring a supernatural element to the epyllion. There are contrasts as well: Proteus is male and he dwells in the sea (Carpathio Neptuni gurgite, 387); Cyrene is female and lives beneath the river Peneus. A more interesting contrast occurs in their respective attitudes to Aristaeus: Proteus is a hostile and unwilling advisor to Aristaeus, Cyrene is completely on his side.

Eurydice, on the other hand, is the least well-defined of the three minor characters.⁴⁶ Although she is crucial to the story-line (her death, after

⁴⁵ At Od. 4.422, Eidothea instructs Menelaus to release Proteus after he has undergone his various changes of form and then to question him. Virgil, however, does not say when or whether Aristaeus loosens his hold upon Proteus. It may be that we are to imagine that Aristaeus does not release Proteus until he has recounted the death of Orpheus, at which point Aristaeus, because he is moved or surprised, relaxes his grip and the old man slips away; or it may be that Aristaeus, like Menelaus, releases Proteus before he begins to speak and we are to suppose that Proteus simply chooses (out of anger or disgust?) to disappear without telling Aristaeus how to recover his bees. Either explanation would suit Virgil's characterization of Proteus.

⁴⁶ Commentators are not even unanimous in their opinion of whether she is a nymph or a mortal. MILES, p.257, calls her a nymph. I would agree with MYNORS, on 4.460-1, who seems to assume that she is human. MYNORS cites as parallels for nymphs making mortal women their "playmates" Nicander Heteroioumena fr.41 and Ov. Met. 13.736. It is perhaps worth noting that nymphs, when chased by unwanted lovers regularly become pools, trees vel sim. (cf. Ov.

all, sets in motion the tragic series of events which culminate in Orpheus' own death and is, therefore, a motivating factor in Aristaeus' loss as well), Virgil provides very little information about her character. For example, details concerning her death, which Virgil could have exploited in a variety of ways, are suppressed. Even her name is withheld until the inner story is approaching its mid-point (486 - 34 lines into the 75-line account). It is possible, I suppose, to deduce, from the depth and breadth of the mourning that follows her death and Orpheus' devotion to her, that Eurydice must have had certain characteristics (kindness, a loving nature?) to inspire such reactions. Still it is impossible to specify these characteristics using the text and she remains a shadowy figure.

There are, in my opinion, two factors which account for Virgil's decision to leave her relatively undeveloped as a character. Firstly, from a technical point of view, since the narrative is short (75 lines) and Orpheus is the main interest, Eurydice must remain in the background. Secondly, since she is a shade, an insubstantial spirit in the Underworld, it is both appropriate and very effective that her character remain shadowy and only vaguely defined.

Eurydice's role, then, is mainly functional. Allusion to the fact that she is an essential element in the story-line has already been made. Equally important is the contribution she makes to the mood and tragic tone of the inner

Met. 1.689ff., where Syrinx becomes a reed bed to escape Pan: see FANTHAM (1983), p.188), but this is not Eurydice's fate.

story. The nouns and adjectives applied to her reinforce the pathos. Prior to Orpheus' descent, Eurydice is described as rapta ... coniuge (456), moritura puella (458) and dulcis coniunx (465). Taken together these phrases establish the close relationship between Orpheus and Eurydice (coniuge, dulcis coniunx) and so stress the tragedy of her loss as well as the untimeliness of Eurydice's death (rapta, moritura puella) - a motif involving great pathos (compare 477).

At 494ff., Eurydice addresses Orpheus as she is disappearing back into the Underworld. Her speech, the only direct words reported in the inset story, invites comparison with Aristaeus' lament at the beginning of the epyllion since both are spoken in reaction to a loss. The difference in tone is striking. Both speeches contain questions but Eurydice's words are deeply moving, not sarcastic. Aristaeus was totally self-absorbed. Eurydice realizes that by turning around, Orpheus has brought tragedy to them both: 'quis et me' inquit 'miseram et te perdidit, Orpheu,/ quis tantus furor?' (494-95).

More importantly by employing direct speech at this climactic moment in the story, Virgil, in my view, is attempting to engage our most profound sympathy. The character of Eurydice is Virgil's vehicle for achieving this.

CHAPTER 6

DETAILED CRITICAL APPRECIATION

SECTION 1: 315-332

The questions addressed to the Muses at 315-16 are not strictly part of the epyllion but they do introduce Virgil's aetion for bugonia and their contribution as an introduction has not yet been fully explored.

It seems to me that the effect of the address is increased in part by the verses leading up to the epyllion (281ff.). Here Virgil reveals that bugonia was the invention of an Arcadian master and specifies that the Egyptians rely upon this technique for producing bees. There is mystery surrounding the identity of the inventor of bugonia¹ and its association with exotic Egypt is intriguing. Even after the eight-line description of Egypt (287-294), Virgil does not immediately reveal the identity of the inventor. Instead, he builds suspense by offering a long (20 lines) and vivid account of the technique. Finally, at 315, he appeals to the Muses and asks who discovered bugonia and what were the circumstances of the discovery. By phrasing the address in question form,

¹ It must be admitted that a prior version of bugonia associating Aristaeus with its invention may have existed (though I personally believe that the connection is Virgil's own invention). Even so, I would argue, Virgil's readers could not yet be certain, at this point, that he would follow this earlier tradition.

Virgil captures our attention and reinforces the mystery surrounding the process. As well, we have been told that an Arcadian magister made the discovery but now, it seems, a god was responsible²: quis deus hanc, Musae, quis nobis extudit artem? This detail heightens our curiosity and the repetition quis seems intriguingly urgent and animated. Virgil, I would suggest, has skilfully and intentionally built up an air of mystery and anticipation about the identity of the discoverer of this wondrous method of creating bees. His choice of diction contributes to the overall impression as well: extundo, ingressus and experientia are all rare words³ and their rarity matches the strangeness (nova ... experientia) of the bugonia.

There is more to add. As commentators duly note, an address to the Muses within a poem is a Homeric device.⁴ Homer, it has been recognized,

² W.B. ANDERSON, p.42, n.3, argues with particular vehemence that, since Aristaeus is not yet a god, "deus is not to be understood with the second quis". However, we do not yet know that the answer to the question quis deus...? is pastor Aristaeus and it seems to me that if Virgil wanted the second quis to refer to a mortal he would have made this clear by adding homo vel sim.

³ Rare or coined words can bring out or match the strangeness of the thing described, simply attract attention and also (see Aristotle Poetics 1458a-b, Cic. De Or. 3.152, Demetrius De Eloc. 77,95) bring about an elevation of tone. TLL v,2.2092.7ff. cites no instances of extundo = "produce with effort" earlier than G. 1.133, 4.315, 4.328. TLL vii,1.1577.43ff. glosses ingressus with initium, susceptio, exordium and gives G. 4.316 as the first occurrence of this sense. Experientia with a subjective genitive appears first in Lucr. 5.1452 (TLL v,2.1652.39ff.). See also NORDEN's comments pp.492-3 n.47.

⁴ See most recently THOMAS, on 315 and MYNORS, on 315-316. For Homer's use of the device, see LYNE (1987), pp.224f., and p.224 n.19, AUSTIN, on Aen. 6.264-7, NORDEN, on Aen. 6.264ff. and BASSETT, pp.28-31.

appeals to the Muses before crucial or important passages such as the Catalogue of Ships at Il. 2.484ff. and the description of the exploits of Aias at Il. 14.508ff. Virgil, then, by employing this traditional device of epic at this point in the poem, draws attention to the fact that something important is to follow and so, I would suggest, creates interest and heightens anticipation. Furthermore, as THOMAS notes⁵, the invocation brings about an elevation of tone.

I would add that the rarity of diction in the lines also contributes to this elevation (see note 3) and further heightens the impression that something of particular importance is to follow and, it seems to me, leads to certain expectations about the type of story which Virgil will present (i.e. heroic vel sim.).

Given the lengthy build up of suspense - thirty-three lines have intervened between the first mention of Arcadii magistri and the revelation of his identity - and the hint at 315 that a god was responsible for the invention of bugonia, the response, pastor Aristaeus, is truly surprising and unexpected. One could compare, for example, Il. 1.8f. where the answer to the question τίς τ' ἄρ σφωε θεῶν ἔριδι ξυνέηκε μάχεσθαι; follows immediately: Διτοῦς καὶ Διὸς υἱός (i.e. Apollo). Virgil, on the other hand, seems particularly to emphasize the fact that Aristaeus is not yet a god by placing pastor at the very beginning of the line.⁶

⁵ THOMAS, on 315.

⁶ NORDEN, pp.492ff., argued that the similarity in language and thought between 4.315 and 1.133 leads to the conclusion that the answer to quis deus...? is Jupiter: "Die Gedankenkongruenz von 4 und 1 ermöglicht nun, wie mir scheint,

If Aristaeus is not a god, he is, some may argue, at least to be viewed as a "heroic" figure. Yet it seems to me that Virgil also provides an immediate hint that this is not the case either. Aristaeus is fleeing (fugiens, 317) and flight is not part of the heroic code. Agamemnon, for example, taunts Achilles with the suggestion that he flee from Troy: *φεῦγε μάλ', εἴ τοι θυμὸς ἐπέσσυται* (Il. 1.173).⁷

So, after the long build up of suspense, the Homeric appeal to the Muses and the accompanying elevation in tone we learn that the discoverer of *bugonia* was neither a god nor a hero (at least in the Homeric sense) but pastor Aristaeus fugiens. The unexpected twist is amusing and, I believe, suggests that we ought not to take Aristaeus too seriously.

Virgil begins his epyllion with four lines of exposition (317-20). He provides us with the name of the protagonist of the narrative, the setting (caput ... amnis), the problem (Aristaeus has lost his bees) and indirectly supplies

eine Lösung der Aporie, die in der Frage quis deus? liegt. Die Antwort kann nur lauten: Jupiter." As further support for this view he cites Servius on 1.14: nam [Aristaeus] apud Arcadas pro love colitur and notes that Virgil himself, at 4.283 and 4.538f., links Aristaeus with Arcadia. NORDEN's analysis is unlikely on several grounds: 1) at 1.133 Jupiter is not the subject of the verb extunderet - rather 1.133 makes it clear that men became responsible for agricultural inventions after the Golden Age ended. 2) Virgil, at the beginning of the epyllion associates Aristaeus not with Arcadia but with Thessaly. 3) Most importantly, Aristaeus is not yet a god - pastor suggests that this is the case and 325 and 326 confirm it.

⁷ See also LYNE (1987), p.107, on Aen. 2.289 where Hector's ghost enjoins Aeneas to flee from Troy: heu! fuge, nate dea. LYNE remarks, "an impossible order to a hero but one which nonetheless eventually had to be obeyed."

information about the time at which the events described occurred (Aristaeus "belongs culturally to the age of Jupiter"⁸ and ut fama implies, among other things, that the story is an old one). So, in four lines, Virgil has "put us immediately 'in the picture'".⁹ Still, the picture is not quite complete. For example, Virgil tells us nothing about Aristaeus' reaction in Tempe when he first realized that his bees were sick and dying. One, if not the main, reason for this skimming of details is to allow Virgil to proceed swiftly to Aristaeus' speech, which offers crucial and early insight into his character. In shorter narratives it is not uncommon to find less exposition and I think it may be said that in four lines Virgil has given sufficient information to orient his readers.

As well, these opening lines contain surprises and "hooks" to catch our attention and interest. I have already discussed at some length the first surprise: Aristaeus, not a god, was the inventor of bugonia. Secondly, the association of Aristaeus with bugonia, despite the phrase ut fama which is a Hellenistic device¹⁰, seems to be Virgil's own invention. If this is so, the novelty creates interest, i.e. this story is something new; how will it evolve?

⁸ THOMAS, on 315.

⁹ WILKINSON (1969), p.213.

¹⁰ Ut fama may refer to a *recherché* source but need not (cp. Call. fr.510 (Pf.): ἡ ῥ' ὅτι τῶς ὁ γέγειος ἔχει λόγος). MYNORS, on 318, calls ut fama a "narrator's opening gambit". See further THOMAS, on 318. FORDYCE, on Cat. 64.1f., JENKYNS, p.99 and NORDEN, on Aen. 6.14.

Furthermore, Aristaeus is not the most familiar of mythological figures and so is an interesting choice as protagonist and may reflect the Hellenistic/neoteric predilection for the unusual and the obscure to show doctrina. Finally, the revelation that the identity of the Arcadius magister in 283 is Aristaeus is somewhat surprising since he was associated with Ceos at 1.14 and probably would not immediately suggest Arcadia. We learn, too, that he is fleeing from Tempe and perhaps wonder initially what he is doing in Tempe (this is answered at 326ff. where his farm is described).

As befits an opening, these four lines are replete with features of style, sound and diction etc. to engage our attention and increase our enjoyment of the piece. On 317 WILKINSON comments "What a lovely line to begin with"¹¹ and draws attention to the smoothness of the line and its varied vowel sounds. There is also, I would suggest, a kind of balance to the line with the participle fugiens separating two words relating to Aristaeus on the one side and two words relating to the setting on the other. The adjective Peneia is, as THOMAS notes, "a Greek formation, though not found in [extant] Greek".¹² It is, at the very least, rare in Latin and may be Virgil's own invention.¹³ In either

¹¹ WILKINSON (1970), p.38.

¹² THOMAS, on 317.

¹³ A review of available concordances confirms that the adjective Peneius occurs here for the first time in extant Latin literature. The adjective recurs in Ov. Met. 12.209 and Met. 1.452 (in the sense "descended from Peneus" and applied

case, the adjective produces a sense of the exotic and suggests high style¹⁴, though, I believe, here the high style is mock-solemn in keeping with the tone created by the amusing twist in pastor Aristaeus at the beginning of the line. There may be a further subtlety in Virgil's choice or coinage of the word which has, I believe, gone unnoticed. Callimachus (Hymn 4.112) has the line Πηνεῖε Φθιωτά, τί νῦν ἀνέμοισιν ἐπίζεις; Catullus most probably echoes Callimachus with his phrase Pthiotica Tempe (64.35). Now Virgil, by using an adjective formed from the proper noun Πηνεῖος and applying it to Tempe, may have intentionally produced a double allusion which includes a twist on both Catullus and Callimachus.¹⁵ Such complexity is precisely what one would expect from Virgil and would appeal especially to readers who could appreciate the implications of what he is doing. As well, the double allusion may be a signal of the type of narrative he is going to offer (i.e. Hellenistic / neoteric).

In 318, there is assonance of "a" sound in amissis ut fama apibus and the repetition of the syllable fam at the caesura and in the final word of the line creates an internal rhyme. High style, continuing the tone of mock-

to Daphne). Later authors of epic also use it: Luc. Bellum Civile 8.33, Stat. Theb. 4.143, V.Fl. Argonautica 1.386.

¹⁴ See note 3.

¹⁵ An interesting and useful discussion of double allusion in Ovid is provided by MCKEOWN, vol.1, pp.37ff. See also THOMAS (1986), passim, for this technique of imitation in the Georgics.

solemnity, is featured in the correlating ... que ... que of morboque fameque.¹⁶

The repeated "s" sound in 319 suggests, perhaps, the rush of Peneus' waters and the rhyme of the first and last words in the line, tristis ... amnis, contributes to the aesthetic effect. In addition tristis, emphatically placed, may well have been chosen to convey more than Aristaeus' sorrow at the loss of his bees. Tristis is also applied to persons who are "ill-humoured" and "cross" (OLD s.v.3) and, we soon learn, this too is an apt description of Aristaeus' mood.

The last line of exposition (320) displays emphatic word placement for effect. Multa, at the beginning of the line, suggests that Aristaeus' complaint is long and loud, while parentem, at the line end, is stressed primarily, I believe, to focus our attention upon the parallel between Aristaeus and Achilles (at Il. 1.348ff. and Il. 18.71ff.). It is to this literary reminiscence that I will now turn my attention.

ARISTAEUS' COMPLAINT (321-332)

The primary literary model for Aristaeus' complaint to Cyrene is Il. 1.348ff. Achilles also laments to Thetis at Il. 18.79ff. after the death of Patroclus and so offers a parallel situation (i.e. loss motif) with Aristaeus' lost

¹⁶ AUSTIN, on Aen. 6.64: "The correlating que ... que (linking related concepts) is a feature of Epic style that looks back through Ennius to Homer."

bees. I would argue, however, that this second Homeric passage is of greater relevance in understanding Virgil's description of Cyrene's thalamus (see below). Many scholars have noted the basic similarities (i.e. loss, complaint to a nymph mother) between Aristaeus' complaint and Achilles lament in Il. 1 but no one, so far as I can ascertain, has presented a detailed examination setting out the comparisons and the contrast between the two passages.¹⁷ Such an analysis is, I believe, crucial to understanding what Virgil is trying to accomplish.

LYNE has argued convincingly that Virgil's use of literary allusion invites the reader to compare and contrast his treatment with that of his source and that "the comparisons and questions which we are stirred to make and ask provoke responses and answers"¹⁸ which may affect our perceptions of what

¹⁷ Prior to FARRELL, KLINGNER's discussion (pp.201ff.) is perhaps the fullest but even he mentions only one or two points of comparison - e.g. both lament to their mothers about the lack of honour accorded them - and only comments briefly upon the differences in tone between the two speeches. FARRELL in his recent study of the Georgics treats the question of comparison and contrast in greater detail (pp.104ff.) and, I find, makes a number of points similar to mine. FARRELL, however, sees greater complexity than I in the play between Virgil's references to the Iliad and the Odyssey (see especially pp.110ff.).

¹⁸ LYNE (1987), p.102. LYNE's statement, it seems to me, amounts to another approach to the vexed problem of Virgilian imitatio, variatio and aemulatio. Even in antiquity, the question of Virgil's borrowings from Homer was a matter of debate (see CONINGTON, pp.xliiiff., for a good discussion of ancient attitudes). Most recently FARRELL, pp.3ff., has reviewed and critiqued the views of modern scholars. Although LYNE applies his remarks especially to the Aeneid, I would agree with FARRELL (p.108) that Virgil's use of Homer in the Georgics anticipates his approach in the Aeneid. While acknowledging Virgil's use of Homer (and other literary models), I would argue, however, that we should not seek parallels for every line but give Virgil his due (especially in narrative) as a skilled story-teller. In addition, I believe that imitatio, etc. need not always have a deeper purpose but may, in fact, be used by Virgil simply to establish himself as part of a continuing tradition and/or for his own intellectual enjoyment (and that of his readers who

the poet is trying to accomplish.

There are many similarities between Aristaeus and Achilles. Both are legendary figures, each has a nymph for his mother, both complain about a lack of honour accorded them, both call out to their mothers beside water (though Achilles comes to the shore of the sea, Aristaeus to the source of the river Peneus) and both are sad and upset (Aristaeus is tristis, Achilles is portrayed as δακρύσας). Furthermore, there are verbal reminiscences - multa and πολλά appear in the same position and mater and μήτηρ are the first word spoken by each one. These correspondences also contribute to our intellectual enjoyment of the narrative but it seems to me that it is the contrasts which provide the key to understanding the effect for which Virgil is aiming.

The major contrast is, of course, that Achilles is a warrior and Homeric hero, Aristaeus a pastor. This difference alone could cause us to wonder whether we are to take Aristaeus completely seriously but there are further contrasts. Both Achilles and Aristaeus refer to their birth but Achilles laments that Thetis bore him to live only a short time - a reference to his heroic choice of a short life with honour over a long life without honour. Aristaeus complains that he was fathered by Apollo yet is invisum fatis because he has lost his bees - he seems to feel that he deserves a life without adversity because he is the son of a god.

understand the connections).

Achilles laments that Zeus does not honour him as he should, given Achilles' choice of a short life. Aristaeus seems to complain that Cyrene herself was somehow responsible for the loss of his bees (te matre has concessive force) and so sarcastically suggests that he will abandon his "honour" (i.e. his crops etc.). Finally, there is a distinct contrast in their respective attitudes. Although Achilles often "gives vent to implacable anger and impassioned violence, bowing before nothing and no one"¹⁹, even he observes due reverence and respect when he calls to his mother (Il. 1.348-51):

αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς
δακρῦσας ἐτάρων ἄφαρ ἔξετο νόσφι λιασθεῖς,
θῖν' ἔφ' ἄλδος πολιῆς, ὀρόων ἐπ' ἀπείρονα πόντον·
πολλὰ δὲ μητρὶ φίλῃ ἠρήσατο χεῖρας ὀρεγνύς·

Achilles stretches out his hands in suppliant fashion and prays to his mother. Aristaeus, on the other hand, shows no such reverence despite the fact that he has come to a sacred spot (sacrum caput).²⁰ This lack of reverence is further stressed by the echo of another Homeric passage, Od. 9.529, where Polyphemus says to Poseidon εἰ ἐτεόν γε σός εἰμι, πατήρ δ' ἐμὸς εἶδεα εἶναι. At 323 Aristaeus says to Cyrene si modo, quem perhibes, pater est Thymbraeus Apollo and THOMAS cites the line from the Odyssey as a parallel

¹⁹ LYNE (1987), p.106.

²⁰ For the use of sacer with rivers, etc. see BAILEY (1969), p.74. Virgil's use of the adjective here, I would argue, is more than mere convention. Aristaeus has come to a sacred spot but his attitude disregards the sanctity of the place.

and comments "The reproach, which here involves a questioning of the mother's morality as well as her word, is Homeric in origin".²¹ In fact, I would argue, the tone of Od. 9.529 is not reproachful nor is Polyphemus actually questioning that Poseidon is his father. At Od. 9.519 Polyphemus says to Odysseus τοῦ [Ποσειδάωνος] γὰρ ἐγὼ πάντις εἶμι, πατήρ δ' ἐμὸς εἶχεται εἶναι and so Polyphemus' questioning of Poseidon's relationship to him at Od. 9.529 is not a reproach but reflects the respectful attitude of prayer formulae.²² Aristaeus does question his "mother's morality as well as her word" and his attitude borders upon the insolent and his appeal becomes a taunt. Virgil's subtle alteration of the tone stresses Aristaeus' anger and lack of reverence for his mother.

A final contrast between Achilles and Aristaeus remains. Achilles prays for his mother's help: he asks Thetis to intercede with Zeus on his behalf (Il. 1.393ff.). Aristaeus, apart from the sarcastic suggestion that Cyrene destroy his crops, asks for nothing. Although he may expect her help, he has come to the sacred source of the river Peneus, it seems, simply to reproach his mother.

The Homeric allusion, which invites comparison (and contrast) between Achilles and Aristaeus, involves, in my view, a novel and amusing

²¹ THOMAS, on 323.

²² Conditional clauses in prayer are regular and do not imply doubt on the part of the suppliant. See e.g. FORDYCE, on Cat. 76.17-26.

twist. Achilles' anger is the theme of the Iliad: Μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά, Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος (Il. 1.1). Yet even he does not address his mother with angry and reproachful words. Aristaeus does and so, in effect, "out-angers" Achilles - he even berates his own mother. The comparison between Achilles and Aristaeus, therefore, provides the intellectual enjoyment of literary allusion and, being undercut by the many contrasts between the two, adds to the tone of mock-solemnity.

Virgil adds further complexity with echoes of Catullus 64. As already noted, there is a probable echo of Catullus in Virgil's phrase Peneia Tempe. Therefore, when Aristaeus comes to the river's source to complain we are prepared to think not only of Achilles but also of Ariadne, though Virgil seems to be more subtle in suggesting the latter comparison. This subtlety is appropriate and artful. If the references to Ariadne were too obvious, they would intrude upon the main comparison between Achilles and Aristaeus.

Firstly, both complaints occur in epyllia and Ariadne, like Aristaeus, is reproachful and angry. She addresses her complaint to a Theseus who no longer loves her and has abandoned her. Aristaeus supposes, though incorrectly, that Cyrene has stopped loving him and has abandoned him. Like Aristaeus, Ariadne begins with a series of indignant questions (Cat. 64.132ff.) focusing upon Theseus' treachery (perfide, 132, 133) and heartlessness (137f.) - cp. Aristaeus' words te matre = treachery, pulsus amor = heartlessness. Like

Aristaeus, she utters her complaint beside water and is separated from the object of her reproach by an expanse of water (though in Ariadne's case there is breadth of water, in Aristaeus' depth): cp. Cat. 64.178f. at gurgite lato/ discernens ponti truculentum dividit aequor and G. 4.322f. gurgitis huius/ ima tenes. Ariadne questions the circumstances of Theseus' birth: quaenam te genuit sola sub rupe leaena...? (Cat. 64.154ff.). With a slight alteration, Virgil makes Aristaeus question the circumstances of his own birth (G. 4.323). Finally, the comparison is confirmed by the verbal correspondence between Cat. 64.140, non haec miserae sperare iubebas and G. 4.325, quid me caelum sperare iubebas?

The blending of Catullan with Homeric allusion allows for the complex interplay between heroic, amatory and agricultural loss and invites comparison of the reactions of the characters involved. It is included partly, I believe, for our intellectual enjoyment and partly because such complexity is characteristic of the epyllion form. Equally important, as I have tried to show, the allusion to Achilles functions to influence our reaction to Aristaeus and contributes to the tone of mock-solemnity which Virgil builds from the first word of the epyllion. The subtle interweaving of references to Ariadne performs precisely the same role.

Before examining the features of sound, rhythm, diction, etc. in Aristaeus' speech I should like first to make some general comments about the

effect of the speech upon the narrative. In the first place, the speech suspends the development of the story-line (though it does supply some background concerning Aristaeus' farm in Tempe) and so creates suspense. We now know that Aristaeus has lost his bees and await the revelation of the origin of bugonia. The main purpose of the speech, however, is to establish the character of Aristaeus. As noted above, Virgil gives only four lines of exposition, skimming over some background details, and, it seems to me, one reason he does so is to come more quickly to Aristaeus' speech. I have tried to show that the treatment of Aristaeus is amusing and unexpected and so it is important that Virgil allow Aristaeus to speak (his first direct speech in the epyllion) to define more closely Aristaeus' character. The vividness achieved by giving Aristaeus' direct words (rather than describing Aristaeus' thoughts and feelings) has great impact.

There is a final point. THOMAS has expressed the view that "Lamentation beside water ... becomes a special feature in the neoteric epyllion".²³ I do not think that enough examples survive to corroborate this generalization (THOMAS offers only Catullus 64 as an example). It is true, however, that Hellenistic poetry in general (including epyllia) is fond of emotional and melodramatic material such as Aristaeus' speech in which he

²³ THOMAS, on 319. As noted, there are not enough Latin examples to confirm or deny his generalization. One can say that lamentation beside water does not seem to have been a standard feature of Greek epyllia.

displays anger, insolence, petulance and sarcasm. The speech then is another of the many Hellenistic elements in the narrative.

Aristaeus begins by calling out to his mother by name. I can see no reason to doubt Servius' comment (ad loc.) that to address one's parent by name is invidiosum. Aristaeus, then, does not observe the respectful attitude owed to his mother, not to mention the fact that she is a goddess. The rhythm of 317 is heavily spondaic and includes a block spondee in the first foot, stressing the word mater (perhaps giving the impression of a shout). Mater is repeated and the resulting alliteration of "m" and the repetition of "r" sound in mater, Cyrene mater ... gurgitis are very effective. There is always a degree of subjectivity in deciding the purpose of such features of sound and rhythm, as the variety and abundance of scholarly opinion on the opening of Aristaeus' speech show.²⁴ However, it seems to me that Virgil has offered a number of other clues to Aristaeus' tone. He is disrespectful, unhappy (tristis) in both senses of the word and complaining (querens). If this is not enough, there are the literary reminiscences of Homer and Catullus. In short, he is angry with his

²⁴ R.D. WILLIAMS, p.213: "The rhythm is highly emphatic, wholly spondaic with the relatively unusual pause after the first spondaic foot." THOMAS, on 321-322: "the anaphora, with the intervening word modifying and restricting the range of the repeated word, creates a mannered effect". MYNORS, on G. 1.65): "the spondaic rhythm ... conveys a sense of ... dejection in ... G. 4.321". NORDEN, p.480: "in Spondeen, bei Vergil oft Ausdruck der Klage". HUXLEY, on 321, calls mater, Cyrene mater a "solemn form of address".

mother and adopts with her an accusatory tone which the rhythm and sound of the line capture most vividly.

Now he addresses three questions²⁵ to his mother and the first, being the longest, receives the greatest stress: he is descended from the glorious line of the gods, the son of Thymbraeus Apollo (unless his mother lied to him) and yet hated by the fates. The antithesis between praeclara stirpe deorum²⁶ and invisum fatis suggests that Aristaeus believes he is being unjustly persecuted. The adjective praeclara²⁷ grammatically modifies stirpe but is juxtaposed with me, perhaps implying that Aristaeus feels keenly his own glory. In addition, there is the epithet Thymbraeus²⁸ which, from Aristaeus'

²⁵ THOMAS, on 322-325 states: "A series of despairing questions, filled with emotion, is one of the features of the lament in epyllion". Aside from the fact that THOMAS can offer parallels from Cat. 64 only, I would ask whether the questions are, in fact, despairing. Rather, Aristaeus seems angry and his tone is insolent and petulant (WILKINSON (1969), p.214).

²⁶ It is worth noting that stirpe is a particularly apt choice of word for Aristaeus because of its literal, agricultural sense (OLD s.v. stirps 1) since Aristaeus though he is a mythological figure is presented as a pastor and farmer.

²⁷ The prefix prae, as often in adjectives, "indicates pre-eminence in the quality concerned" (OLD s.v. prae). Praeclarus, attested both in the sense "magnificent" and "outstanding in reputation" (OLD s.v. praeclarus 2,3), effectively captures Aristaeus' pride in his lineage and more importantly what he expects as his due because of that lineage.

²⁸ Like Peneia, Thymbraeus is rare and, so far as I have been able to ascertain, occurs here first in extant Latin literature (the epithet occurs again in Statius (e.g. Theb. 1.643, 1.699, 4.515; Silv. 1.4.117, 3.2.97)). I would argue, though, that Virgil intends us to see a degree of humour in the epithet. The rarity of the word, which is a lesser known title of Apollo, reflects the Hellenistic/neoteric

point of view elevates the tone and is worthy of the respect his father (and so he himself) is due. Yet his mother, though she herself is a goddess, has neither prevented the loss of his bees nor provided an immediate remedy and so he is angry and disdainful - his tone is effectively reflected by the alliteration perhibes pater followed by the "Th" of Thymbraeus (323).

The two further questions which Aristaeus addresses to Cyrene may be paraphrased: "Don't you love me any more?" and "Why did you tell me that I would receive divine honours (caelum)?" One may wonder how the loss of his bees should imply that his mother no longer loves him and especially how dead bees affect Aristaeus' eventual deification. The questions are highly emotional and overstate the situation and so suit the epyllion form and, because they are so overly dramatic, make Aristaeus seem slightly ridiculous.

En (326) injects a bitter and sarcastic tone into Aristaeus' harangue²⁹: "Hope for heaven? You can't even protect the pride of my mortal life!" The sarcasm is stressed by the emphatic phrase etiam hunc ipsum ...

penchant for the obscure (i.e. doctrina). According to Servius (on Aen. 3.85) the sanctuary of Apollo at Thymbra was the site of the death of Achilles (see also PAULY-WISSOWA, vol.6a, pp.694ff., s.v. Thymbra 2) and given the fact that Aristaeus' complaint is based upon Achilles' lament to Thetis, the epithet may have been chosen by Virgil because of the connection with Achilles. Finally, Servius (on Aen. 3.85) says that Thymbra was so named because the herb Thymbra grew there in abundance. At G. 4.31, Virgil recommends that thymbra be planted near beehives, so there may be a learned reference to an unknown connection between Thymbraean Apollo and bees which would be appropriate to the context here (see further ROSS (1987), pp.220f.).

²⁹ For this use of en see OLD s.v. 2c. TLL v,2.548.1ff. supposes that en here introduces novum aliquid aut gravius.

honorem, by the antithesis between caelum sperare iubebas and vitae mortalis honorem ... relinquo and by the repetition of the "t" sound in 328. Despite his diligence (custodia sollers) and heroic efforts (vix ... omnia temptanti extuderat³⁰), Aristaeus says that he gives up.

In the concluding lines of his speech Aristaeus' sarcasm and bitter anger are vividly captured by the series of no less than five (six if one includes age (329) in the count) imperatives, erue (329), fer and interfice (330), ure and molire (331), each one applied to a different part of Aristaeus' farm, and by the repeated "t" sound (330-332) and the alliteration of inimicum ignem atque interfice and validam in vitis. Moreover, R.D. WILLIAMS³¹ has pointed out the sarcasm of ipsa manu and how well the elisions in the phrase inimicum ignem atque interfice represent Aristaeus' sense of indignation (presumably by producing a "gulping" effect vel sim. - though WILLIAMS does not specify this).

In addition, this final outburst receives particular stress from its length (a full four lines out of twelve) and from the forcefulness of expression and violence of the language: erue ("uproot"), fer ... ignem and ure (=burn), etc. Virgil's use of rare diction³² also makes for emphasis.

³⁰ Aristaeus' expression and choice of words (especially extuderat: see above) effectively represent how hard he feels he has worked. After complaining that his divine descent has been of no help, that Cyrene has abandoned him and forgotten her promises, Aristaeus moans that his hard work has come to naught.

³¹ WILLIAMS, on 329 and 330.

³² E.g. I can find only this instance where inimicus is applied to ignis (TLL vii,1.1628.70ff.). For interficio of crops etc. the closest parallel is Cic. Phil. fr.1.12: herbas arescere et interfici (TLL vii,1.2191.74ff.). For molior in the sense "set in

The sarcastic tone and emphasis serve to reinforce our impression of Aristaeus - he is petulant, disrespectful and overreacts to his situation. However, I believe that there may be a further, previously unnoticed point to the last four lines of Aristaeus' speech. Virgil makes Aristaeus choose language appropriate to a military assault: eruo is used in its primary sense "uproot", but the meaning "raze to the ground" is attested in military contexts (TLL v,2.845.70ff.); interficio, as noted, is an unusual word to apply to crops but is appropriate for killing a foe in combat (TLL vii,1.2192ff. supplies numerous examples); inimicum ignem, it has been suggested, recalls the Homeric phrase $\delta\eta\iota\omicron\nu\ \pi\omicron\rho$ ³³ and fire coupled with a weapon is standard in military contexts (in this case a bipennis for the more usual ferrum vel sim.). The bipennis is used to cut vines, etc. (TLL ii.2001.38ff.) but as a weapon it is particularly associated with Amazons (TLL ii.2002.10f.), and so an especially suitable choice for Cyrene as a female attacker of Aristaeus' farm. I would tentatively propose, then, that Virgil purposely chooses words and concepts which imply a military context and so adds a further amusing twist on the parallel between Aristaeus and the heroic Achilles.

motion" vel sim. TLL vii.1362.4ff. has four examples from Virgil, two from Ovid, one from Seneca (tragedy), one from Statius.

³³ MYNORS, on 330. See also TLL vii,1.1628.70.

SECTION 2: 333-360

As in the discussion of the previous section, my main focus will be upon the way in which Virgil treats material that is Homeric or ostensibly Homeric and how his treatment affects the tone of his narrative. Most commentators note the obvious parallels between Virgil and passages from the Iliad and Odyssey; however, I shall attempt to assess the subtle twists which Virgil incorporates into his account. As well, I shall point out where Virgil uses multiple allusion (by which I mean the blending of two or more Homeric reminiscences or the interweaving of a literary reference to a second author with Homeric material). Both imitatio cum variatione and multiple allusion are Callimachean/ neoteric techniques and by employing both Virgil makes his narrative more complex and arresting. I shall treat three specific points where Virgil seems particularly to exploit Homer: Cyrene's reaction to Aristaeus' complaint, the catalogue of the nymphs and Clymene's song.

As discussed above, the primary model for Aristaeus' lament is Il. 1.348ff.¹ In the Iliad, immediately after Achilles' lament, Homer reveals that Thetis, sitting in the depths of the sea, hears the cry of her son: τοῦ δ' ἔκλυε πότνια μήτηρ/ ἡμένη ἐν βένθεσσιν ἀλδὸς πατρὶ γέροντι (Il. 1.357f.). So

¹ I do not mean to suggest that the influence of Il. 18.35ff. is not yet felt at all; rather that the closer parallel up to this point is Il. 1.348ff., since there Achilles addresses Thetis directly. Virgil skilfully switches specifically to Il. 18 with the description and the catalogue of nymphs. See further my main text, below.

too, Virgil, immediately after Aristaeus' lament, has at mater sonitum thalamo sub fluminis alti / sensit. The similarities are obvious: a nymph, deep beneath the surface of the water (alti/ ἐν βένθεσσι), hears the cry of her son² (mater ... sensit; ἔκλυε ... μήτηρ). However, there are differences as well. In addition to the different reasons for the sons' cries discussed above, Virgil omits details from Homer which are not required for his account. He makes no reference to πατήρ γέρων who, in any case, is superfluous in Homer; he has nothing to match the Greek honorific πότνια - such a reference would be highly ironic given the tone of Aristaeus' lament. Virgil also adds the detail that Cyrene is in her thalamus³ (while Thetis' location is somewhat more vaguely defined) which sets up the description of the domestic scene to come. Still, the major difference, it seems to me, is Virgil's treatment of Cyrene's reaction or, more accurately, her lack of reaction.

² WILKINSON (1969), p.214, I believe is correct when he says that Cyrene does not recognize that the sonitum is Aristaeus' cry. However, I would argue that, upon reading 333f. (to sensit), we are intended to suppose that she does (especially given the parallel with Homer). It is not until Cyrene finally reacts (351ff.) that it becomes completely clear that she is not indifferent to, simply unaware of, Aristaeus' plight.

³ MYNORS, on 333, notes that thalamo is used "in its Homeric sense, an apartment in a palace, not (as always in Catullus) a marriage-chamber". He also comments "From Homer (Il. 13.21 and 32) onwards, sea-deities inhabit submarine palaces which are spoken of sometimes as though they stood on the sea-bottom, sometimes as if they were caves in the side or bottom of the sea".

At Il. 1.359, as soon as she hears Achilles' cries, Thetis reacts:

καρπαλίμως δ' ἀνέδου πολιτῆς ἀλδος ἦτορ' ὀμίχλη. Virgil, although he makes it clear that Aristaeus has actually called to his mother (321) and implies, at least, that she has heard his cries, makes no reference to Cyrene's reaction. I believe that the omission is intended to surprise. Firstly, given the parallels that Virgil has established, we expect Cyrene to react as Thetis reacted. Secondly, Virgil seems subtly to create the impression that she will, in fact, respond in some way. As HUXLEY⁴ notes, there is an unusual pause after sensit within the first foot of 334. This pregnant pause at the beginning of the line is, I believe, intended to give the impression that Cyrene will react: the pause is metrically unusual and so catches the ear, perhaps creating the expectation that something important is about to be described, so that, recalling the poetic model of Achilles and Thetis, we await a cry from Cyrene or some action by her to aid Aristaeus. Instead, we are told that Cyrene is surrounded by her fellow-nymphs who are engaged in the every-day activity of wool-working.⁵ By

⁴ HUXLEY, on 334.

⁵ One could argue that Virgil is alluding specifically to Homer, Od. 5.62 where the nymph Calypso is engaged in the wool-working, i.e. that Virgil is again blending two Homeric references from the Iliad and Odyssey (cp. also Circe at Od. 10.222-3 - although Circe is technically not a nymph, NISBET and HUBBARD, on Odes 1.17.20, suggest that Horace may have considered her a nymph; therefore, so too possibly Virgil). It seems to me to be more likely that Virgil has simply chosen an everyday activity to contrast with the ostensibly Homeric picture. This seems to be WILKINSON's view (p.216) and this interpretation adds, as he notes, "a touch of humour in the genre picture of nymphs, like Roman girls, working wool around

undercutting our expectations, Virgil exploits the humour of the situation and so reinforces the tone of mock solemnity which characterizes his treatment of Aristaeus' reaction to his plight. His description of the nymphs adds to the light-hearted tone - the anachronistic use of Milesia⁶ and the mock elevation of the diction which includes the rare words fucatus, satur (in the sense "rich") and hyalus.⁷ The rarity of diction may also contribute to the mysterious, exotic atmosphere.

a matron". It occurs to me, too, that Virgil may be playing with the idea that Cyrene rejects traditional female pursuits (see above Chapter 1, Part A) by depicting her as engaged in working wool. For wool-working, especially by women of nobility (and their slaves) see PAULY-WISSOWA, vol.3a, p.1812, s.v. Spinnerei and HEUBECK, *et al.*, on Od. 1.356-8.

⁶ HUXLEY, on 334-5.

⁷ Fucatus occurs first at Lucr. 1.644 (TLL vi,1.1460.18) in a derogatory (and metaphorical) sense: veraque constituunt quae belle tangere possunt/ auris et lepido quae sunt fucata sonore. The participle also appears in Cicero (e.g. Brut. 36, Orat. 79) and often has the connotation "fake", "sham", "not genuine" (so G. 2.465 and see TLL vi,1.1460.33ff.). It is unlikely that any notion of disparagement or contempt is intended here. Virgil may, however, be engaging in a complex type of word play. I would point out that fuco is etymologically linked to fucus a seaweed from which a red dye was derived (see FORDYCE, on Cat. 64.49). In his choice of the participle fucata, therefore, Virgil may be including a further (disguised) reference to the sea/water. Satur in the sense "rich" vel sim. (of colours) occurs here first (OLD s.v.3). Hyalus (a Graecism) appears here first (TLL vi,3.3130.37ff.) - the rarity matches the context. Cf. Horace Ars 48ff.:

si forte necesse est
indiciis monstrare recentibus abdita rerum,
fingere cinctutis non exaudita Cethigis
continget.

BRINK on Ars 49 compares Cic. Fin. 3.5: de rebus non pervagatis inusitatis verbis (uti).

This twist not only adds to the humour of the passage but also allows Virgil smoothly to change his main model specifically from Il. 1.348ff. to Il. 18.35ff. In Il. 1, Thetis is alone, but in Il. 18, after she cries out in response to Achilles' groan when he learns that Patroclus is dead, the nymphs gather around (Il. 18.37f.) and Homer then offers his list of their names. Virgil, on the other hand, has the nymphs already present but engaged in a different occupation from Homer's nymphs and he too includes his own catalogue of their names. This change of Homeric models, so subtly and skilfully introduced, reveals the intricacy with which Virgil constructs his narrative. He exploits the two instances in the Iliad where Thetis reacts to a loss by Achilles and blends them together, with alterations, in his description of Cyrene and Aristaeus' single loss. Though he has changed his first main Homeric model, he has done so in such a way that he can exploit a second, related Homeric passage.

At Il. 18.37, Thetis, though she has not specifically been called by Achilles, reacts to his groan by crying aloud - κώκυσέν τ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα - but she does not surface immediately. Instead, the catalogue intervenes. So too in Virgil's account, his catalogue intervenes before a nymph surfaces but with one major difference - Cyrene has still not yet reacted. Finally, at 349, Aristaeus' cries reach the nymphs again (iterum) and now they all react - obstipuere (351). Again, in my view, Virgil intentionally alters Homer for humorous effect and his clever twist seems to have been missed by commentators. In Il. 18, Thetis

cries out and the nymphs gather around her (ll. 18.37f.) and beat their breasts (ll. 18.50f.) - i.e. they react loudly. The first reaction of Virgil's nymphs is stunned silence⁸ and Virgil stresses his change by the emphatic positioning of obstipuere - first word in the line, in enjambement and followed by a heavy pause.⁹ Again, I believe, the change is unexpected and therefore humorous, and Virgil reinforces the tone by the unusual collocation (i.e. mock-solemn) vitreisque sedilibus.¹⁰ In addition, there is irony in the correspondences between Achilles (who is lamenting the death of Patroclus) and Aristaeus (who is lamenting the death of bees). Finally, there is also a difference in mood - in contrast to Homer, Virgil gives us initially a peaceful and humorous (334, 347ff.) picture.

Now Virgil makes a further alteration. Arethusa, not Cyrene, surfaces, in contrast to Thetis who goes to Achilles herself. Arethusa calls to Cyrene (355-6):

tristis Aristaeus Penei genitoris ad undam
stat lacrimans, et te crudelem nomine dicit.

Aristaeus, it seems, repeats his complaint for a third time. Only now do we understand Cyrene's full reaction. She stricken with a "strange dread"

⁸ For this sense of obstipesco, see TLL vi,2.260.2ff.

⁹ On 351, THOMAS and HUXLEY both remark upon the emphasis given to obstipuere, without noticing how Virgil alters Homer.

¹⁰ Apparently unparalleled in extant Latin literature according to Ibycus.

(nova...formidine, 357) and with great urgency¹¹, bids Arethusa to bring Aristaeus to her. It becomes clear, then, that Cyrene is not indifferent to, simply unaware of, Aristaeus' plight.¹²

There are, in my view, a number of conclusions to be drawn about the effect and significance of the changes which Virgil incorporates into his narrative. Firstly, the variety creates interest - an obvious but important consideration. In addition, this imitatio cum variatione is a feature of Hellenistic/Callimachean poetry and so not out of place, perhaps even required, in a neoteric epyllion. Thirdly, Cyrene's delayed reaction contributes to the amusing treatment of Aristaeus: he is standing at the edge of the river Peneus railing away, but is ignored. While there is humour in the depiction of Aristaeus and it may appear that he is over-reacting, at the same time, I believe, Virgil intends that we feel some sympathy for his plight. Aristaeus is clearly very upset (luctus, 350; tristis, 355; lacrimans, 356), but his cries elicit no response. This blending of emotions would also be typically Hellenistic.¹³

¹¹ For the tone of urgency, see THOMAS, on 358: "the only instance in V. where the imperative preceding age is repeated; it obviously conveys great urgency."

¹² Just as Thetis, in both Homeric passages is unaware of the reasons for Achilles' sorrow.

¹³ HUTCHINSON, p.11.

The reasons behind Virgil's choice that Arethusa, not Cyrene, surface are more complex. I would argue that from the point of view of the story-line Virgil wants Aristaeus to descend into Cyrene's subaquatic world and the main reason for the change is to set up the parallel with Orpheus' descent into the underworld which is to come later in the narrative. If Cyrene were to surface, presumably she would hear the whole tale of Aristaeus' woes at the river's edge, just as Thetis comforts Achilles on the shore of the sea. Also, Aristaeus' descent provides for Virgil the opportunity to present the vivid and detailed description of Cyrene's underwater domain which is intriguing, adds a supernatural element to the Aristaeus story and invites comparisons with the underworld setting into which Orpheus descends.¹⁴ Finally, by at first delaying then stressing Cyrene's reaction (i.e. she reacts violently to unaccustomed distress)¹⁵, Virgil adds to the impression that she, in her underwater thalamus, is detached from the concerns of the world above.¹⁶

¹⁴ I make this suggestion independently of NORDEN, pp.481f.: "Aber dann lässt er die Szene von Σ sich wandeln. Dort sucht Thetis, aus der Meerestiefe emportauchend, ihren Sohn auf; Aristaeus wird von der Nymphe Arethusa geholt, in die Tiefe des Stromes hinabgeführt und trifft seine Mutter erst dort. Die Änderung ist durch die Absicht bedingt, die unterirdische Märchenwelt sich dem Blick weiterhin erschliessen zu lassen." NORDEN does not point out that Aristaeus' descent below the surface of the water sets up a contrast between the Märchenwelt and the Underworld into which Orpheus must descend.

¹⁵ In addition to obstipuer note nova ... formidine. As MYNORS, on 357, says nova here = insolita and formido is a strong word (TLL vi.1.1096.54ff.).

¹⁶ KLINGNER, pp.203f., also remarks upon Cyrene's detachment from the concerns of the upper world.

Still, one wonders whether or not there may be further significance in Virgil's choice of Arethusa specifically as the nymph who surfaces. Although many springs in the Greek world bore her name, Virgil refers to the spring at Syracuse at Ecl. 10.1ff. and Aen. 3.694ff. in the only other passages where Arethusa occurs in his poetry. In the latter he appears to allude to the myth that Alpheus pursued the nymph Arethusa from Elis to Sicily.¹⁷ Perhaps, then, we are to think of this pursuit here too (despite the geographical anomaly) or at least recall Arethusa when we realize that Aristaeus is being punished for the consequences of his pursuit and attempted rape of Eurydice.

THE CATALOGUE OF NYMPHS

Lists of names have a long literary history which can be traced back to Homer (e.g. Il. 7.161ff. - Greek heroes; Il. 12.20ff. - rivers) and to Hesiod (e.g. Theog. 77ff. - Muses; 240ff. - Nereids; 337ff. - rivers; 346ff. - Oceanids).¹⁸ However, given that the literary reminiscence of Il. 18 colours

¹⁷ PAULY-WISSOWA, vol.2, pp.679ff., has 19 entries under Arethusa of which about half are springs in various regions of the Greek world. However, the first instance of Arethusa as a personal name may, as THOMAS notes (on 344), occur in Apollodorus (= one of the Hesperides). Ov. Met. 5.572ff. has a detailed version (in which she is an Arcadian nymph and huntress) of Alpheus' pursuit of her and her metamorphosis into a stream. See also Met. 5.487ff. and BÖMER, on Met. 5.487-508, for the dual tradition, i.e. nymph and spring.

¹⁸ For further examples of catalogues in poetry, see WEST, p.180 (on Theog. 76). WEST comments particularly upon lists which contain a specific statement of the number of names included in the list and so omits e.g. Il. 18.39ff. and Ov.

Virgil's description of Cyrene and the nymphs, it might be expected that the names in Virgil's list recall Il. 18.39ff. Yet, as commentators unanimously observe, none, except Clymene, appears in Homer's catalogue;¹⁹ nor, incidentally, do any of the names appear in Hesiod's lists of Nereids and Oceanids (again, with the exception of Clymene at Theog. 351). Though the names are not Homeric, Virgil begins his catalogue with what WILKINSON calls "a studied reproduction of one of Homer's lines (43)."²⁰ Virgil's opening line is typical of his poetic technique in the Aristaeus portion of the epyllion. We expect Homeric names, but find none. Instead, Virgil presents non-Homeric names in a line that copies Homeric rhythm (Δωτώ τε Πρωτώ τε Φέρουσά τε Δυναμένη τε, Il. 18.43). In other words, he manipulates our expectations in a manner that is both clever and complex.

All of the names which Virgil selects are Greek but most are obscure or mostly unknown as names for nymphs. It may be that Virgil deliberately selects names not commonly attested for nymphs and that he is therefore, in a sense, inventing them or it may be that he is basing his list, either wholly or in part, upon a literary source now lost. Of course, it is impossible to make a

Met. 3.260ff.

¹⁹ I would agree with the generally held view that 338 is interpolated: 1) because it is repeated at Aen. 5.862, and 2) because the names are Homeric and so do not fit well with the other non-Homeric names. See THOMAS, on [338], WILKINSON (1969), p.215, and PAGE, on 338.

²⁰ WILKINSON (1969), p.215. See also THOMAS, on 336.

definitive choice between these two alternatives, but I would make the following observations: some of the names seem to be selected strictly for their sound (see above on the first line of the catalogue); or meaning - Drymo (= "thicket") an appropriate, if unattested, name for a woodland nymph; or surprise - Drymo as the first name in a list which we expect to contain water-nymphs; or for playful purposes - Phyllodoce (= "leaf-receiver"), modelled upon Homeric Cymodoce (= "wave-receiver"). On the other hand, some of the names are more suggestive. Clio, for example, recalls the Muse, while Cydippe may refer to Callimachus' story of Acontius and Cydippe (Aet. 3 fr. 67-75 (Pf.)). Ovid calls Beroe the nurse of Semele (Met. 3.278) which is a tantalizing detail if he is referring to an earlier source available to Virgil, since an oblique reference to Dionysus in the catalogue may be linked to the death of Orpheus at the hands of the Thracian women engaged in celebrating the rites of Bacchus. Such speculations, though tempting, cannot be supported by the available evidence.²¹

²¹ In addition to the names discussed in my main text, I would note the following possible learned allusions, suggested by THOMAS, on 336, 339 and 343: Xantho appears in AP 9.570, Ligea in Lycophron (Alex. 726), Lycorias was perhaps associated with Apollo (Lycoria being a town near Delphi), Ephyre (according to the poet Eumelus) was an Oceanid and the first inhabitant of Corinth, Opis appears at Call. Hymn 3.204-5 and Deiopeia may be connected with Deiope who was married to Musaeus. See also MYNORS, pp.303-4, RICHTER, pp.377ff., and PAGE, pp.370-1.

Having said that, I find very attractive THOMAS' suggestion that Callimachus may have been a secondary model for Virgil's list.²² He argues first that the names of the nymphs fall into two categories - "sylvan figures" and those associated with poetry, especially Hellenistic poetry, Callimachus and Alexandria.²³ Secondly, he points out similarities between 341-2, Oceanitides ambae,/ ambae auro, pictis incinctae pelibus ambae and Callimachus Hymn 3.43, πάσας είνετας, πάσας ἔτι παῖδας ἀμύτρους: the shared subject matter, Virgil's repetition of ambae, Callimachus' of πάσας and the possible word play between incinctae and ἀμύτρους. Finally THOMAS notes that Callimachus wrote a treatise, Περὶ Νυμφῶν, cited by Stobaeus, and speculates that there may be a connection between Virgil's catalogue and the Περὶ Νυμφῶν. I agree with THOMAS that it would be in keeping with Virgil's technique if he had used Callimachus to colour material that is ostensibly Homeric but because the putative source has been lost we cannot fully appreciate further underlying connotations which Virgil may have intended.

The difficulties do not end with the names which Virgil selects for his nymphs. Further questions and complications arise in interpreting the lines of

²² THOMAS (1986), pp.191ff.

²³ THOMAS' division seems to me to be more satisfactory than e.g. HUXLEY's (on 336-44) and RICHTER's (on 336-344), who argue that there are 6 water nymphs and 6 wood nymphs, since there is no evidence to support the view that Opis, etc. are water nymphs and some of the nymphs in Virgil's list (e.g. Clio and Beroe) seem to be described as both.

description interspersed between the names (337, 339-40, 342). Some of the descriptive details appear to be merely conventional - 337, referring to the nymphs' hair (presumably as a sign of their beauty) may be compared to Il. 18.48, ἐϋπλόκαμος τ' Ἀμάθεια. Other details are less conventional (altera tum primos Lucinae experta labores) and the range of opinion about their significance is predictably wide.²⁴ It may be that such details contain some underlying relevance and that their significance would become clear if Virgil's source(s) were available. However, without that source (or sources) interpretation must remain only speculative.

It can be said, however, that some of the descriptive details which Virgil includes seem to recall ideas present in Callimachus' extant works. Arethusa, in addition to her association with springs has, in Virgil, as THOMAS points out,²⁵ a possible sylvan connection (positis ... sagittis), just as Clio and Beroe are both Oceanitides (341) and both pictis incinctae pellibus - the latter suggesting that they were huntresses too. THOMAS notes further that Callimachus (Hymn 3.40ff.) similarly blends sylvan nymphs and Oceanids. I would add that the river Peneus (Call. Hymn 4.123f.) is associated with women and childbirth, when the river god addresses Leto, οἶδα καὶ ἄλλας/ λουσαμένας

²⁴ WILKINSON (1970), p.38: "the names and little details must have been selected primarily for beauty - what other motive can have been at work?" Contrast JOHNSTON, pp.121f. and n.34, who reads great significance into 340.

²⁵ THOMAS (1986), p.192, n.52.

ἀπ' ἐμεῖο λεχωῖδας, and would tentatively propose that Virgil may have had this passage (or a similar passage in a lost work of Callimachus) in mind when he writes at 340, altera tum primos Lucinae experta labores.

While only so much can be said with any degree of certainty about the interpretation of the names and descriptive details in Virgil's list, observations can be made about the style compared to a Homeric (or Hesiodic) catalogue. As WILKINSON observes²⁶, the frame for Virgil's list may have been provided by Homer, but the treatment and style are Hellenistic: the detailed description, the attention paid to sound and rhythm, the selection of non-Homeric names (perhaps involving learned allusions and therefore adding doctrina), the touch of humour in the nymphs working Milesian wool, like Roman women, and, one could add, in the reference to the nymphs being too absorbed in Clymene's song about love to hear Aristaeus' complaint.

I would make the following additions to WILKINSON's observations and point out that the polish of Virgil's list further distinguishes it from Homer's. Virgil includes rare diction - e.g. caesariem, incinctae, Oceanitides²⁷ - which

²⁶ WILKINSON (1969), pp.216f.

²⁷ Caesaries denotes rich, luxuriant hair (see AUSTIN, on Aen. 1.590) and so is particularly apt for sea-nymphs. On caesaries, TLL iii.108.15ff. states legitur semel ap. PLAUT., deinde saepius apud poetas inde a CATULL., ex pedestribus scriptoribus habent singulis locis LIV. PLIN. paneg. APUL..... For the rarity of incingo see TLL vii,1.911.64ff. The verb appears first in Ennius (scaen. 30), then Afran. com. 182 and twice in Catullus (64.258, 308) prior to Virgil. See THOMAS' note (on 341-2) on Oceanitides.

may have been chosen to match the unusual subject matter, or for humorous effect (again mock-elevation of tone). He effectively exploits alliteration and assonance in phrases such as caesariem ... candida colla and pictis incinctae pelibus. Furthermore, Virgil employs stylistic devices favoured by the Hellenistic poets - e.g. the epanalepsis at 339-40.²⁸ Again, as NORDEN remarks, Virgil alternates hexameters which would appeal to the Greek then to the Roman ear:

Ein kleines Kunststück für sich ist die Variation der Metrik: die Verse mit den Namen sind arte graecanica facti, die mit den Zugaben dem römischen Ohr angepasst.²⁹

Specifically, I would point out too that the lines containing Greek names alternate with lines consisting largely of Latin words. Finally, Virgil's catalogue and description are set off in ring composition:

A Aristaeus' cry (333) and reference to glassy/ sea green colour of the nymphs' wool (334).

B Catalogue.

A Second cry of Aristaeus (349) and reference to the glassy thrones of the nymphs (350) (notice further that

²⁸ FORDYCE, on Cat. 64.26, states: "The device goes back to Homer (e.g. Od. 1.23, Il. 2.849) and was cultivated by the Alexandrians (e.g. Call. Hymn 1.33, 4.118, Theoc. 9.2)." FORDYCE also suggests that the device is sometimes emphatic, sometimes pathetic or picturesque.

²⁹ NORDEN (1966), p.480, n.23. See also WILKINSON (1969), p.217: "No less Hellenistic is the minute care for sounds and rhythms, in which Virgil surpassed all - the open vowels, the mingling of Greek and Latin words, the alternation of hexameters of Greek and Latin form...".

Virgil uses the Latin vitreus at 350 whereas he uses the Greek hyalus at 334).

CLYMENE'S SONG

While the nymphs are engaged in their spinning, Clymene sings to them, and the theme of her song is love. The apparent reference (345f.) to the love affair between Venus and Mars seems to contain an allusion to Demodocus' song at Od. 8.266ff. and so there is a further literary reminiscence of Homer blended into the passage. As noted above, Clymene is the only one of Virgil's nymphs who is also Homeric and it seems particularly appropriate, therefore, that she sing a Homeric song. THOMAS³⁰ proposes the attractive suggestion that Virgil's choice of Clymene may contain an etymological play between αοιδός περικλυτός, as Demodocus is called at Od. 8.367 and κλυμένη (Clymene).

However, it must be questioned whether or not her song is, in fact, entirely Homeric. In Demodocus' song, the emphasis is upon Hephaestus trapping Ares and Aphrodite in the net which he forges and the subsequent ridicule of the lovers by Poseidon, Apollo and Hermes. In Virgil, Clymene's song seems to refer to an occasion when Venus and Mars successfully deceived Vulcan and enjoyed their dulcia furta. I do not believe that the Latin

³⁰ THOMAS (1986), p.193.

can support the view that the doli referred to in 346 can be Vulcan's. Rather, it seems to me, that doli must be the trickery employed by Mars to avoid detection by Vulcan. This is the view e.g. of MYNORS, who argues further that the emphasis in Demodocus' song is different because he was "singing for an audience of husbands".³¹ I assume that MYNORS means that a tale in which a husband is cuckolded would be little appreciated by such a gathering. However, his comment, I would argue, addresses the matter from the wrong perspective. It seems more germane to ask why Virgil altered Homer's treatment of the story.³²

Firstly, Virgil makes Clymene's audience female. This adjustment is dictated by the circumstances of the narrative - Virgil's setting is Cyrene's thalamus and her companions are the nymphs. Secondly, Clymene's song deals with a successful seduction and, in my view, one of the effects of this twist is that it allows Virgil to exploit the humour of the situation. As NORDEN notes: "Eine der Nymphen erzählt, wovon junge Mädchen gern sprechen und

³¹ MYNORS, on 345. The view that the doli are Vulcan's is reported in Servius (on 345) as being the interpretation of Donatus. Connected with this difficulty is the interpretation of inanem ... curam which some see as a reference to Vulcan's unrequited love (see THOMAS, on 345). However, I would agree with those - e.g. R.D. WILLIAMS, on 345-6 - who interpret the phrase as Vulcan's futile attempts to prevent the seduction. WILKINSON (1969), p.216, correctly in my view, believes that Clymene's song is a variant upon Demodocus' tale precisely because the lovers succeed.

³² Of course, Virgil could have been using a variant version found in a different source/sources. Something so recondite would be typically Hellenistic.

hören, Liebesgeschichten".³³ There is humour too in the fact that the Nymphs do not respond to Aristaeus' first cries because they are captae ... carmine and the song upon which they are so intent concerns seduction and the passion of gods. Virgil's alteration, then, is not simply imitatio cum variatione, but also functions to explain a detail of his story-line (why the nymphs do not respond to Aristaeus) and to affect the tone.

INTRODUCTION TO ARISTAEUS' DESCENT

The discussion of Aristaeus' descent beneath the water belongs properly to the next section. However, I should like to comment briefly here upon the way in which Virgil introduces the means whereby Aristaeus descends at 359f.: simul alta iubet discedere late/ flumina, qua iuvenis gressus inferret.

Though there are instances where gods descend beneath the water, most notably Dionysus at ll. 6.135ff. and Iris at ll. 24.77ff., they dive into the waves. The only instance of a hero/mortal accomplishing an underwater descent is Theseus as described by Bacchylides (17.93ff. (CAMPBELL)). Ignoring the difficulty of whether or not Virgil may have been familiar with Bacchylides' account, I would point out that Theseus, like Dionysus and Iris in Homer, dives into the water. In Virgil, however, Cyrene orders the waters of the Peneus to part to allow Aristaeus to enter her underwater domain. This is a

³³ NORDEN (1966), p.480.

truly remarkable detail and, so far as I can ascertain, unparalleled. Yet most commentators pass over 359f. or note, rather prosaically, that inferret is subjunctive in a relative purpose clause.³⁴ Much of my discussion so far has focused upon Virgil's use of literary allusion and the various effects of the alterations which he makes to his literary models. At 359f., Virgil seems to be inventing Cyrene's role in parting the water and the novelty is striking and very effective. The detail gives us some indication of Cyrene's divine power and, more importantly, emphasizes the supernatural element in the story of Aristaeus' descent. Not only is Cyrene's role given prominence, but Virgil also stresses that Aristaeus' descent itself is remarkable by reminding us of Aristaeus' special status: fas illi limina divum/ tangere.

I would also mention that the recollection of Theseus here is a brilliant choice both because his descent beneath the water parallels Aristaeus' descent and because he also journeyed to the Underworld and therefore provides a parallel with Orpheus.

I conclude this section with a few remarks upon Virgil's narrative technique. The most significant feature is the descriptive pause at 334-348 which contributes to the detached and serene atmosphere of Cyrene's underwater thalamus. The marvellous scene where the nymphs are engaged in the everyday activity of wool-working and absorbed in Clymene's song about

³⁴ E.g. THOMAS, on 360.

the love affairs of the gods contrasts vividly with Aristaeus and his reaction to his plight. Added to this overall impression, there is a sense of mystery since Virgil has not yet specified the precise location and appearance of Cyrene's chamber. We know only that the scene occurs underwater, somewhere.

In addition, Virgil effectively exploits the contrast between the serenity of the scene in Cyrene's thalamus and the emotional reaction of Cyrene and the nymphs at 349ff. Such interplay of moods is, as WILKINSON remarks, Hellenistic: "It is also wholly in the spirit of Callimachus that at 348 this peace should suddenly be broken and the light tone changed to one of passionate anxiety."³⁵

³⁵ WILKINSON (1969), p.217.

SECTION 3: 360-386

As noted above, some scholars have argued that the literary model for Aristaeus' descent beneath the river Peneus may have been Bacchylides 17, where Theseus dives into the sea and is escorted by dolphins to Poseidon's underwater palace.¹ While it does seem likely that Virgil intends us to recall Theseus' descent below the water,² there is little in his description to suggest specifically that Bacchylides is his model. There are basic similarities - the hero descends beneath the water to a marvellous underwater dwelling (and so both accounts contain supernatural elements) and both heroes are warmly received, Theseus by his step-mother, Aristaeus by his mother. However, these details could occur in any account of Theseus' descent and need not imply that Virgil is borrowing directly from Bacchylides. On the contrary, the lack of verbal correspondences between the two accounts suggests otherwise³ and so it seems equally probable that Virgil is using a literary model other than

¹ So NORDEN (1966), p.482 and WILKINSON (1969), p.114.

² In support of this assertion, I would point out that Theseus, alone of heroes, both entered the Underworld and came to an underwater palace. He therefore, offers a parallel to the Orpheus-Aristaeus pair in G. 4. Also, Virgil (I have argued) has included an earlier reference to Theseus by echoing Catullus 64 (especially at 325).

³ NORDEN (1966), p.482, it should be noted, argues that domum mirans genetricis ... ibat, spectabat, and postquam est perventum are verbal reminiscences of Bacchylides ἔμολέν τε θεῶν μέγαρον ... εἶδέν τε πατρὸς ἄλοχον φίλων. None of these is particularly striking.

Bacchylides or is adapting the Theseus myth and embroidering it with details of his own invention.

It is perhaps inappropriate to speak of a standard version of the story of Theseus' descent, since there is no extant literary account after Bacchylides until Hyginus (Ast. 2.5).⁴ However, a central feature of the story is apparently that Theseus is responding to Minos' challenge to prove that he is the son of Poseidon and this has no place in Virgil's description of Aristaeus' descent. On the contrary, Aristaeus' divine parentage allows him to pass beneath the waves: fas illi limina divum/ tangere. Virgil's treatment of this point seems to stress Aristaeus' passive response to his plight in contrast to Theseus who leaps into the sea of his own accord. In addition, there may be an interesting twist to the Theseus myth: Theseus is challenged by Minos and dives into the sea to prove that he is the son of Poseidon; Aristaeus, on the other hand, sarcastically questions whether he is the son of Apollo (323) and Cyrene responds to this challenge by causing the water of the river to part qua iuvenis gressus inferret.

Whatever Virgil's debt to Bacchylides or another source in this connection may be, the language of his description in 360-362 recalls Homer.

⁴ Hyginus' account agrees with Bacchylides' in many details but includes the interesting variant that it was Thetis, not Amphitrite, who presented a wreath to Theseus, though Hyginus does note: Alii autem a Neptuni uxore accepisse dicunt coronam. Besides Hyginus, Pausanias (1.17.3) describes the scene as it appears in the wall-painting in the Theseion at Athens, dated c.470 B.C. For this and other representations of the scene in art see BARRON, p.40, JEBB, pp.223ff., PAULY-WISSOWA, suppl.vol.13, pp.1105ff.

In fact one of the noteworthy features of this whole section (360-386) is the fact that Virgil employs a number of brief Homeric reminiscences but strikingly has abruptly broken away from his earlier models (Il. 1 and Il. 18) and no longer has one main model and so avoids monotonous repetition of narrative technique. He does however still retain an overall Homeric flavour in his description.

There is virtual unanimity among scholars⁵ in noting the similarity between 360-1 and Il. 24.96: ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρα σφι λιάζετο κῦμα θαλάσσης; and most note the twist in Virgil's echo: in the Iliad passage Thetis and Iris are leaving the sea and journeying to Olympus while Aristaeus is travelling in the opposite direction.

To this already complex array of allusions is added a further literary reminiscence. Virgil's choice of language to describe the wave which surrounds Aristaeus, curvata in montis faciem ... unda (361), seems to recall the Homeric encircling wave and simile at Od. 11.243: πορφύρεον δ' ἄρα κῦμα περιστάθη, οὐραϊ ἴσον.⁶ However, it is again noteworthy that Virgil's comparison appears in rather a different context. In Homer, the encircling wave conceals the seduction of Tyro by Poseidon.⁷ So again, I believe, Virgil invites us to

⁵ See MYNORS, on 361, THOMAS, on 360-1, et al.

⁶ MYNORS, on 361, notes that the comparison appeared also in Hesiod (fr.32 M.-W.) and is echoed by Ov. Met. 15.508-9.

⁷ For Tyro, see HEUBECK and HOEKSTRA, on Od. 11.235-59 and PEARSON, pp.270ff., on Sophocles fr. 648ff. The main point of her story is that she was in love with the river god Enipeus. Poseidon, adopting the appearance of Enipeus, deceives her and seduces her.

compare and contrast the situation he is describing with that of his model. In Homer, there is sexual love and deceit. In Virgil, there seems to be the hint of a mother's love and embrace without a trace of deceit and this interpretation is reinforced by the use of sinus in 362 which, as THOMAS comments, "suggests a nurturing of Aristaeus, appropriate since it is his mother who ultimately receives him."⁸

One final point requires comment. The procedure by which Aristaeus comes to his mother's umida regna is left vague (deliberately, I would argue). There is no further mention of Arethusa, despite 358, duc, age, duc ad nos, and the sense of misit (362) is ambiguous. Does the verb mean "let him pass" (so HUXLEY)⁹ or does it imply that Aristaeus has been "carried down" by the wave (so TLL viii.1165.51f.), i.e. Aristaeus is standing upon the river bank, the waters of the river part and the wave encircles him and sweeps him away to the river bottom? The fact that Virgil leaves this matter open to question creates a sense of mystery appropriate to the marvellous world into which Aristaeus comes. Not only do we wonder how Aristaeus suddenly finds himself in Cyrene's watery kingdom but also where exactly Cyrene's thalamus is located and what exactly this umida regna is like.

⁸ THOMAS, on 312.

⁹ HUXLEY, on 362, offers the parallel mittin me intro? Plaut., Truc. 756.

The world which Aristaeus has entered is truly marvellous and mysterious and Virgil stresses this in a number of ways. Firstly, as THOMAS notes,¹⁰ 363-373 form a single sentence, the longest in the poem, and the unusual length reflects the uniqueness and strangeness of the setting. The landscape is remarkable. There are lakes or pools (lacus), ringed by caves (or inside the caves), and trees which make a noise (sonantis). The latter detail perhaps implies that there are breezes blowing,¹¹ and the atmosphere seems to be the same as that of the upper world since Aristaeus is able to walk and breathe.

In addition, the whole passage is replete with features of diction, sound and style. In 363, genetricis belongs to elevated diction¹² and the phrase umida regna is, so far as I can ascertain, unparalleled in extant literature.¹³ The descriptive line speluncisque lacus clausos lucosque sonantis is particularly noteworthy for its spondaic rhythm, the magical sound of the repeated s, l, and c and the similarity of lacus clausos lucosque. At 366 Virgil employs a golden line¹⁴ both to round off the general description of the

¹⁰ THOMAS, on 363-73.

¹¹ Or possibly the trees are echoing the roar of water flowing.

¹² TLL vi,2.1816.52f. (on genitor) - "primum est vocabulum poetarum vel sublimioris dictionis. So also genetrix is rare in oratore pedestri (see TLL vi,2.1821.40ff.).

¹³ Confirmed by an Ibycus search.

¹⁴ For Virgil's use of "golden lines" see WILKINSON (1970), pp.215f.

underwater realm and as a preface to the catalogue of rivers. The catalogue itself contributes to the atmosphere of marvel and strangeness. The choice of names (see further below) is striking. Again, there is rarity in diction: saxosus (370) auratus and taurino (371)¹⁵; and elevated diction: se erumpit (368), fluenta (369) and pater Tiberinus (369).¹⁶ Furthermore, the dactylic rhythm of 369 and the alliteration saxosusque sonans (370) imitate effectively the sound and swiftness of the rushing rivers, while the repetition unde ... unde ... unde (368-9) is perhaps intended to suggest their thundering roar. The sentence is remarkable for these features alone.

An analysis of the way in which Virgil blends literary allusion in the passage is difficult. RICHTER comments: "Die Partie ist ein schönes Beispiel literarischen Ineinanderarbeitens vorliegender Elemente zu einem neuen künstlerischen Ganzen."¹⁷ THOMAS¹⁸ is the most recent of many

¹⁵ Auratus first appears in Enn. Ann. 621 (SKUTSCH): Olli creterris ex auratis hauserunt. It is the mot juste for the gilded horns of sacrificial animals (OLD s.v.2b, TLL ii.1521.47ff.). Here, however, the association with a bull-shaped river god is singular (though echoed by later writers -Mart. 10.7.6; Auson. Mos. 471; Claudian 28.161). The rarity of saxosus (OLD s.v.1) and taurinus (OLD s.v.1a) has been confirmed by an Ibycus search.

¹⁶ On se erumpit in Lucretius (4.1115) see MYNORS, on 368-9. Also MYNORS on fluenta states: "used thus in a periphrasis ... would probably convey epic cadence" (see also TLL vi,1.949.30ff.). Pater Tiberinus is Ennian - see Ann. 1.26 (SKUTSCH): Teque pater Tiburine.

¹⁷ RICHTER, on 363ff.

¹⁸ THOMAS, on 363.

commentators to suggest, for example, that domum mirans (363) invites comparison with Od. 4.43-4 οἱ δὲ ἰδόντες/ θαύμαζον κατὰ δῶμα, describing the reaction of Telemachus and his companions upon seeing the home of Menelaus. If Virgil is, in fact, intending to recall this passage specifically, it is worth noting that the cause of the amazement is different: in Homer, it is the splendour and richness of Menelaus' δῶμα; in Virgil, Aristaeus marvels at the strangeness of Cyrene's umida regna. Such a variation, we have seen, would be typical of Virgil's allusive technique.

However, there are difficulties with this view. Firstly, the verbal parallel is not particularly striking. Secondly, Aristaeus' amazement is natural enough since he quite unexpectedly finds himself in a strange world. The fact that Virgil mentions Aristaeus' amazement is not surprising and so the situation does not immediately suggest the Homeric passage. Finally, Odysseus himself also feels similar amazement when he stands before the palace of Alcinous at Od. 7.81ff. and one could, I suppose, just as easily argue that this passage provided Virgil's model.

Again, RICHTER¹⁹ (among others) points out that Lucretius (6.536) describes underwater caverns and pools and suggests that lacus clausos lucosque sonantis (364) recalls multos lacus multasque lacunas (Lucretius 6.538). Once again, I would argue that conscious allusion is unlikely here since the language is not remarkably similar and, as MYNORS notes, "The theory that

¹⁹ RICHTER, on 363ff.

under the earth are great caverns, with pools and rivers...is common property (e.g. Plato Phaedo 111d, A. 8.74-5, Sen. nat. 6.8.1).²⁰

What is striking and effective in Virgil's account is that in focusing upon Aristaeus' reaction (mirans, stupefactus) to this marvellous world under the river and by stressing that the youth is overwhelmed by the sights and sounds, he is able to make the scene more vivid.

The catalogue of rivers, like the catalogue of nymphs, is smoothly incorporated into the narrative and of the many wondrous things which Aristaeus sees the source(s)²¹ of all the rivers of the world is the most spectacular and fittingly receives the greatest attention (8 of the 11 lines).

Once again the question arises whether or not Virgil has a specific literary model in mind or (as with the catalogue of nymphs, possibly) more than one model. The evidence, it seems to me, if not conclusive, is at least suggestive.

Firstly, the idea that rivers spring from an underground source appears elsewhere (as noted above, e.g. Plato Phaedo 111d). However, I can find no evidence that the specific location of that underground source is identified elsewhere as being beneath the river Peneus. This detail, therefore, would seem to be Virgil's own invention and required by the narrative.

²⁰ MYNORS, on 363.

²¹ It is not clear whether we are to envision a single source (so apparently WILKINSON (1969), p. 217) or different sources for each (so e.g. THOMAS, on 366). The ambiguity is suitably mysterious.

Secondly, there are a number of earlier examples in poetry of catalogues of rivers: Homer's at Il. 12.20-23 and Hesiod's at Theog. 337-45, etc. The shortness of Homer's list and its omission of descriptive details and the fact that no names are common to both lists might seem, at first glance, to preclude the possibility that Virgil is using Homer's catalogue as a direct model. Still, I would argue that there are certain points which would seem to favour the opposite conclusion. The fact that the two lists share no names in common is far from conclusive (cp. the catalogue of nymphs). Also both lists contain 8 names. Then, too, although Homer's list generally is lacking description, the final river in his list receives almost two lines of description (Il. 12.22-3):

καὶ Σιμόεις, ὅθι πολλὰ βοάγρια καὶ τρυφάλεια
κάππεσον ἐν κονίησι καὶ ἡμιθέων γένος ἀνδρῶν·

In Virgil's catalogue, the final river named, the Eridanus, receives the same kind of emphasis and significantly, I think, the appended clause contains an apparent Homeric reminiscence: compare quo non alius per pinguia culta/ in mare purpureum violentior effluit amnis with Il. 16.391 ἐς δ' ἄλα πορφυρέην μεγάλα στενάχουσι ῥέουσαι - the subject matter is the same (rushing/ roaring rivers), πορφυρέην in Homer is repeated by Virgil and the blending of two different Homeric passages would not be uncharacteristic of Virgil's technique. On balance, therefore, it seems to me to be plausible that Virgil is adapting Homer in a manner similar to his earlier treatment of the catalogue of nymphs.

It still remains to attempt to ascertain whether or not Virgil selected the names of the rivers in his list specifically from another literary source.

If in fact he has, one possible candidate is Hesiod, whose catalogue of rivers occurs at Theog. 337ff. WILKINSON notes that Virgil's list has three names in common with Hesiod's and concludes: "again Virgil has been at pains to make clear the source of an idea he develops."²² This seems tenuous at best. Hesiod's catalogue contains twenty-five names in all. If Virgil wanted to signal that he was using Hesiod as a model, I would have expected either more of the names to coincide or at least some other indication (an echo in the language vel sim.) that this was his intent.

Another possibility has been suggested by THOMAS²³ who argues that Callimachus is known to have written a work upon the rivers of the world and that this treatise is the probable source for Virgil's catalogue. The credibility of this hypothesis suffers because there is no direct evidence to confirm it.²⁴

Since no other extant catalogue (besides Homer's) can be demonstrated to be related to Virgil's list, one can only consider the names in context and comment upon the effectiveness of the list.

²² WILKINSON (1969), p.217n.

²³ THOMAS (1986), p.192.

²⁴ THOMAS, on 363-73, does note that Ovid's catalogue of 27 rivers at Met. 2.241-59 includes the Peneus and four of the rivers in Virgil's list. He tentatively suggests that Virgil and Ovid may, therefore, share a common source.

It is important to note that Virgil stresses that Aristaeus gazes upon all the rivers of the world (omnia begins 366). However, he chooses to name only eight, from various geographical areas.²⁵ Some are Italian (Tiber, Anio, and the Eridanus probably = the Po), others suggest far-flung regions, their names exotic and sonorous. Even the more familiar Italian rivers are not simply named but figure impressively - pater Tiberinus, Aniena fluenta (on fluenta see above and n.16) and the Eridanus, which receives two full lines of description. It is a wondrous sight and the selection and presentation of the names contributes to the marvellous picture.

In addition, the list is carefully structured. For variety, some of the rivers are merely named (Phasimque Lycumque), others (Enipeus, Hypanis) are given descriptive details and the whole catalogue comes to a resounding climax. The Eridanus is simultaneously a river and bull-faced, with both horns gilded.²⁶ Clearly, this detail is included to reflect the marvellous world into

²⁵ Aside from the three Italian rivers, the Phasis and Lycus are probably both in the area of Colchis, the Enipeus is in Thessaly, the Hypanis in Scythia and the Caicus in Asia Minor. See further THOMAS, on 367, 368, 369, 370, 371-3, MYNORS, on 366, 367, 368-9, 370, 371-3, RICHTER, on 363ff. and Servius ad loc. Attempts to force a particular geographical order on the list, especially by reversing the order of 369 and 370 are not convincing (e.g. SAINT-DENIS, p.119). As MYNORS, on 366, asks "why should V.'s arrangement be geographical, where all is daunting complexity and the sound of many waters....?"

²⁶ MYNORS, on 371-3, notes that the Roman poets adapted the Greek view that rivers have the heads of bulls ("perhaps from their roaring when in flood"). See further WEST, on Theog. 789, HUXLEY, on 371-2, PAGE, on 371. PAGE also notes that the horns of bulls were sometimes gilded for sacrifice, though the

which Aristaeus has come. Still, Virgil does not end here. He concludes the catalogue with a striking Homeric reminiscence and reference to the roaring flood of the Eridanus (violentior effluit, 373).

From the confusion and tumult of the extraordinary sights and sound comes relief as Aristaeus enters the quiet calm of Cyrene's cave.

At 374-6, Cyrene and Aristaeus meet. It is interesting, not to say somewhat surprising, that despite the long build-up which precedes their meeting, Virgil supplies very little detail when they actually do see one another. We are told only that Aristaeus enters Cyrene's thalamus and that she realizes that his tears are inanis. It seems to me that Virgil could have chosen to play this scene in a variety of ways - e.g. he could have created a situation filled with great emotion and pathos. Instead, he downplays the meeting between mother and son. There are several possible explanations for his decision. It could be that Cyrene sees that Aristaeus' problem is easily remedied (as inanis suggests) and that Aristaeus' loss is not as serious as it might have been (compared, e.g., with Orpheus' loss of Eurydice). Another possible explanation is that Virgil wants us to maintain our objectivity towards Aristaeus' plight, which Virgil presented in a somewhat humorous light earlier in his narrative.

Be that as it may, Virgil focuses instead first upon the entertainment, then upon the comforting of Aristaeus by Cyrene and the other nymphs. It has

relevance of this detail for understanding Virgil escapes me.

been widely recognized that the reception of Aristaeus is heavily indebted to Homeric scenes of welcoming. Whether or not, as THOMAS has asserted most recently, Virgil intends us to think of a specific Homeric passage (e.g. Od. 4.47-58) is debatable. It is plausible, however, to suppose that we are intended to consider Homeric scenes of welcoming in general.²⁷ There are further indications which point to Homer.

There is the language, which MYNORS calls "exalted"²⁸, while HUXLEY states "The elevated and somewhat pompous diction should be noted; simple objects are dignified by sonorous descriptions."²⁹ In addition 382 Oceanumque patrem rerum... is an adaptation of Il. 14.246 Ὠκεανοῦ, ὃς περ γένεσις πάντεσσι τέτυκται.³⁰ Yet, it must be stated that Virgil does not simply imitate Homeric convention. Aristaeus, after all, is not a Homeric ξείνος but

²⁷ THOMAS, on 376-9, states "a miniature vignette, heavily indebted to Homer". WILKINSON (1969), p.218 (and p.339 n.46) compares the passage in Virgil with Od. 1.144ff. in addition to Od. 4.52ff. HEUBECK, et al., on Od. 1.113ff., outline in general terms, the treatment accorded a ξείνος in Homer. See also the interesting discussion in HOLLIS, pp.341ff. HOLLIS discusses the hospitality theme in literature and specifically identifies conventional features that appear in the Hecale. Many of these features are quite different from the situation in Virgil (e.g. the guest is often unrecognized, the host or hostess frequently poor, etc.).

²⁸ MYNORS, on 376ff.

²⁹ HUXLEY, on 376-9. Examples include Panchaeis; carchesia (TLL iii.439.52ff.); fontes (for lymphae, see MYNORS, on 376ff.); adolescunt (TLL i.800.72ff.); Maeonii (THOMAS, on 380, states "Maeonii could suggest Homer, given the Homeric surroundings"); and Virgil's use of metonymy Bacchi, Vestam.

³⁰ See e.g. OTIS, p.196.

Cyrene's son and while the ostensibly Homeric vignette takes place in Cyrene's (Homeric) thalamus, her thalamus is located under the water, hardly a conventional detail.

Still, a number of difficulties remain. The emphasis given to the entertainment and comforting of Aristaeus and to the pouring of libations, etc. caused some earlier commentators to view 376ff. as evidence of hasty composition since the lines bear a marked resemblance to Aen. 1.701ff. (i.e. as KLINGNER opines³¹, evidence that Virgil replaced the laudes Galli with the story of Aristaeus). Aside from the fact that there is no evidence to support the hypothesis that the Aeneid passage was composed prior to 376ff., KLINGNER convincingly argued that the banquet scene was part of a religious ceremony leading up to the prayers and taking of omens. This may well be correct but the question remains: why is the scene given such prominence? In the first place, (as already noted) the peaceful setting balances the description of the extraordinary world immediately preceding. In addition, by stressing the warm reception Aristaeus receives, Virgil prepares for a contrast with the "reception" of Orpheus in the Underworld (467ff.). Finally, the whole procedure may be designed for Aristaeus' benefit to help him to face his coming ordeal with Proteus. Cyrene is very precise and careful in her actions (the repetitions Oceano ... Oceanum, 381-2, and centum quae ... centum quae, 383³² suggest

³¹ For a fuller discussion see KLINGNER, pp.206ff.

³² Note also the repetition ter ... ter (384-5). THOMAS, on 384-5, points out that the blazing fire is an auspicious omen as is the triple response.

that she does everything formally and in due order) - perhaps for Aristaeus' benefit.

This interpretation requires a brief re-examination of the sense of inanis (375). WILKINSON states that he inclines to the view that inanis is a stock epithet for tears: "otherwise the solemn rites and the elaborate and difficult trial [i.e. I presume, the struggle with Proteus] become disproportionate, if not otiose."³³ I would comment that it seems to me unlikely that Virgil would simply pad his narrative in this way and that inanis is, after all, emphatically placed at the end of the line. What then can be said of WILKINSON's criticism that the description of the solemn rites becomes otiose? If one accepts that Cyrene performs the whole procedure in order to cheer and comfort Aristaeus, WILKINSON's perceived difficulty disappears. If this suggestion is correct, the ambiguity of firmans animum also is removed. The reference must be to Cyrene's encouragement of Aristaeus³⁴ not to restoring her own courage, as MYNORS, e.g., argues: "she has been badly scared.... and has to face an awkward customer".³⁵ In any case, it is Aristaeus, not Cyrene, who must face the "awkward customer" (I assume MYNORS means Proteus).

³³ WILKINSON (1969), p.218n.

³⁴ PAGE, on 386 and HUXLEY, on 386, offer the same interpretation of the phrase.

³⁵ MYNORS, on 386.

SECTION 4: 387-414

In my discussion of the previous section, I argued that Virgil relies upon no single literary model in his description of Aristaeus' descent beneath the river Peneus. Still, he maintains an overall Homeric flavour by blending scattered brief allusions to the Iliad and the Odyssey and especially by employing the Homeric motif of welcome with which the section concludes. At 387, Cyrene's speech of instruction to Aristaeus begins. In presenting this speech and the confrontation between Aristaeus and Proteus (425ff.)¹, Virgil returns to a single main literary model, Od. 4.351ff., where Homer describes how Menelaus, prevented by unfavourable winds from leaving the island of Pharos, meets the daughter of Proteus, Eidothea. She, like Cyrene, offers advice which enables the hero to capture and question the old man of the sea. The similarities between the two accounts are striking and, as THOMAS states, "though the characters and situation are changed to suit the new context, V. adapts a poetic model as closely as anywhere in his corpus."²

Before examining the specific similarities and differences between the accounts of Virgil and Homer, however, I should like to comment briefly

¹ Between Cyrene's instructions and Aristaeus' confrontation with Proteus, Virgil describes how Cyrene prepares Aristaeus for his task and, in some detail, Proteus' cave. The latter, OTIS points out (pp.196f.), receives only brief mention in Homer, and so is one of several instances where Virgil embellishes his model.

² THOMAS, on 387-414.

upon Virgil's use of Homeric models up to this point in his narrative. At the beginning of the epyllion, his main literary model is Il. 1.348ff., then, at 333ff., Virgil subtly shifts to Il. 18.34ff. He alters the pattern completely at 360ff., employing no single Homeric model. At 387ff., he returns to a close adaptation of Homeric material but uses not the Iliad but the Odyssey. In the course of the narrative, then, Virgil not only varies the extent of his borrowing from Homer but also shifts from one Homeric work to the other. At the same time, he recasts Homer to suit his own purpose and blends in smoothly secondary references to Homer and to other authors. These variations and subtleties create a complex and intriguing mixture which heightens and holds our interest.

As noted above, Virgil's debt to Homer in the Proteus episode is readily demonstrable. In both accounts, a nymph advises the hero how to capture Proteus, both contain two references to the changes of shape the god will undergo in order to escape (G. 4.406ff., 441f.; Od. 4.417f., 456ff.) and in both Proteus' unwillingness to offer advice is mentioned (G. 4.398f.; Od. 4.415f.). Still, Virgil does not simply reproduce and transfer Homer's account but makes a number of alterations.

For example, Virgil introduces a clever twist in the relationship among the characters. In Homer, Menelaus is not related to either of the other characters; rather, Eidothea is the daughter of Proteus. Virgil alters this so that there is still a blood-relationship (mother/son instead of father/daughter) -

between Cyrene and Aristaeus - while Proteus is the unrelated character. Moreover, Virgil highlights certain details which appear in Homer without emphasis: the need for force (Od. 4.414-16, G. 4.396-400, 405, 412), Proteus' cave (Od. 4.403, G. 4.415-424) and the noon-day heat (Od. 4.400, G. 4.401-2, 425-28).³ Other Homeric details Virgil omits altogether - e.g. Eidothea's contribution of seal-skins to Menelaus and his companions (Od. 4.435-446). Perhaps the most obvious change is not one of detail but the way in which the two accounts are presented. In Homer, the episode unfolds in the form of a dialogue between Eidothea and Menelaus (as reported by Menelaus to Telemachus).⁴ Virgil, on the other hand, has Cyrene deliver her advice without interruption and, in fact, Aristaeus says nothing until he has captured Proteus (except for a loud shout as he rushes upon the sleeping god, 339). It may be that Virgil intends us to infer from Aristaeus' silence that the youth is overwhelmed by the task of tackling Proteus.⁵

Appropriately for a nymph speaking of a revered sea-god, Cyrene's speech begins solemnly, in high style: Est in Carpathio Neptuni gurgite vates.

³ See further OTIS, pp.196-7, KLINGNER pp.211ff. and THOMAS, on 425-8.

⁴ KLINGNER, p.216, also, I find, makes this point.

⁵ Having suggested the comparison between Achilles and Aristaeus earlier in the narrative, Virgil now invites us to compare Menelaus and Aristaeus. Again, the contrast reinforces the impression that Aristaeus is an immature youth, whose problem pales (in this instance) when we consider the struggles of the Greek heroes returning from Troy.

Est, as many commentators have noted⁶, is the conventional opening for an ecphrasis, a narrative technique described by AUSTIN as "an epic mannerism".⁷ The periphrasis Carpathio Neptuni gurgite also contributes to the elevation of tone⁸, as does the secondary reference to Homer in 388-9: magnum qui ... aequor ... metitur recalls Od. 3.179, πέλαγος μέγα μετρήσαντες. It is difficult to see how the Homeric context to which Virgil alludes here (Nestor describing the offerings made to Poseidon by the Greeks upon reaching Geraestus from Lesbos in safety) could suggest any underlying significance and so I would argue that the effect is merely to elevate the tone and to produce contaminatio.

It is important to note, too, that Virgil may be immediately including a variant on his Homeric model by locating Proteus' dwelling in "Neptune's

⁶ E.g. THOMAS, on 387-8, WILKINSON (1969), p.218. THOMAS also notes that this is the only example of an ecphrasis in Virgil to have a human or divine figure as its subject. I would add that it is also quite different from the ecphrasis below (at 418ff. est specus ingens...). The latter, at first glance, seems simply ornamental, the former provides information crucial to the story-line. In addition, it should be noted that "topographical introductions" are not infrequent in Homer - e.g. Od. 4.354 νήσος ἐπειτά τις ἔστι, Od. 13.96 Φόρκυνος δέ τις ἔστι λιμῆν. See HEUBECK and HOEKSTRA, on Od. 13.96 for further examples and their comment: "Vividly interrupting the normal flow of epic narrative, they [i.e. topographical introductions] focused the attention of the hearers on what was coming".

⁷ AUSTIN, on Aen. 4.480, compares Il. 6.152, Il. 13.32. Of course, the technique is not confined solely to epic.

⁸ For comments upon periphrases of this type see AUSTIN, on Aen. 6.398. Cp. also Cat. 65.5 Lethaeo gurgite.

Carpathian flood". In Homer, Proteus is called Αἰγύπτιος (Od. 4.385) and his cave is on the island of Pharos. The point of the epithet Carpathio is not entirely clear. It may be, of course, that Virgil is simply identifying more generally the region where Proteus dwells in Homer, since the Carpathian Sea was the name given by the ancients to the south-eastern Mediterranean and so the island of Pharos would be situated in this area.⁹ The ancients were, after all, rather cavalier in matters of geography.¹⁰ It may be that Virgil chooses the epithet to add to the elevation in tone or deemed it *recondite*¹¹ and so suited to the style of the epyllion. Perhaps, too, there is some other point to Virgil's selection that we can no longer understand. There is, however, a further explanation which I feel deserves consideration. Could not Virgil be intentionally disguising, initially at least, that Homer is his model? The

⁹ MYNORS, on 387, notes: "Carpathos is a large island between Rhodes and Crete which gave its name, strictly to the north-western part, but in general to the whole, of the south-eastern Mediterranean between Egypt and Asia Minor." Cp. Servius, ad loc.: Carpathos enim insula est Aegypti, vel, ut Pompeius dicit, insula Rhodiorum. alii sic: Carpathium mare inter Rhodum et Alexandriam. Cf. BÖMER, on Ov. Met. 11.249.

¹⁰ See e.g. FORDYCE, on Cat. 64.35.

¹¹ The adjective Carpathius occurs first (in extant Latin literature) in Lucilius as cited by Servius on G. 4.386. OLD (s.v.) and Ibycus confirm that this is the only existing reference which pre-dates Virgil (and so may suggest the rarity of the adjective). To the occurrences given in OLD add Hor. Odes 1.35.8, 4.5.10; Juv. Sat. 14.278; Prop. 3.7.12; Sil. Pun. 3.681; Stat. Silv. 3.2.88; Virg. Aen. 5.594; Ciris 113. In prose, Pliny has five references (Nat. 2.243.6, 4.71.6, 4.71.12, 5.102.2, 9.62.3), Mela one (Chor. 2.114.3).

description in Carpathio Neptuni gurgite vates/ caeruleus Proteus does not immediately suggest Od. 4. Virgil, by hinting that he is going to use a model other than Homer (or invent something new), then shifting to a close adaptation of a Homeric scene, keeps our attention and heightens our interest in the narrative.¹² However that may be, I would point out that the Carpathian Sea was, for the ancients, particularly perilous.¹³ The fact that Cyrene begins with a reference to this particular body of water suggests that she is preparing Aristaeus for the worst (even though Aristaeus learns, at 390, that he need not journey there to find Proteus).

In addition, Virgil seems to raise Proteus' status as a seer.¹⁴ It is true that Homer refers to him as νημερτής (Od. 4.384), but he is also called Ποσειδάωνος ὑποδμῶς (Od. 4.386). Virgil, on the other hand, states specifically

¹² It has been suggested to me that the deception may work only so far as caeruleus with Proteus coming as a surprise. However, while the presence of Proteus may recall Homer, nothing points directly to Virgil's close adaptation of Od. 4 until the seals are mentioned at 495.

¹³ NISBET and HUBBARD, on Odes 1.35.7.

¹⁴ This interpretation does not require that one take Neptuni as depending upon vates, as HUXLEY, on 387, rightly points out. KLINGNER's discussion of this question, pp.216f., is full and useful: "Proteus ist in seiner Würde und Macht erhöht. Er erhält das Gespann der Seegötter ... Und seine Allwissenheit ist mit der Verehrung niederer und höherer göttlicher Wesen umgeben und dadurch mächtig gehoben, eine von Neptunus selbst verliehene Würde ..." Virgil's diction also contributes to Proteus' elevation of status, e.g. at 394 quippe ita Neptuno visum est which HUXLEY, ad loc., calls "a noble epic expression" and compares Aen. 2.428, 3.2 and Ov. Met. 7.699.

that Proteus is a vates¹⁵ (387, and in an emphatic position in 392) who receives his prophetic power by the will of Neptune: quippe ita Neptuno visum est (394). Proteus' elevation in status is reinforced at 391ff. by the language veneramur, ipse (again emphatically placed) grandaevus Neptunus¹⁶ and by the solemn, spondaic rhythm of 391-2. Finally, Virgil concludes the description of Proteus' prophetic ability with a secondary reference to Homer: quae sint, quae fuerint, quae mox ventura trahantur (393), as has generally been noted by commentators, recalls Il. 1.70 where it is said of Calchas, ὄς ἦδη τά τ' ἔδοντα τά τ' ἔσσομένα πρὸ τ' ἔδοντα.¹⁷ Calchas is also called οἰωνοπόλων ὄχ' ἄριστος (Il. 1.69), so, by this secondary reference, Virgil reconfirms Proteus' status as a seer.¹⁸

By emphasizing Proteus' ability and the respect in which he is held, Virgil introduces the type of subtle alteration of Homer which is characteristic of

¹⁵ Cf. THOMAS, on 387-8.

¹⁶ Grandaevus, according to TLL vi,2.2176.23f., occurs only in Lucilius before Virgil and appears only here, G. 4.178 and Aen. 1.121 in Virgil. The rarity of the word contributes to the solemn tone and is appropriate in the context of Proteus' elevated status.

¹⁷ As R.D.WILLIAMS, on 393, notes, Virgil's trahantur suggests the metaphor of the threads of Fate. This subtlety, I would add, makes the reminiscence more interesting than it would have been if Virgil merely reproduced Homer's line using forms of sum. Notice the further variation: Homer has present, future, past; Virgil has present, past and future, and, in fact, Proteus does speak of the present and past but never offers a prophecy for the future.

¹⁸ Also, Virgil may be amusing himself (or entertaining his readers) by working in deftly a reference to a different seer elsewhere in Homer.

his technique. In addition, the story line does require that Aristaeus consult an infallible source to discover the reason for the loss of his bees and, given the overall Homeric tone of the Aristaeus portion of the epyllion and the fact that a prominent setting of the story involves water, Proteus is the logical choice to fill this role. Still, it seems odd that Virgil should so emphasize Proteus' prophetic ability, when, in fact, he never does reveal to Aristaeus what must be done to recover his bees. A possible explanation for the apparent contradiction, it seems to me, is that Virgil deliberately elevates the status of Proteus when he introduces the character in order to raise our expectations that the god will provide a solution to Aristaeus' misfortune. Virgil, however, effectively (and humorously) undercuts this expectation by having Proteus slip away, leaving Aristaeus' problem unsolved. In Homer's account, Proteus is much more helpful - he tells Menelaus what he should do to get favourable winds and provides information about the other Greeks returning from Troy. Virgil's Proteus demonstrates only his knowledge of past and present in the story of Orpheus and Eurydice generally (see e.g. 453-6).

A further non-Homeric addition is Proteus' team of hippocamps. Aside from the variation, Virgil again introduces a fanciful (and bizarre) element into the story. Previously in the narrative the marvellous had been juxtaposed with the mundane: Cyrene sits in her underwater thalamus with her sister nymphs engaged in the everyday activity of wool-working (Milesian wool).

Aristaeus descends to the strange, supernatural world beneath the surface of the river Peneus and is entertained there and given food and Maeonian wine. In the present passage, Virgil balances the marvellous description of Proteus and his team with geographical references to Proteus' dwelling place and homeland, Emathiae portus patriamque revisit/ Pallenen (perhaps the strong alliteration here serves to draw attention to the geographical names). The geographical references add an air of verisimilitude to the whole description, while, on the other hand, the striking image of the god traversing the sea in company with the strange hippocamps belongs to the realm of fancy.¹⁹

At 390-1, Cyrene explains why Proteus is in the vicinity of Thessaly (as opposed to Homer's Egyptian location) and Virgil adds another non-Homeric detail - Proteus' patria is Pallene and he has returned to it. As noted above, in Od. 4 Proteus is associated with Egypt and nowhere in his account does Homer connect him with Chalcidice. It has been suggested by a number of commentators that Virgil is exploiting a tradition which occurs in the Alexandrian poets. Lycophron²⁰ (115ff.) refers to this association, and Callimachus in the

¹⁹ See MYNORS, on 388-9, for general remarks upon hippocamps. MYNORS also points out that Poseidon's team at Il. 13.23ff. is, less fancifully, horses. He also comments upon the sense of curru = "team" not "car" - a less common sense of the word - see TLL iv.1520.41ff.; 1524.24ff. HUXLEY, on 388-9, calls the hendiadys "extremely bold". The unusual expression suits the bizarre, fanciful picture.

²⁰ As THOMAS rightly remarks, on 390, Lycophron makes Egypt the homeland of Proteus and it is from there that he visits Pallene.

Victoria Berenices makes him the seer from Pallene: εἰς Ἑλένη[ς νησιδ]α καὶ εἰς Παλληνέα μά[ντιν,] ποιμένα [φωκᾶων] (SH fr. 254.5-6). THOMAS argues that Virgil is borrowing directly from Callimachus, but it is possible that the tradition associating Proteus with the northern Aegean predates Homer²¹, and so Virgil may be drawing upon knowledge of a different source.²² In either case, the variation allows Virgil conveniently to explain Proteus' presence in the vicinity of the action and again to embroider his (Homeric) account with non-Homeric material - a further instance of contaminatio.

There is little, then, in the early part of Cyrene's speech which specifically recalls Od. 4, though the presence of Proteus must suggest the Homeric episode, especially given the overall tone of Virgil's epyllion to this point. At 392-3, Virgil incorporates a clear literary reminiscence of Homer, but still disguises his primary model, since the line quae sint, quae fuerint, quae mox ventura trahantur suggests not the Odyssey but the Iliad.²³ This

²¹ HEUBECK, et al., on Od. 4.384ff.: "In later legend we also find him [Proteus] linked with Chalcidice (so Lyc. 115ff., Call. Victoria Berenices (Suppl. Hell. 254)..., Verg. G. iv.390-1, schol. A.R. i.598, Apollod. ii.5.9), and the persistence of this tradition, despite the Odyssey's authority, strongly suggests that Proteus was originally associated with the north Aegean and relocated to serve the poet's interest in Egypt."

²² If this is correct, there occurs here an instance of "by-passing", see e.g. MCKEOWN, vol.1, pp.37ff.

²³ It may be that some readers suspect the true source here (given the fact that we have a female goddess talking about Proteus to the hero of the narrative) but again Virgil's technique prevents them from being certain.

reference is immediately followed, at 394-5, by mention of Proteus' flock of seals: immania cuius/ armenta et turpis pascit sub gurgite phocas - an element which features prominently in Od. 4 (eg. 404ff.), and now at last the source becomes clear.²⁴ In fact, Virgil may have taken Homer's simile, likening Proteus to a shepherd (Od. 4.413) and given it a subtle and bizarre twist by making him an actual shepherd, and a submarine shepherd at that.²⁵

These two Homeric references help to effect the transition to a closer adaptation of Homeric material - the need to capture Proteus to force him to speak and his various changes of shape.

At 396ff., Cyrene tells Aristaeus that he must capture the god and here Virgil stresses far more than Homer the need to use force. In Homer, Eidothea's advice to Menelaus begins with 14 lines (Od. 4.400-413) describing Proteus' habits - how he comes from the sea at mid-day, counts his seals and rests. This is followed by 6 lines (Od. 4.414-419) devoted to Proteus' changes

²⁴ THOMAS, on 395 argues that "For the bolder designation here implied (pastor phocarum) V. is surely indebted to Callimachus, who gives Proteus (without naming him) this very title: ποιμένα [φωκῶων], SH fr.254.6". This is possible, but relies upon a conjectural supplement and as THOMAS himself notes the comparison to a shepherd is equally Homeric. Armenta is apparently used here for the first time of animals other than grazing animals (TLL ii.612.68ff.). The unusual word matches the strange subject matter and adds a solemn note. Perhaps, too, the various senses of immania are to be felt (OLD immanis s.v.).

²⁵ It is important to note that, although Virgil still incorporates touches of humour, in general this element is diminishing - perhaps in anticipation of the tragic story of Orpheus and Eurydice which is soon to be revealed by Proteus.

of shape and the requirement of force. Virgil not only inverts the order, placing first (and so stressing) the need for force, but gives 5 lines (396-400) to this theme and only 4 lines (401-404) to Proteus coming to his cave at mid-day. The abbreviation produces a more concise version and also shifts the emphasis onto Aristaeus' confrontation with Proteus.²⁶ Virgil further stresses this point. In 396-99, he adds a new detail which does not appear in Homer - chains are to be used to hold the god.²⁷ The requirement of force and chains is repeated, vinclis ... vincula, vi ... vim and the repetitions occur in chiasmus which draws our attention and so stresses the point.²⁸ As I argued above (see Chapter 5), I believe that Virgil highlights this detail because, as Cyrene understands, the youthful Aristaeus may not have the courage to face Proteus. Further support for this view comes at 401, ipsa ego te. From the emphatic position of the pronoun ipsa and the juxtaposition of ego and te, it may be inferred that Cyrene is offering needed reassurances to Aristaeus that she will

²⁶ Cf. THOMAS, on 407-10.

²⁷ It may be that Virgil includes the new detail of the chains in order to work in the bizarre and humorous notion of tightening chains around flames and water. Cf. R.D. WILLIAMS, on 409-410. The non-Homeric chains provide Aristaeus with a "weapon" to help him manage and cope with the wily Proteus.

²⁸ Further stress is given by the subsequent repetition - vinclis (405), vincla (412). In addition, Virgil may be introducing a figura etymologica here, since Varro believed that vinculum was derived from vis (see MYNORS, on 396 and MCKEOWN, vol.1, pp.45ff. for etymologising as a Hellenistic/ Augustan phenomenon). There is possibly further word play between neque flectes and diram and in the zeugma in tende (for the latter see e.g. PAGE, on 400).

accompany him and that he will not be completely alone when he faces his ordeal.²⁹

At 401-404, Virgil parallels closely a number of elements which occur in Od. 4.400-13: Proteus comes from the sea at mid-day, medios ... aestus, cp. Od. 4.400, ἦμος δ' ἠέλιος μέσον οὐρανὸν ἀμφιβεβήκη; to his cave, in secreta ... quo fessus ab undis se recipit,³⁰ cp. Od. 4.403 ἐκ δ' ἐλθὼν κοιμᾶται ὑπὸ σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσιν; and Cyrene will bring Aristaeus to Proteus' cave, ipsa ego te .../ in secreta senis ducam, cp. Od. 4.407 ἔνθα σ' ἐγὼν ἀγαγοῦσα. In Virgil's account, there are minor changes too. Cyrene will bring Aristaeus to the place of ambush at mid-day; Eidothea at dawn ἀμ' ἠοῖ φαεινομένηφιν (Od. 4.407). Also, Virgil omits much of the descriptive detail in Homer, particularly Proteus' counting of his flocks of seals. On the other hand, Virgil places far greater emphasis upon the heat of mid-day than Homer - almost a full two lines (401-402) of the five. THOMAS' comment seems particularly appropriate: "V's emphasis on pastoral heat, here and at 425-428..., far exceeds that of the Homeric model, and contrasts with the excessive cold of Orpheus' landscape (517-518)".³¹

²⁹ Virgil omits from Homer Menelaus' three companions (Od. 4.408f.). The variation is presumably dictated, in part, by the story-line - it is difficult to see where Aristaeus could readily find companions to help him.

³⁰ HUXLEY, on 403-4, implies that there may be added point to fessus (perhaps an amusing touch): "Though a god, Proteus gets tired like an old man, and in the manner of Mediterranean folk takes a noonday siesta."

³¹ THOMAS, on 401.

Virgil now proceeds to describe Proteus' transformations (406-10). In Homer's account the god's changes of shape are mentioned twice, at Od. 4.417-18 and again at 4.456ff. The second, where Menelaus describes the actual assault upon Proteus, is the longer. As commentators note with virtual unanimity, Virgil inverts Homer's order, placing the more detailed description first.³² In addition, Virgil reverses (with one variation) the order of Proteus' transformations: in Homer - lion, serpent, leopard, boar (Od. 4.456ff.), in Virgil - boar, tiger, serpent, lion. Moreover, in Virgil each animal receives an epithet, in Homer only the lion (ἡὐγένειος) and the boar (μέγας).³³ After Proteus' transformations into the various animals, Menelaus reports that the god became water and a tree. Cyrene warns Aristaeus that Proteus will become fire and water. The inversion of the description by Virgil, the parallels and variations are all characteristically complex.

The style, diction and rhythm of the passage also contribute to the atmosphere of marvel. MYNORS, in his note on species atque ora in 406, states: "V. joins facies with ora in A. 1.658... and 7.328... this use of species is

³² CONINGTON's comments (on 407) are particularly valid: "Menelaus, in speaking of what he had gone through, would naturally be particular. Virgil has no such reason for detailing what actually happened to Aristaeus; while, independently of a desire for variety, he might think precision of detail especially suited to Cyrene's speech, as tending to reassure Aristaeus...".

³³ I find THOMAS also makes this point (on 407-10).

paralleled in 6.208, but ora of beasts is unusual."³⁴ The unusual expression, then, may have been chosen to mirror the strange subject matter. In 407, the alliteration (and repetition of the "s" sound) in the phrase subito sus horridus³⁵, the rare use of atra (= "deadly" vel sim.)³⁶, the chiasmus sus horridus atraque tigris (=noun, adjective, adjective, noun) and the dactylic rhythm in 407 (suggesting the speed with which Proteus will undergo his changes) all contribute to the vividness and marvel of the description. It has been argued that Virgil is guilty of a "lapse"³⁷ in 408 because he alters the gender of Homer's lion (for variety), yet keeps the description "maned" (Od. 4.456 ἡὺγένειος, cp. fulva cervice). It seems to me, however, that Virgil may deliberately include the anomaly of a "maned lioness" in keeping with the remarkable notion of Proteus' transformations of shapes. R.D. WILLIAMS remarks that here "The diction is highly fantastic".³⁸ I presume that WILLIAMS means that while all the words seem quite common, it is their combination (e.g. acrem flammae sonitum and in aquas tenuis) and the resulting picture they

³⁴ MYNORS, on 406.

³⁵ Sus horridus may be Lucretian (cp. 5.25, horrens Arcadius sus). If so the secondary literary reminiscence adds variety and interest.

³⁶ According to TLL ii.1018.23ff. this is the only occurrence of atra with tigris (most frequently applied as an epithet to serpens vel sim.). Servius glosses id est saeva. In any case, the phrase atra tigris is striking per se - one immediately thinks atra = "black" which makes tigris unexpected.

³⁷ E.g. THOMAS, on 408.

³⁸ R.D. WILLIAMS, on 409-10.

create which is "highly fantastic". Also noteworthy here is the dactylic rhythm of 410 which captures effectively the speed of Proteus' changes.

At 411-412, Cyrene repeats her injunction that Aristaeus apply the fetters tightly. The repeated "t" sound and "ten" in contende tenacia in 412 drive her point home. Again the marvellous (formas se vertet in omnis) and the bizarre ("it is hard to visualise how one could tighten fetters ... around flames or water"³⁹) are highlighted. Then, the section closes on a note of quiet, calm (see especially 414) with a close reminiscence of Od. 4.421, τοῖος ἐὼν οἶόν κε κατευνηθέντα ἴδησθε.

³⁹ R.D. WILLIAMS, on 409-10. Contende in the sense "draw tight" is rare (see TLL iv.662.61ff.).

SECTION 5: 415-424

Virgil begins this section with a reference to ambrosia and proceeds to describe the effects upon Aristaeus after Cyrene applies the divine substance to his body. Although it is not yet certain that Aristaeus will actually confront Proteus, Virgil has set the stage for a struggle between them (e.g. at 396-7). Cyrene's preparations, therefore, invite comparison with Od. 4.435ff. where Eidothea similarly offers aid to Menelaus prior to his confrontation with Proteus. Homer, in his account, provides far greater detail: Eidothea flays four seals, scoops out hiding places in the sand for Menelaus and his companions, covers them with the sealskins to conceal them from Proteus and finally, to combat the unpleasant stench of the skins as the men lie in ambush awaiting Proteus' arrival, places ambrosia beneath their noses.

Virgil presents a more concise version (Cyrene's preparations for Aristaeus receive only 4 lines, Eidothea's for Menelaus receive 12) and concentrates upon one detail only - the use of ambrosia. In 415, Virgil stresses ambrosia's fragrance¹ and it seems possible that he is hinting that he, like Homer, will focus in some way upon the deodorant property of the substance. Instead, we learn immediately that Cyrene applies ambrosia to the whole of Aristaeus' body in contrast to Eidothea who places it only beneath the noses of

¹ The periphrasis liquidum ambrosiae ... odorem (415) = odoratum liquorem vel sim. allows the emphasis to fall upon odorem in the final position of the line.

Menelaus and his companions (Od. 4.445-6). Virgil continues his account with a reference to the sweet fragrance from Aristaeus' neatly arranged hair and to the hero's "invigoration" (habilis ... vigor) which occurs after he has been anointed.² Neither of these details is paralleled in Homer's description. Virgil, therefore, begins with a teasing reference to ambrosia's fragrance but adds an immediate twist to his primary model (by changing the function of the substance), a twist designed, I believe, to capture attention and to heighten interest.

The fact that Virgil represents Cyrene as covering Aristaeus' entire body with ambrosia is a clear departure from Homer. As has been noted, only the corpses of Hector and Sarpedon are covered with the substance and in each of these instances ambrosia is used as a preserving agent. It is difficult to see how the anointing of corpses has any relevance to Virgil's account, so I doubt that Virgil intends a secondary Homeric reference here. However, MYNORS, commenting upon totum, states "[it] emphasizes loving care; there is

² Ambrosia is not used precisely in this way in Homer. The closest Homeric parallel would seem to be Il. 19.353, where Athena drips nectar and ambrosia onto Achilles' chest to keep away hunger pangs during his fast in mourning the death of Patroclus. It must be admitted, however, that the differences between Il. 19.353 and our passage are more evident than the similarities. As an unguent, ambrosia is used to preserve the corpses of Sarpedon (Il. 16.670, 680) and of Hector (Il. 23.186); cp. Il. 19.38 where it is dripped into the nostrils of the dead Patroclus. For further discussion of the nature and use of ambrosia see ONIANS, pp.292ff. and PAULY-WISSOWA, vol.1, pp.1809ff. Relevant non-Homeric occurrences are treated below.

no risk of an 'Achilles' heel'..."³ and HUXLEY refers to the apparently late tradition that Thetis dipped Achilles in the river Styx, attempting to make him immortal.⁴ Since Virgil has suggested a comparison between Aristaeus and Achilles earlier in his narrative, I would tentatively propose that he may be alluding to the tradition that Thetis placed the infant Achilles in fire by night and anointed him with ambrosia by day in order to make him immortal.⁵ In the case of Aristaeus, the primary effect of the ambrosia is stated in 417f. (i.e. his invigoration); however, it may not be stretching the matter too far to suppose that Virgil is subtly and vaguely hinting at Aristaeus' eventual deification.

A further difference between Virgil and Homer is the way in which each introduces the use of ambrosia. In Homer, Eidothea's motives are in a sense "practical" - to counteract the foul stench of the sealskins - and the ambrosia does not transform the heroes in any way. At least, Homer does not

³ MYNORS, on 415-18.

⁴ HUXLEY, on 416, also states: "we do not know Virgil's authority for the total anointing of the body." ROSE, p.239 and p.251 n.39 gives Stat. *Achill.* 1.134, 2.269, Hyg. *fab.* 107 as authorities for the myth of Achilles being dipped into the Styx. Though these references are late, the story could, of course, be much earlier.

⁵ See e.g. Ap.Rhod. 4.869ff., Schol. Ap.Rhod. 4.816, Apollod. 3.13.6. I would point out that ambrosia and fire are similarly used by Demeter when she attempts to make Demophoön immortal (*Hom. Hym.* 2.231ff.). Cp. also Theoc. *Id.* 15.106-8, where Aphrodite makes Berenice immortal: ἀμβροσίων ἐς στήθος ἀποστάξασα γυναικός. According to Pindar *Pyth.* 9.59ff. Aristaeus was made immortal by being fed ambrosia and nectar.

specify any effect. In Virgil's treatment, there is also a practical motive (the necessary invigoration of Aristaeus) but Virgil stresses first the "magical" effect of the divine substance and, simultaneously, Cyrene's powers.⁶ In particular, Aristaeus' hair and the sweet fragrance of ambrosia are presented in striking detail: the arrangement of 417 (although compositis is technically a participle rather than an adjective, some commentators categorize the line as "golden") matching Aristaeus' carefully arranged hair, the emphatic placement of dulcis and aura ("scent") and spiro ("be given off").⁷ The artful word order and the language help to bring out (and match) the extraordinary effect of the ambrosia. In addition, compositis contributes to the marvellous picture - how, when and through whom does it come about that Aristaeus' hair becomes so neatly arranged?

All of the above points are valid in my view; however, there still remains something puzzling: Why should Virgil place such emphasis (a full

⁶ See RICHTER, on 415ff.: "Auch diese Szene ist eng an die Odyssee (δ 445) angeschlossen; aber die Veränderung, die Verg. vornimmt, ist tiefgreifend, weil sie einen ganz rationalen Zweck (Übertönung des Robbenfellgeruches bei Homer) mit einem Akt der Magie vertauscht." So also WILKINSON (1969), p.218: "Virgil omits the naïvely amusing but unromantic trick of Eidothea ... Homeric magic serves instead.", and OTIS, p.197.

⁷ THOMAS, on 415, suggests that aura ... dulcis may imply ambrosia's function at Od. 4.445-6, namely to combat the stench of the seal skins. TLL i.1474.9ff gives two examples of aura = "smell" from Pacuvius (trag. 102, 363) and three from Lucretius prior to Virgil. In addition spiro = "be given off" is also rare and first occurs here (OLD s.v.4c).

line) upon the hair? THOMAS simply comments "an elegiac attribute, going with the use of perfume".⁸ However, the detail is not specifically confined to elegy. In Homer, there are a number of instances both in the Iliad and in the Odyssey where, by the intervention of a goddess, heroes are made to appear taller, stronger, etc.⁹ Of these, there are two passages where specific reference to hair is made (Od. 6.229-31, Od. 23.156ff.) and in both Athena prepares Odysseus not for a confrontation with an enemy but to meet a woman (Nausicaa in Od. 6, Penelope in Od. 23). It may be that Virgil is teasing us here, leading us to expect that a female is about to enter the scene (perhaps Eidothea?). There may be a further point. Perhaps we are to infer that the fragrance of ambrosia would induce in Aristaeus a feeling of well-being and that the grooming would inspire confidence in the youth. As MYNORS notes: "the prospective winner of an epic contest ought to look the part."¹⁰

Finally, we learn the second effect of the ambrosia - Aristaeus becomes stronger, or at least more capable of handling Proteus (418). THOMAS, correctly in my view, argues that "V. ... has Cyrene use it [ambrosia] mainly to invigorate Aristaeus (418); in this the passage most resembles

⁸ THOMAS, on 417. See also GRIFFIN's remarks (p.100) upon the importance of well-groomed hair (for both males and females) in elegiac and other contexts.

⁹ See HEUBECK, et al., on Od. 2.12.

¹⁰ MYNORS, on 415-18.

Homeric contests where a deity infuses strength into a mortal (e.g. Od. 8.18-73)".¹¹ As I have argued above (see Chapter 5 on Character), I believe that Virgil stresses the need to strengthen the youthful, immature Aristaeus because otherwise he would not have the fortitude to face Proteus. This alteration of the Homeric model, therefore, performs an integral function in the story-line - guiding our perception of Aristaeus' character.

At the end of 418, there occurs an ecphrasis describing Proteus' cave which, in contrast to the earlier ecphrasis (Cyrene's account of Proteus' habits etc.), seems to be only tenuously linked to the narrative.¹² The shift from Aristaeus' transformation to the cave is abrupt¹³ and it is not immediately clear where the cave is located or that it is the cave to which Proteus will come. By suppressing this information, Virgil creates an air of mystery and though we learn that it is Proteus' cave (422), it remains unclear precisely how Cyrene and Aristaeus journey to the place where the cave is located (presumably, Chalcidice, as 390f. suggest). This omission is more than simple skimming of detail. Rather, it seems to me to contribute to the atmosphere of marvel. Again, divine, magical (Cyrene's) powers are at play.

¹¹ THOMAS, on 415.

¹² For discussion of ecphrasis see RACE, pp.56ff. and FRIEDLÄNDER, p.11ff.

¹³ R.D. WILLIAMS, on 418: "notice the heavy stop after the fourth foot, and the conflict of accent and ictus in the fifth, introducing the ecphrasis ... with power and emphasis."

In Homer's account, Proteus' cave receives only brief mention at Od.

4.403. Virgil, therefore, introduces a variation by expanding upon the single Homeric detail (contrast the technique of abbreviation in presenting Cyrene's preparations). Although, as THOMAS points out¹⁴, there is a certain similarity between the opening line of Virgil's ecphrasis and Od. 4.354 νήσος [i.e. Φάρος] ἐπειτὰ τις ἔστι, the expression and subject matter are closer to Homer's description of Poseidon's cave which begins ἔστι δέ τι σπέος εὐρύ (Il. 13.32). Virgil, then, may be recalling the dwelling of another sea-deity elsewhere in Homer (i.e. contaminatio). It seems to me that there may be a further reminiscence (in 419) of Od. 12.80: μέσσω δ' ἐν σκοπέλῳ [cp. exesi latere in montis] ἔστι σπέος ἡεροειδέος. In this Homeric cave the Scylla dwells and at Od. 12.98-9 Homer has Circe tell how no sailor has yet escaped the monster. In contrast, the area near Proteus' cave provides a safe haven for sailors.

Finally, MYNORS compares Od. 13.96-113 where the harbour of Phorcys, like Proteus a ἄλιος γέρων, is described.¹⁵ MYNORS may well be correct to see a reminiscence since there is a similarity between 419-21 and Od. 13.99-101:

αἶ τ' ἀνέμων σκεπώσι δυσσήων μέγα κῦμα
ἐκτοθεν· ἐντοσθεν δέ τ' ἀνευ δεσμοῖο μένουσι
νήες ἐδύσσελμοι, ὅτ' ἄν ὄρμου μέτρον ἴκωνται.

In addition, at Od. 13.104 Homer describes a shadowy cave, sacred to the

¹⁴ THOMAS, on 418.

¹⁵ MYNORS, on 418-22.

nymphs. It may be that Virgil gives a clever twist to this: a Nymph (Cyrene is so-called at 423) comes to a shadowy (latebris) cave where there dwells a ἄλιος γέρων.

Aside from the fact that Virgil develops (with characteristic complexity) the description of Proteus' cave and the harbour in which it is located far beyond the parallel passage in Homer, his ecphrasis functions to slow the pace of the narrative and so heighten anticipation as we await the next development in the story-line. In addition, Virgil presents the setting with remarkable vividness, and the leisurely expansive description, the soporific effect of the sound of water¹⁶ and the cool shade inside Proteus' cave build an atmosphere of tranquillity. This mood is developed in the next section - all in contrast to the eventual (439ff.) action and emotional disturbance.

Virgil's choice of diction contributes to the vividness of the description: exesi, rare in the sense "hollowed out", seems to be strikingly picturesque;¹⁷ plurima, as MYNORS notes "seems, as elsewhere in V., merely to add a touch of vividness to a description";¹⁸ the superlative tutissima

¹⁶ The soothing sound of the waves is effectively reproduced in 420 where, as THOMAS, on 419-20, notes "the alliteration represents the hissing of the shallow waves over the sand". For the sound of water as soporific see MURGATROYD, on Tib. 1.2.77-8.

¹⁷ TLL v,2.1317.53ff. gives the first example in this sense from Bell.Hisp., then G. 4.44 and 4.419. Lucretius 4.218, 6.926 uses exesor in a similar context (waves eroding rock) and I wonder, therefore, whether Virgil intends a reminiscence.

¹⁸ MYNORS, on 418-22. For the sense of 419-20 HUXLEY, ad loc., follows SAINT-DENIS and translates "'where the wave piles up (plurima = 'at its greatest extent') driven by the wind, and splits up into ripples (sinus) which flow back

emphasizes the safety of harbour as a calm retreat from the perilous open sea; obice, again rare (in the sense "barrier"),¹⁹ emphasizes the safety of Proteus' haven - behind the protection of a huge rock, inside a cave situated in a secluded harbour. Yet, despite the apparent impregnability, Aristaeus, with Cyrene's help, waits in ambush and it is Aristaeus, again because of Cyrene's help, who is protected.

At 423-4, Cyrene positions²⁰ Aristaeus inside the cave (contrast the hiding-places in the sand at Od. 4.438ff.). Here Virgil emphasizes the cool darkness inside the cave: in latebris aversum a lumine. The stress given to the darkness, it seems to me, has a practical point - Aristaeus will be more difficult for Proteus to see and so Aristaeus has the element of surprise on his side. In addition, the cool shade inside the cave contrasts with the bright sunlight and mid-day heat to be described at 425ff.

(reductos has full verbal sense')." The alternative is to take sinus reductos = 'distant inlets'. So e.g. MYNORS, on 418-22, who compares Aen. 6.703, 8.609 and Hor. Odes 1.17.17 for reductos = 'withdrawn'. Though the rendering of SAINT-DENIS is picturesque, MYNORS' interpretation seems more likely, given the parallels he offers and given the fact that Virgil seems to be emphasizing the seclusion of Proteus' haven.

¹⁹ According to TLL ix,2.45 the first extant occurrence of obex in the sense "barrier" appears here in Virgil.

²⁰ HUXLEY, on 424, states that conlocat appears only here in Virgil and that the verb suggests military deployment. I am uncertain what effect Virgil is aiming to achieve. There may be a slight touch of humour in his choice of diction (i.e. Cyrene, "the general", positioning her force of one). A humorous reference, on the other hand, seems odd since it would undercut the emphasis upon Cyrene's divinity. OLD s.v.4b cites this passage under "place in ambush" amid examples that appear perfectly serious.

HUXLEY notes the emphatic position of Nympha (424)²¹ but does not suggest why Virgil should so stress Cyrene's divinity. It may be that Virgil does so in order to reinforce what is already manifest. After all, she has brought Aristaeus to the cave, anointed him with ambrosia and, as HUXLEY further points out "being a divinity Cyrene can conceal herself in a veil of mist".²² The latter detail may be Homeric²³ and therefore a further example of contaminatio.

Finally, Virgil contrives to have Cyrene remain close by²⁴ in order to hear whatever advice Proteus gives. This is necessary because, as we learn, Proteus tells only the reason not the remedy for Aristaeus' lost bees.

²¹ HUXLEY, on 423.

²² HUXLEY, on 423.

²³ MYNORS, on 423-4, compares Il. 5.186, 15.308.

²⁴ For procul in sense "nearby" not "far off" see e.g. MYNORS, on 423-4.

SECTION 6: 425-452

The scene is set: Aristaeus has been prepared by Cyrene and she has stationed him inside the cave. We now await the confrontation (anticipated at 396ff.) between the hero and Proteus.

Again it is appropriate to compare Virgil's treatment with its Homeric model. At Od. 4.447ff., after Menelaus and his men are in position, Homer refers briefly (one line - 447) to their waiting all morning, then the seals come to the shore and sleep (448-9), lastly, at noon ($\epsilon\nu\delta\iota\omicron\varsigma$, 450), Proteus comes from the sea, counts the number of seals (including Menelaus and his companions hiding beneath the seal skins provided by Eidothea), then lies down to rest. The entire description leading up to the attack on Proteus receives seven lines.

Virgil's account contains the same information. However, he expands upon Homer's single reference to midday - specifically four lines are included to describe the midday heat. In addition, Virgil incorporates and expands upon the comparison (earlier in Homer's account at Od. 4.413) between Proteus and a shepherd. Finally, there occurs an interesting variation: the seals do not precede Proteus but accompany him to the shore (and unlike Homer, Virgil actually mentions Proteus first).¹ In fact Virgil's description of events preceding the attack upon Proteus occupies thirteen lines (nearly twice as long as Homer's).

¹ In addition to these variations, I would draw attention to the specific reminiscences to Od. 4 which are noted by THOMAS, on 429-30, 430f., 431, 433-6, 439-40, 440, 441-2, 443, 445, 446, 447.

Virgil begins with a picturesque description, typical of epyllia - four lines building atmosphere and emphasizing the dry, oppressive midday heat. In addition to the length of the description, Virgil's choice of diction effectively creates atmosphere. The number of words which refer to heat and dryness is remarkable (note especially the collocation of five such words in 425):

rapidus², torrens, sitientis, Sirius, Indos³, ardebat, igneus, hauserat⁴, arebant,

² For the reading and sense "fierce" vel sim. see MYNORS, on 425.

³ THOMAS, on 425-8, also comments upon the accumulation of words conveying heat. He does not, however, include Sirius and Indos but I think that both words add to the overall effect. There is some dispute about the exact sense of Sirius. RICHTER, on 425ff., argues "Sirius ist hier die Sonne ...". Therefore, according to RICHTER (whom HUXLEY, on 425-7, supports), both clauses in 425-6 refer to the time of day (i.e. 426 is simply a variation of 425). Hesychius is the authority (in Greek) for Σελήριος = the sun (see WEST's note on Hes. Op. 417) and RICHTER offers as further parallels Archil. 61, Orpheus Argon. 121, Lycophron 397. This interpretation has certain points to recommend it. Sirius = the sun is rare and therefore appropriate to an erudite epyllion. Also, if Sirius refers to the time of year, it is argued, there is a contradiction with 305-7 where Virgil states that it is best to perform bugonia in springtime. If Sirius refers to the time of day this apparent contradiction is removed. On the other hand, Sirius more commonly = the dog-star (OLD gives no Latin parallel for Sirius = the sun) and is specifically associated with the hottest time of the year (see e.g. MURGATROYD, on Tib. 1.27-8 and WEST, on Hes. Op. 417). On balance, it seems better to follow the majority of commentators and accept this latter interpretation. One need not expect logical consistency regarding the time to perform bugonia (and Aristaeus' bugonia may well have had divine help) and this interpretation contributes effectively to the emphasis upon heat - it is the hottest time of the day and the hottest time of the year. On Indos see R.D. WILLIAMS, on 425-7: "The Indians are mentioned as people who experience heat at its fiercest." i.e. it is exceedingly hot!!

⁴ See PAGE, on 426: "the bold and original phrase haurire orbem ... suggests strongly the consuming fury with which the sun advances". Cf. THOMAS, on 426-7.

siccis⁵, tepefacta, radii, coquebant.⁶

THOMAS has explained Virgil's (non-Homeric) emphasis upon the heat and dryness by suggesting a contrast first with the moisture and dampness in Cyrene's underwater realm at 363ff. and, secondly, with "the excessive cold of Orpheus' landscape".⁷ I would add that there is equally a more immediate contrast with the darkness of Proteus' cave where Aristaeus waits in ambush (423-4). Moreover, the stress on the midday heat builds a calm, peaceful, soporific scene and so heightens the dramatic impact of Proteus' appearance (at 429).

Additionally, it has occurred to me that Virgil's description and reference to Sirius may subtly recall Ap.Rhod. 2.516ff. where Aristaeus is summoned to the Minoan Islands to help the inhabitants overcome the pestilence that threatens them: ἦμος δ' οὐρανόθεν Μινωίδας ἐφλεγε νήσους/ Σείριος.⁸ This reminiscence may be reinforced at 427-8. Here, Virgil tells us

⁵ Upon the phrase siccis faucibus MYNORS, on 427-8, comments that TLL vi,1.398.54 "knows only this passage and Grattius 432". The rarity makes for stress.

⁶ TLL iv.927.74ff. gives only Manil. 5.683, Colum. 12.21.4, Plin. Nat. 16.54 and Val.Fl. 2.333 in addition to our passage. Again, rarity makes for stress (and vividness).

⁷ THOMAS, on 363-73 and on 401.

⁸ THOMAS, on 425-6, I find, also makes this suggestion, which occurred to me independently.

the rivers are dry and at first the detail seems merely to be a consequence of the heat and therefore included to create atmosphere. I would argue that Virgil is perhaps playing with the notion that later in his career Aristaeus will be summoned to save islanders from drought but now he is more concerned with his bees and with Proteus.

It is worthwhile to note further that midday is naturally, and conventionally, a time when men and animals rest.⁹ By stressing the time of day and building a soporific atmosphere, Virgil heightens our expectation that Proteus will be making his long-awaited appearance coming to his cave to rest. However, midday is not simply a time of rest. It is equally a time when dangerous powers may be abroad and active and as BULLOCH¹⁰ notes, for both the Greeks and the Romans, noon was "a critical time" when epiphanies could occur.

Finally, WILKINSON's comments upon Virgil's descriptive technique are, I feel, particularly acute: "Virgil begins by creating an atmosphere ... Only then does Virgil bring on the seals: everything has been concentrated on the dramatic moment of Proteus' appearance, the name of the new arrival reserved for the beginning [actually the second word of the line] of a line".¹¹ He

⁹ GOW, on Theoc. *Id.* 1.15ff.

¹⁰ BULLOCH, on Call. *Hymn* 5.72, and see also p.179 n.5.

¹¹ WILKINSON (1969), pp.218-9.

continues, arguing that Virgil may have adopted this dramatic technique from Callimachus and states his belief that Virgil's description shares features employed at Callimachus Hymn 5.70ff.¹² Virgil, therefore, exploits Homeric material but employs a descriptive technique characteristic of Hellenistic poets.

At 429ff., Proteus comes to the shore surrounded by his seals. The drama of his appearance is perhaps underlined by the repetition of "p" and "c" in cum Proteus consueta petens. Another striking effect results from Virgil's variation on Homer in having the seals accompany Proteus to shore. As noted, at 425ff. Virgil creates a calm, soporific scene, appropriate since "Stillness is the traditional response of nature to a divine epiphany".¹³ The stillness is broken by Proteus and his seals whose gambolling advance creates sea-spray. The contrast and vivid picture heighten the impact of Proteus' arrival.¹⁴

In addition, Virgil's description has as much in common with Od. 4.400-6 as with his primary model, Od. 4.447ff. Proteus comes from the sea (e

¹² See also BULLOCH, on Call. Hymn 5.70ff.: "The passage consists almost entirely in the creation of atmosphere with a minimum of movement and action ... This confining of the dramatic action to a minimum and the concentration on atmosphere ... is typical of many of the later Hellenistic writers influenced by him [i.e. Callimachus]."

¹³ DODDS, on Eur. Bacch. 1084f.

¹⁴ The tone of the description is also elevated through Virgil's diction: the phrase gens umida is unparalleled in Latin (confirmed by an Ibycus search), though RICHTER, on 430f., compares Soph. Ant. 345, πόντου εἰναλίᾳ φύσις and Eurip. fr. 27, πόντου φύλα; vasti ... ponti exploits high, lofty diction - for vastus see FORDYCE, on Cat.64.156 and for pontus SKUTSCH, on Enn. Ann. 217.

fluctibus; cp. Od. 4.401, ἐξ ἀλδς) to sleep in his cave (consueta petens ... antra; cp. Od. 4.403, ὑπὸ σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσιν) and is surrounded by his seals (eum ... circum; cp. Od. 4.404, ἀμφὶ δέ μιν).¹⁵ It seems clear then that Virgil uses details from the earlier Homeric passage to create a more picturesque description of Proteus' approach than occurs at Od. 4.447ff.

Furthermore, as THOMAS notes,¹⁶ 430-1 appear at first to echo Od. 4.404-5, ἀμφὶ δέ μιν φῶκαι νέποδες καλῆς ἀλοσύδνης/ ἀθρόαι εὔδουσιν but Virgil changes εὔδουσιν to exsultans (stressing, I would add, the alteration by the emphatic position of exsultans) and so incorporates an apparent reference to Il. 13.27-8, ἀταλλε δέ κῆτε' ὑπ' αὐτοῦ/ πάντοθεν ἐκ κευθμῶν. The Iliad passage refers to Poseidon and the creatures of the sea which attend him and, significantly, Virgil has incorporated a reminiscence of the same Homeric context earlier in his narrative at 418. THOMAS' suggestion seems plausible and, if correct, Virgil teases us by leading us to expect a reference to seals sleeping, not "gambolling", then adds further complexity by contaminatio.

Finally, at 432 Virgil returns to his primary model, echoing Od. 4.448-9, αἱ μὲν ἔπειτα/ ἐξῆς εὐνάζοντο παρὰ ῥηγμῖνι θαλάσσης. Virgil exploits the heavy spondaic rhythm (especially the initial block spondee) to suggest, in PAGE's words, "how the cumbrous beasts settle down."¹⁷ Altogether, then,

¹⁵ THOMAS, on 431, comments that Virgil again suppresses the Homeric reference to odour (πίκρον) while noting that amarum while it means "brine" may hint at the reference in Homer to smell.

¹⁶ THOMAS, on 430-1.

¹⁷ PAGE, on 432.

this vivid description of Proteus coming to shore surrounded by his seals and the seals settling down to sleep further delays the anticipated confrontation between Proteus and Aristaeus and so increases tension.

Virgil further postpones the attack by expanding into a three line simile (433-5) the brief comparison at Od. 4.413 where Proteus is likened to a shepherd (νομευδς ὡς πῶεσι μῆλων). The first two lines of the simile contain a number of points of contact with the narrative: Proteus = stabuli custos, the seals = vitulos and Sirius (by a clever inversion of the time of day) becomes Vesper. In addition, the motif of returning to shelter occurs both in the narrative (petens ... antra) and in the simile (ad tecta).¹⁸

Less clear, however, is the interpretation of the third line of the simile (435). The seals are now compared to agni and presumably their barking (unmentioned in the narrative) to the bleating of the sheep. The wolves in the simile logically correspond to Aristaeus and (given the plural) to Cyrene. In Homeric tradition, relevant since Virgil's simile appears in a close adaptation of Homeric material, wolves tend to be fierce creatures and heroes in battle are frequently compared to them.¹⁹ Presumably, it is this tradition which leads PUTNAM to conclude that with the mention of wolves:

¹⁸ The correspondence here is loose since petens ... antra refers to Proteus (the stabuli custos in the simile) while ad tecta strictly refers to the flocks (presumably they would be accompanied by the shepherd).

¹⁹ LYNE (1987), p.212.

we move from variations of shepherding into an epic aspect of the comparison ... At the moment of greatest physical crisis in his developing saga, Aristaeus must be placed in an heroic context which magnifies his prowess and prepares for the confrontation that follows.²⁰

I find PUTNAM's view somewhat overstated, given Virgil's presentation of Aristaeus up to this point in the narrative - youthful, immature, contrasted with Achilles, Theseus, Menelaus.²¹ Moreover, the Homeric tradition compares wolves to warriors in battle, fiercely killing the enemy,²² not, as in Virgil's simile, lurking threateningly in the background. I am not certain, therefore, that we need press the tradition here. The reference to wolves may simply fit more loosely with the idea of an unfriendly assailant in the vicinity unseen, but present. The simile, in fact, seems rather loose generally since the wolves are presumably a greater threat to the lambs than to the custos, while it is Proteus (not the seals) whom Aristaeus intends to attack. Perhaps we are to understand from the comparison that Aristaeus, upon hearing the barking of the seals, unmentioned in the narrative but implied by the bleating of the lambs in the simile, is given advance warning that Proteus has come. If so, the material in the simile helps to clarify and advance the narrative. Perhaps too, Virgil is

²⁰ PUTNAM, p.288.

²¹ It is possible that Virgil has included hints about Aristaeus' later "career" - i.e. the ambrosia at 415 (suggesting immortality) and the reference to Sirius in this section. These perhaps help increase the seriousness leading up to 453ff.

²² See e.g. Il. 11.70ff., 16.155ff., 16.350ff.; Ap.Rhod. 2.123ff.

playing with the reversal of roles of Proteus and Aristaeus: Proteus, the sea-god, is likened to a human shepherd,²³ while pastor Aristaeus (317) is compared to a wolf, the natural enemy of a shepherd and his flock.

A final observation should be made. The simile builds up a quiet, soporific scene (evening is a time for rest after a hard day's work) prior to the dramatic appearance of Aristaeus and so the atmosphere is exactly parallel to 425ff. prior to the dramatic appearance of Proteus.²⁴

436 appears to combine one detail from Od. 4.413, medius = ἐν μέσσησιν (with variation since in Virgil's account Proteus sits in the midst of the seals to count them, in Homer's he sleeps in their midst)²⁵, with one detail from Od. 4.451, the counting of the seals - numerumque recenset = λέκτο δ' ἀριθμόν. As KLINGNER points out, Homer exploits the humour of Proteus counting Menelaus and his companions, concealed beneath the seal skins, among his herd: "Bei Homer ist es ein Schwank zum Lachen, wenn der alte misstrauische Dämon ausgerechnet die gut getarnten Feinde, Menelaos mit

²³ Stabuli custos recalls Ecl. 5.44 pecoris custos and Ecl. 10.36 custos gregis and so is in keeping with the diction of pastoral. THOMAS, on 433-6, thinks that the association of Proteus with a pastor prepares the reader for his story of Orpheus which THOMAS argues has similarities to Virgil's bucolics. However, THOMAS does not, so far as I can see, produce specific references to support this view.

²⁴ Note also the position of the name of Aristaeus - like Proteus (in 429) the second word in the line. This may, of course, be coincidental but it may be indicative of Virgil's conscious attempt at parallelism.

²⁵ THOMAS, on 436, also notes this variation.

seinen drei Helfern, als Nummer eins bis vier zählt."²⁶ Virgil avoids matching the humour, which would undermine the drama of the moment, instead stating only numerumque recenset.

The description of the attack by Aristaeus (437-44) contains a number of similarities with Homer's description of Menelaus' attack upon Proteus at Od. 4.453-61. First, 439-40 correspond to Od. 4.454-5, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἰάχοντες ἐπεσσύμεθ', ἀμφὶ δὲ χειρᾶς/ βάλλομεν. In addition to clamore magno (cp. ἰάχοντες) and ruit (cp. ἐπεσσύμεθ'), there occurs, as numerous commentators²⁷ have noted, the exact correspondence in scansion and position between occupat and βάλλομεν. Moreover, 440 repeats the Homeric reference to Proteus' use of trickery (i.e. his changes of shape) at Od. 4.455, οὐδ' ὁ γέρων δολίης ἐπελήθετο τέχνης. Virgil, like Homer, employs litotes - non immemor = οὐδ' ... ἐπελήθετο - and artis corresponds in position and case to τέχνης. 441-2 describe Proteus' changes of shape and generally match Od. 4.456-8 and finally 444 hominis tandem ore locutus recalls Od. 4.461, καὶ τότε δὴ με ἔπεσιν ἀνειρόμενος προσέειπε.

There are however certain differences between the two accounts and these differences have not received sufficient attention from commentators. In Homer, at Od. 4.413, Eidothea states that Proteus is accustomed to lie down

²⁶ KLINGNER, p.220.

²⁷ Most recently, THOMAS, on 439-40. As R.D. WILLIAMS, on 440, notes "the rhythm of a run-on dactyl reinforces the sense of drama". There is a further emphasis upon occupat because of its position.

among his seals to rest, so at Od. 4.453, after counting the seals *ἔπειτα δὲ λέκτο καὶ αὐτός*. It is clear, I think, that Menelaus and his companions attack Proteus as he sleeps on the shore. Virgil, however, glosses over the scene of the attack. The implication from 438 in conjunction with 403f. is that Proteus has come to his cave. By skimming over this detail Virgil focuses our attention upon the attack (which follows abruptly after numerumque recenset) and may be suggesting the rapidity with which Aristaeus leaps upon Proteus.

There may also be a hint that the youthful Aristaeus is over-anxious, suggested by the emphatic position of vix in 438: vix defessa senem passus componere membra; and in 439 there may be a further indication of Aristaeus' state of mind in the phrase cum clamore ... magno. As W.B. ANDERSON notes,²⁸ earlier scholars criticized Virgil for including this detail on the grounds that the shout is appropriate in Homer since Menelaus and his companions outnumber Proteus. The shout therefore will frighten or startle the old man and make him more vulnerable to attack. However, the argument goes, Aristaeus' shout is inappropriate since he is alone and can only serve to warn Proteus. ANDERSON points out, correctly in my view, that "Aristaeus shouts to keep his courage up and to startle and confuse Proteus" as he impetuously attacks the "still wakeful" old man. It seems then that Virgil deftly and subtly alters the Homeric detail exactly to fit Aristaeus' situation: he is over-anxious and fearful,

²⁸ W.B. ANDERSON, p.40.

which is not surprising (despite Cyrene's aid and her use of ambrosia) since he must face a powerful god alone (a further variation).

Virgil's second and shorter description of Proteus' changes contains a number of reminiscences of Homer's shorter (but first) description at Od. 4.417-8. The similarities are noted by THOMAS: omnia matches πάντα in position and sense, miracula rerum (which, THOMAS argues, probably means 'the wondrous things of the earth') perhaps represents ἐπι γαῖαν, Homer's ἐρπετά becomes or is replaced by feram, and ignem and fluvium are present but inverted from their Homeric order.²⁹ I would add that the expressions horribilem feram and fluvium liquentem³⁰ are both unusual and the rarity makes for stress and reflects the supernatural element as Proteus undergoes his various changes in shape. 442 is remarkable for its dactylic rhythm (following the initial spondee) which suggests the speed of Proteus' changes. Remarkable too is the sound - the alliteration of feram fluviumque and the striking repetition -em, -em, -am, -um, -em, which adds to the feeling of speed. There is chiasmus of adjective-noun-noun-adjective in the last four words in the line and the repeated -que is a feature of high style.³¹ In short, the line is a miniature tour de force.

²⁹ See THOMAS' full note on 441-2.

³⁰ Confirmed by an Ibycus search.

³¹ AUSTIN, on Aen. 4.83 has a detailed note on this repetition of -que.

The exchange between Aristaeus and Proteus at 445-9, like the earlier portion of the description, contains verbal similarities to the parallel encounter between Menelaus and Proteus at Od. 4.462ff: nam quis ... iussit (445-6) cp. τίς νό τοι ... θεῶν συμφράσσατο βουλᾶς (462); quidve hinc petis (446) cp. τέο σε χρῆ (463); scis, Proteu, scis ipse (447) cp. οἶσθα, γέρον (465). However, again, there are several differences (apart from background situation). Firstly, Proteus' tone is more impatient and angry (perhaps because he is tired and resents being disturbed by Aristaeus or because he is aware of the pursuit and death of Eurydice). Nam quis introduces an impatient question³² and confidentissime is, as PAGE comments³³, remarkable for its size and weight. In addition the repeated "s" sound at 445-6 perhaps suggests Proteus' hissing disdain and captures the angry impatience of the staccato questions. Then, too, the demeanour of Aristaeus contrasts with the confident Menelaus who tells Proteus specifically what he wishes to know. Aristaeus is taken aback by Proteus' questions, as is indicated by the repetition of scis and the emphatic ipse.

Aristaeus is excited, having just faced a rather daunting challenge, and his first words to Proteus effectively reflect that excitement. The precise

³² PAGE, on 445 and THOMAS, ad loc.; see also AUSTIN's note on Aen. 4.368.

³³ PAGE, on 445. PAGE also notes "while fidens has a good sense, confidens in classical Latin has a bad one = 'impudent', cf. Cic. Tusc. 4.7.14." See also TLL ix.209-10.

sense of 447-8 is disputed and various interpretations have been proposed.³⁴ R.D. WILLIAMS also comments upon the odd rhythm of 448: "The rhythm is very unusual here with a diaeresis after the second foot and a heavy pause after the trochee in the third foot."³⁵ The rhythm may be intended to reflect Aristaeus' confusion and dismay at being challenged by Proteus. I would argue further that in the phrase deum praecepta secuti, Virgil displays an acute understanding of human nature. HUXLEY calls Aristaeus' statement a "justifiable exaggeration".³⁶ It seems to me that Virgil effectively represents the natural reaction of an individual to defend his actions through exaggeration when challenged and also to justify and lend authority to an appeal for help (cf. 449). In addition, there may be a hint at Aristaeus' naiveté (and confusion?) in that he should exaggerate when (as I understand 447) he has just stated that he realizes it is impossible to deceive Proteus.

This section concludes with a remarkable and vivid description of Proteus which has no parallel in Homer and so presumably is meant to receive special notice. Firstly, we are reminded that Proteus is a vates, recalling

³⁴ Either "nor is it possible to deceive you in anything: but [likewise] you should stop wanting [to deceive me]" - so THOMAS, et al. (this seems to me the most satisfactory interpretation) - or "nor is it possible that you deceive me, so cease to attempt it" or "nor is it possible for anything to escape you, do not seek to outwit me". MYNORS, on 447, 448-9, discusses the possibilities in some detail.

³⁵ R.D. WILLIAMS, on 448.

³⁶ HUXLEY, on 448.

Cyrene's words at 387 and 392f., which captures our attention and lends weight to what Proteus will say. Proteus' authority is further emphasized at 452, sic fatis ora resolvit.³⁷ Besides the stress upon Proteus' authority, the frightening aspect and appearance of the old man are vividly described. Ardens, applied to the eyes, is most frequently associated with cruelty, menace or anger,³⁸ and intorqueo is used of the eyes only here and Prud. psych. 114.³⁹ The rarity makes for an arresting picture and heightens the impact. Furthermore, the unparalleled phrase lumine glauco⁴⁰ suggests not only Proteus' sea-green eyes (appropriate for a marine deity) but, perhaps, a flashing, angry gaze. Finally, the almost onomatopoeic phrase graviter frendens⁴¹ captures Proteus' unwillingness to speak (cf. vi ... multa) and his wrath. The three lines hold our

³⁷ The unusual expression stresses Proteus' oracular authority. For the phrase ora resolvit see BÖMER on Ov. Met. 13.127 and TLL ix,2.1057.6ff. (s.v. os). BAILEY, pp.205f., points out the link between fari and fatum and argues that to Virgil fatum "seems to have implied primarily the notion of the 'spoken word' of divine beings". BAILEY argues further that the original sense is the 'spoken word' of a seer or prophet. In other words, Virgil's use of fatum here seems to confirm Proteus' authority.

³⁸ TLL ii.484.69ff.

³⁹ TLL vii,2.32.70ff. I would tentatively suggest that the expression may recall G. 3.433f. where the snake exsilit in siccum [like Proteus?!] et flammantia lumina torquens / saevit (i.e. Proteus is further likened to a hissing serpent).

⁴⁰ Confirmed by an Ibycus search. TLL vi,2.2039.59ff. gives this as the first example of glauco describing the eyes of a sea-deity.

⁴¹ TLL vi,1.1287.13ff. and 41ff. associates frendo with furor, dolor, indignato, i.e. it is the mot juste for Proteus.

attention and are an effective prelude to the tale which Proteus has to tell.

Before proceeding to analyse Proteus' tale, I should like to comment briefly upon the various repetitions in this section at 426f. (from 401ff.), at 438f. (from 403f.) and at 441f. (from 406ff.). Individually each of these repetitions stresses a specific detail and so each presumably has some point and is not unintentional reduplication. The first detail to receive emphasis is the mid-day heat and, I believe, THOMAS has explained correctly the significance - to highlight the contrast between the various settings in the narrative.⁴² The second repetition highlights Proteus' weariness when he comes to his cave at mid-day and, I would suggest, Virgil highlights this detail to stress that Aristaeus needs to exploit every advantage and so must attack when the god is most vulnerable. The third, Proteus' changes, reflects Virgil's Homeric model (with inversion) and also highlights a supernatural and bizarre element in the narrative. Collectively, the repetitions suggest Cyrene's accuracy in prediction (her words coming exactly true at 426f. and 441f.) and facilitate her return at the end of the narrative to explain to Aristaeus what he must do.

⁴² See above (note 7).

SECTION 7: 453-527PART A: 453-456

Proteus' response to Aristaeus begins strongly (453). The litotes (non ... nullius) and vagueness of expression are in keeping with an oracular utterance¹ and the heavy spondaic rhythm heightens the sense of gravity and drama. The line is ominous and threatening² and so sets the tone for the accusations which Proteus is about to make against Aristaeus. These features strike a serious note and so make for an appropriate introduction to the tragic story of Orpheus which is about to be revealed.

I do not believe that the major commentators have paid sufficient attention to the fact that Proteus' speech, right from its beginning, diverges from Homer. In Homer's account Proteus immediately tells Menelaus the cause (and answer) to his problem (Od. 4.472ff.):

ἀλλὰ μάλ' ὄφελλες Διὶ τ' ἀλλοισὶν τε θεοῖσι
ῥέξας ἱερὰ κάλ' ἀναβαινέμεν, ὄφρα τάχιστα
σὴν ἐς πατρίδ' ἴκοιο πλέων ἐπὶ οἴνοπα πόντον.

¹ R.D. WILLIAMS, on 453, states: "the heavy double negative represents the oracular style" and compares Aen. 11.725. THOMAS, on 453, also comments upon the "emphatic double negatives".

² The unusual lengthening of the final syllable of nullius prolongs the "s" and, as ANDERSON notes (p.43), this together with the repeated "s" sound in Proteus' opening lines (453-456) suggests the god's angry hissing and contributes to the ominous tone of his words. The effect may also be heightened by the repeated "n" sound in 453.

The first line that Virgil's Proteus speaks is much more mysterious - a nameless power is harassing Aristaeus (non ... nullius ... numinis irae).³ The difference between the two passages is striking and, I would add, surprising given Virgil's close adaptation of Od. 4 in the narrative which immediately precedes. The alteration in tone and content is intriguing and, at once, our interest is aroused.

The air of mystery is maintained in 454. Proteus tells Aristaeus that his loss is an atonement for an unnamed crime or crimes (it is not yet certain whether commissa refers to one or more criminal acts). The emphatic position of magna, however, ominously foreshadows the seriousness of these as yet unspecified misdeeds. In addition, the brevity of the phrase magna luis commissa has great impact and we learn here for the first time that the death of Aristaeus' bees has not been caused by his negligence in caring for them but is a punishment for some great crime(s). Furthermore, Aristaeus' enemy is named and the name is emphatically placed at the end of the line with the epithet miserabilis which sets the tone for the story of Orpheus' sufferings. There is additional impact (and surprise) if Virgil is, in fact, the first to link Aristaeus with Orpheus (and Eurydice).

³ Servius believes that the avenging deity is Tisiphone but it becomes clear at 532 that it is (as D. Serv. points out) the nymphs who are responsible for Aristaeus' woes. For the plural irae see AUSTIN, on Aen. 4.197, who suggests that the plural implies repeated "fits of anger" or "angry actions". The plural, then, may contribute to the menacing tone (i.e. by suggesting the relentlessness of Aristaeus' foe).

455 begins with the resounding negative haudquaquam, which, as MYNORS notes, is a formal word.⁴ As such, it effectively captures Proteus' accusatory tone. The line, however, contains the much discussed phrase haudquaquam ob meritum, the interpretation of which is difficult. Some commentators⁵ take the phrase with poenas and translate "penalties which you have by no means deserved". Aristaeus, the argument runs, did not intend Eurydice's death and so, Proteus asserts, is being punished too harshly.⁶ Surely, this interpretation is against the whole tenor of Proteus' speech and his reaction to, and treatment of, Aristaeus at this point and fails to explain satisfactorily Proteus' anger and the phrase magna ... commissa. The suggestion that the loss of Aristaeus' bees (although a serious matter to him) is too heavy a penalty to pay seems to me to undermine the tragedy of Proteus' tale.

⁴ MYNORS, on 455. See also TLL vi,3.2565.59ff. for the appearance of the word in Ennius and Lucretius.

⁵ E.g. R.D. WILLIAMS, THOMAS.

⁶ While it is true that as early as the Twelve Tables Roman law did distinguish between intentional and unintentional murder (see JOLOWICZ and NICHOLAS, p.174), Virgil gives no hint that we should view Aristaeus' lack of intent as lessening his guilt. Clearly, if Virgil had made Aristaeus willfully responsible for Eurydice's death, Proteus' story would have even darker overtones. Surely, part of the tragedy is that Aristaeus, had he known what the outcome of his pursuit of Eurydice would be, would have acted otherwise. So too Orpheus, had he not been overcome by "frenzy" would not have turned around and lost Eurydice a second time. One thinks (e.g.) of Oedipus who would not have married Jocasta had he but known.

A second possible interpretation, "punishments not as great as you deserve",⁷ is better suited to the context: it is consistent with magna ... commissa and with Proteus' angry accusation against Aristaeus. However, I cannot find an exact parallel for ob which will render the required sense - non talis qualis mereris.⁸ The alternative, attractive only as a last resort, is to accept ad, the reading of P alone, and to ignore the unanimous testimony of the other manuscripts.⁹

We are left, therefore, with the third possibility¹⁰ which requires that the phrase qualify miserabilis (i.e. it is Orpheus, not Aristaeus, who is suffering undeservedly): "Orpheus so worthy of pity for his undeserved misfortune". There are two major criticisms of this interpretation which need to be answered. First, it is argued that to take haudquaquam ob meritum with miserabilis involves an impossible hyperbaton. However, as FORDYCE notes, bold hyperbata are found in Latin poetry and are, in particular, a feature of

⁷ So e.g. Servius and NORDEN, p.523.

⁸ NORDEN, p.523 n.111 takes ob to mean "als Entgelt für" and meritum to mean "Schuld". But this does not convey the most obvious sense which as MYNORS, on 455-6, states is "punishment which you have not deserved" (MYNORS notes the parallel in Livy 25.6.4).

⁹ So e.g. CONINGTON, MYNORS.

¹⁰ Supported e.g. by SAINT-DENIS, HUXLEY, RICHTER. RICHTER, on 455, argues further that writers of Orphic literature generally, responding to Plato Symp. 179d, stressed Orpheus' innocence ("tragische Schuldlosigkeit") and the "die Worte Vergils dürfen als Niederschlag solcher Apologetik betrachtet werden".

Hellenistic poetry¹¹ and so perhaps Virgil's use of the device here, in his "Hellenistic" epyllion, would not be unexpected. In addition, the disjointed word order may suit the oracular ambiguity of Proteus' statement.¹² The second perceived difficulty is stated by MYNORS: "we are not concerned with what Orpheus deserves".¹³ In fact, Proteus may well be concerned, as part of his angry condemnation - he states quite emphatically that Orpheus is miserabilis and the added detail that he has suffered misfortune through no fault of his own heightens our sympathy at a significant point in the story. The criticisms of this interpretation, therefore, are unjust and, moreover, the emphasis upon Orpheus' blamelessness is consistent both with magna ... commissa and with Proteus' anger.

If the beginning of line 455 is ambiguous, so too is what follows: poenas, ni fata resistant,/ suscitāt. The blending of moods, the ellipse of the apodosis of the condition,¹⁴ the disjointed word order, delaying and so emphasizing suscitāt (further stressed by its position in the line) make Proteus'

¹¹ FORDYCE, on Cat. 66.18 cites Call. fr.178-9-10 (Pf.), fr.384.31 (Pf.), Theoc. Id. 29.3 as examples in Alexandrian poets. In his note FORDYCE also points out similar bold hyperbata from Greek tragedy and Latin poetry. See also AUSTIN, on Aen. 1.109, for further discussion and a select bibliography of scholarship.

¹² It is possible too that the disjointed word order is intended to convey Proteus' animation. He is, after all, supposed to be furious.

¹³ MYNORS, on 455-6.

¹⁴ Cf. THOMAS, on 456: "the thought of the apodosis is compressed: 'he stirs up punishments [which would be exacted] were not the fates to resist'."

pronouncement more ominously threatening and mysterious and, in addition, suggest his animation. Is Orpheus responsible for the loss of Aristaeus' bees? If not, who is? Are there more punishments to come or is Aristaeus protected by this fate?

Finally, at 456, Virgil refers to the reason for Orpheus' wrath. The three-line delay heightens the impact of the brief revelation et rapta graviter pro coniuge saevit. Still, I would argue, we remain uncertain of Aristaeus' specific crime. Is Orpheus' rage due to the fact that his wife has been raped or that she has been snatched away by death?¹⁵ Of Orpheus' rage, however, there is no doubt. Saevit, in emphatic position, is a strong word and is further strengthened by graviter.¹⁶ His rage, moreover, is justified. In either of its senses rapta makes it clear that his wife has been cruelly victimized.

One final point must be made. In the Aristaeus portion of the narrative there is little direct reference to the emotions - only Aristaeus' initial display of anger and Cyrene's fear for him. In Proteus' opening four lines, we find irae (emphatically placed at the end of its line), miserabilis, graviter ... saevit (like irae stressed by its position). Emotions are highlighted. This focus upon emotions is not only typical of epyllia but also increases our involvement in the narrative.

¹⁵ For rapta in the first sense see OLD s.v. rapio 4 and e.g. Aen. 8.635; for the second sense OLD s.v.5 and THOMAS, on G. 3.67-8.

¹⁶ Cp. G. 1.511 (of Mars), G. 3.434 (of a serpent), G. 3.551 (of Tisiphone). For graviter with saevit see TLL vi,2.2304.37ff. and OLD s.v.10.

SECTION 7: 453-527PART B: 457-459

Virgil now shifts our attention away from Orpheus to his as yet unnamed wife, illa (457), and in three lines elaborates further upon the link between Aristaeus, Orpheus and Eurydice. It bears repeating that Virgil may be the first to make Aristaeus responsible for Eurydice's death and, if this is so, the innovation would heighten the audience's/ reader's interest and raise their curiosity about how the story may unfold.¹

Virgil's narrative technique here requires some comment. He chooses to begin with and focus upon only one element in the story - Eurydice's flight and death. There is no mention of the events leading up to the pursuit: for example, did Aristaeus simply happen upon her or was he already in her company when the pursuit began, etc.? One may remark that such omissions are a feature of epyllia.² That being said, it must be noted that Virgil selects and stresses the most poignant moment, the climax of the story,

¹ I would point out too that the snake is mentioned only by Virgil, Apollod. 1.3.2., Hyginus Fab. 164, Ov. Met. 10.8ff. and later mythographers and so may be a further innovation to heighten interest. Death by a snake bite is also particularly painful - see below (n.8).

² See e.g. the witty remarks by ROSS (1975), p.244 on narrative technique in neoteric epyllia: "Ask a neoteric poet for an epyllion on the same tale [i.e. the three little pigs], and he will present you, nine years later, with some fifty lines of architectural drawings of the house of bricks, a lengthy digression (beginning nam perhibent olim ...) on the ancestry and forgotten exploits of Little Red Riding Hood's wolf, in which he might, but probably won't, disclose its fate...".

Eurydice's flight and death. He chooses, therefore, the most pathetic, most dramatic and most horrifying aspect of the story. Moreover, he fashions the description to highlight first the pathos then the horror of Eurydice's death and he creates a startlingly graphic and realistic picture.

Firstly, as commentators have pointed out,³ the separation of illa (457) and puella (458) may be a Homeric mannerism. However, Virgil's effective use of the mannered word order is more to the point. The delay of puella, with the participle moritura, places special emphasis upon the phrase, which comes as an unexpected addition.⁴ Puella is further stressed by its position in the line and strikes a pathetic note - Eurydice died while still young. The pathos is increased by the participle moritura which stands as the only direct reference to Eurydice's fate.

Virgil does not, however, ignore the horrific elements in the description. Praeceptis, emphatically placed at the end of 457, vividly and realistically captures Eurydice's panic as she flees from Aristaeus. We feel the various senses of immanem ("savage", "frightful", "of enormous size").⁵ The word, then, is particularly apt and, like praeceptis, receives added stress from its position in the line, while the snake, the agent of Eurydice's death is identified

³ E.g. THOMAS, on 457-8.

⁴ I find that MYNORS, on 457-9, also makes this point.

⁵ OLD s.v. immanis 1,2,3.

as the hydrus.⁶ The notion of the snake, lurking unseen in the tall grass (459), produces a feeling of dread. Finally, Virgil exploits sound to enhance the overall effectiveness of the lines. The p's and f's of fugeret per flumina praeceps (457) may reflect Proteus' anger at what he is relating (or, it has been suggested to me, the sound of Eurydice's footsteps as she flees) and the heavy spondaic rhythm of 459 complemented by the mournful long "a" sounds adds a menacing note matching the content of the line.

CONINGTON⁷ comments upon Virgil's "delicacy" in handling Eurydice's death. It is true that Virgil does not specify that she steps upon the snake and so avoids a graphic depiction of her death. However, this omission may be more than a reflection of Virgil's delicacy or a simple skimming of detail. In fact, I would argue, that Virgil, by leaving the details of Eurydice's death unspoken, increases the poignancy and horror by allowing us to imagine for ourselves her terrible and painful death.⁸ It is worth noting, too, that the

⁶ It is worth noting that in Homer a water-snake is responsible for Philoctetes' wound (Il. 2.723, ἐλκεῖ ... κακῷ ὀλοόφρονος ὕδρου). The first known occurrence of hydrus in Latin is G. 2.141 (TLL vi,3.3158.69ff.) where it is applied to the dragon of Cadmus. The rarity of the word attracts attention and those who recall the earlier passage (with its monstrous connotation) may feel an added note of menace here.

⁷ CONINGTON, on 459.

⁸ Especially for an audience aware of Nicander's description (Ther. 424ff.) of death following the bite of the chelydrus (a snake which, according to Nicander, inhabits marshy areas and water-weeds and bites the sole of the foot):

ἦτοι ὅταν κώληπας ἦ ἐν ποδὸς ἴχνει τύπη,

second (more pathetic) death of Eurydice and the killing of Orpheus are still to be described. Presumably, therefore, Virgil does not wish to over-emphasize Eurydice's first death.

χρωτὸς ἀπο πνιγδεσσα κεδαιομένη φέρετ' ὀδμή·
 τοῦ δ' ἦτοι περὶ τύμμα μέλαν κορθύεται οἶδος,
 ἐν δὲ νόον πεδόωσιν ἀλυσθαίνοντος ἀνῖαι
 ἐχθόμεναι, χροῖη δὲ μόγῳ ἀυαίνεται ἀνδρός.
 ῥινοὶ δὲ πλαδόωσιν ἐπὶ χροῖ, τοῖά μιν ἰὸς
 ὄξυς ἀεὶ νεμέθων ἐπιβόσκειται· ἀμφὶ καὶ ἀχλύς
 ὄσσε κατακρύπτουσα κακοσταθέοντα δαμάζει·
 οἱ δὲ τε μηκάζουσι περιπνιγέες τε πέλονται,
 οὐρα δ' ἀπέστυπται· τοτὲ δ' ἔμπαλιν ὑπνώοντες
 ῥέγκουσιν, λυγμοῖσι βαρυνόμενοι θαμέεσσιν,
 ἢ ἀπερευγόμενοι ἔμετον χολοειδέα δειρής,
 ἄλλοτε δ' αἱματόεντα· κακὴ δ' ἐπιδίψιος ἄτη
 ἐσχατὴ μογέουσι τρόμον κατεχεύατο γυίοις.

SECTION 7: 453-527PART C: 460-466

By the end of 459 Proteus has provided all of the details which we require to understand the course of events earlier in the narrative. Orpheus' anger is the cause (either directly or indirectly) of Aristaeus' loss and the reason for his anger - Eurydice's death - has been revealed. Proteus, it would seem, can now tell Aristaeus how to atone for his part in Eurydice's death, just as Proteus offers advice to Menelaus at Odyssey 4.472ff. Instead, Virgil presents a description clearly included to build pathos - a description not of Eurydice's death but of the reaction to her death.

Virgil begins not with Orpheus' reaction but with the lamentation of the Dryads, the first in a lengthy list of mourners. Their cries reach even the mountain tops - supremos receives special emphasis from its position at the end of 460 and is given added significance by the phrase clamore implerunt.¹ The combination underlines the loudness of the Dryads' cries and hence the depth of their grief.

¹ The text of 461 is disputed. Although implerunt is better attested, THOMAS, MYNORS, et al. accept implevit. THOMAS, on 461, remarks that implevit "is preferable to the better-supported implerunt, which produces with flerunt ... a rhyme that is not typical of V." I would point out, however, that the rhyme at 466 te veniente ... te decedente is not suspect. Moreover, BULLER, p.49, n.10, comments upon the use of rhyme to intensify the pathetic fallacy at Theoc. Id. 1.71-75. There are, in addition, a number of instances of rhyme in the Lament for Bion (e.g. 99, αἰαῖ τὰ μαλάχαι, etc.). Implerunt, therefore, may be correct and the rhyme may be a feature of laments generally. For chorus with a plural verb see KÜHNER-STEGMAN, vol.2, part 1, pp.21ff. (especially p.23).

The pathos is increased, as is the sense of loss, by the list of additional "mourners" at 461-3: the mountains and rivers (represented by the Hebrus) of Thrace; even the land itself² as well as the fierce peoples of the region join with the Dryads in their lament. The pathetic fallacy which includes the arresting picture of mountains and rivers weeping is a particularly effective way to suggest the depth and extent of the grief caused by Eurydice's death.

The diction and arrangement of 461-3 are remarkable and both contribute to the tone. Virgil uses the noun-epithet combination Rhodopeiae arces to refer to the Thracian mountain Rhodope. The adjective Rhodopeius appears here for the first time in extant Latin literature³ and arces, too, for "mountain-tops" is unparalleled before Virgil.⁴ The resounding phrase is all the more effective in conjunction with flerunt. The third mourner in the list is also a mountain but Virgil varies the pattern. Again, he uses a noun-adjective combination, altaque Pangaea but here the name of the mountain is given as the noun in the pair. Pangaea also is new in Latin.⁵ The unusual place names

² Both DICK and BULLER discuss the particular fondness of Hellenistic poets for the 'pathetic fallacy'. R.D. WILLIAMS, on Ecl. 1.38-9, notes "'pathetic fallacy' ... occurs from earliest times in Greek literature (e.g. Hom. Il. 19.362) but its use ... was greatly extended in pastoral poetry." See also GOW, on Theoc. Id. 7.74 and KLINGNER, p.222, who compares Ecl. 5.20-8.

³ OLD s.v. and THOMAS, on 461: "though a Greek formation, ... not found in Greek."

⁴ TLL ii.741.52: locus editus in poetarum sermone inde a VERG.

⁵ OLD s.v.

are arresting and appropriate for the exotic location but more importantly match the strangeness of mountains weeping.

Even the land of Thrace, renowned for its cruelty, barbarity and coldness,⁶ joins in the lament. Virgil places particular emphasis upon Thrace's association with war. The epithet Mavortia is formed from the archaic Mavors⁷ and so elevates the tone, providing an epic ring suited to the context of war. Rhesus, named here, also has epic associations as he was the leader of the Thracian forces allied to Troy at Il. 10.435.⁸ The focus then is upon Thrace's reputation as a land of warriors and by emphasizing this point Virgil makes the sorrow felt by this cold, martial land at Eurydice's death even more poignant.

The list of mourners ends with a tricolon. The Getae, chosen to represent the peoples of Thrace and presumably as cold and cruel as the land they inhabit⁹, also join in the lament. The river Hebrus, traditionally associated with ice and cold,¹⁰ completes the geographical list.

⁶ Cf. Aen. 3.13f.: terra procul vastis colitur Mavortia campis/ (Thracas arant), acri quondam regnata Lycurgo. Hdt. 3.5ff. describes Thracian customs and notes their love of war and plunder. For Thracian cold, see e.g., Xen. An. 7.3-4.

⁷ See BAILEY (1969), p.110, on Mavors.

⁸ Rhesus may also, appropriately, have tragic connotations from Euripides' play of the same name.

⁹ Cp. Ov. Ex.P. 1.7.12, 1.8.6.

¹⁰ See Ecl. 10.65 and NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 1.25.20.

The catalogue of mourners, which has encompassed the whole of Thrace, concludes with an individual, Orithyia. By ending with Orithyia Virgil achieves the structural neatness of ring-composition in the list beginning with the Dryads, Eurydice's female companions, and concluding with a lone woman. The choice of Orithyia, moreover, is particularly apt since she, like Eurydice, was the victim of a capricious assailant.¹¹ The epithet Actias is unparalleled in the sense "Attic"¹² and its novelty stresses that Orithyia is non-Thracian and at once invites us to recall how Boreas carried her off from her home.¹³

In sum, Virgil's catalogue treats us to a geographical sweep of Thrace and its major landmarks. At the same time, the landscape of Thrace, as Virgil presents it, mirrors the character of the place: a cruel and war-like land with rugged mountains and icy rivers, peopled by warriors. Yet, this cold

¹¹ For the rape of Orithyia by Boreas see e.g. Ap.Rhod. 1.212 and schol., and Apollod. 3.15.1-2. It is possible that Virgil, by concluding the list with Orithyia, intends to connect her with the Dryads as an aequalis of Eurydice. If so, this may be a further novelty, since I can find no other source which links Orithyia with Eurydice or with the Dryads (see PAULY-WISSOWA, vol.18, pt.1, pp.952-958, for articles on Oreithyia).

¹² Actias is unparalleled in this sense (OLD s.v.). HOLLIS, however, on Call. Hecale fr.1, cites parallels for Ἀκτῆ = Attica and notes that Ἀκταῖος, though not attested before Callimachus, was popular among later Greek and Roman poets - see his note for examples. Virgil, therefore, may be introducing an erudite variation of a Callimachean novelty.

¹³ The spondeiazon further stresses Orithyia's name. As THOMAS, on 463, notes, Orithyia is mentioned at Ap. Rhod. 1.212 where her name ends the line (also a spondeiazon).

and hostile place weeps for Eurydice and the fact that it does heightens the pathos. The extent and depth of the grief felt at her death are further emphasized by the length of the list and the number of the mourners, added on one after another with great cumulative impact.

In addition to the diction and arrangement of 460-3, the sound and rhythm of the lines contribute to the mood. WILKINSON comments upon the "sounds of wailing, hauntingly expressed by the a, ae and e sounds".¹⁴ The effect is heightened by the heavy spondaic rhythm of 461 and the preponderance of spondees in 462 and Virgil concludes the list impressively with the spondeiazon Orithyia¹⁵ in 463.

The emphasis now shifts back to Orpheus who is reintroduced not by name but by the word ipse which begins 464. There is, of course, no doubt who ipse is. Orpheus' reaction has been delayed by the list of mourners and with this delay Virgil increases the anticipation and thereby the impact of the description. After the list of mourners at 460-3, with its geographical sweep, Virgil narrows the focus from the sad to the saddest of all, the lone figure of Orpheus.

¹⁴ WILKINSON (1969), p.220.

¹⁵ There are additional metrical peculiarities in the line: a hiatus after Getae, and a strong caesura in the third/fourth foot is lacking (cf. e.g. R.D. WILLIAMS, on 463).

Orpheus' distress is emphasized by the transferred epithet aegrum in 464 as he seeks solace in his power of song. The song which he sings increases the pathos. The repetition of te four times reflects Orpheus' preoccupation with Eurydice. He can sing of nothing else. The shift to the second person and the direct address dulcis coniunx lend a subjective quality to the lines which make them more personal and moving. As OTIS remarks, they verge on direct speech.¹⁶ The simplicity of the phrase dulcis coniunx, which suggests the manner in which Orpheus may have addressed Eurydice in life, only adds to the poignancy of the scene. Further empathy for Orpheus' suffering is created by the phrase solo ... secum which repeats and so stresses Orpheus' loneliness and isolation. In litore surely refers to the bank of the river¹⁷ where Eurydice was bitten and, if so, the picture of Orpheus waiting helplessly at the scene of his wife's death adds a further pathetic (and realistic) note. Finally, the "weary iteration" of te veniente ... te decedente¹⁸ and the use of the imperfect tense (canebat) vividly suggest Orpheus' unceasing

¹⁶ OTIS, p.200. See also FORDYCE, on Cat. 64.69: "the apostrophe was developed by Hellenistic poetry as a device to give a subjective, personal quality to the narrative, and thence was adopted by the neoterics."

¹⁷ For litus used of a river bank see NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 1.2.14.

¹⁸ See PAGE, on 465. NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 2.9.10, note that: "the mention of both sunset and dawn is an affectation of neoteric and elegiac lament; cf. Cinna, fr.6 te matutinus flentem conspexit Eous./ te [Hollis: et codd.] flentem paulo post vidit Hesperus idem."

lament. Yet his music which has the magical power to draw trees etc. seems powerless.

In contrast to the diction of the catalogue of mourners at 460ff., the words which Virgil uses to describe Orpheus in mourning are remarkably simple and this simplicity adds immediacy to a scene which is at once poignant and realistic. The realism makes the picture all the more believable and so heightens its impact.

Again Virgil exploits the rhythm and sound of the description to complement the mood and subject. There is a preponderance of spondees in 464 and 465 is even heavier. The rhythm adds solemnity and pathos and effectively prolongs the lines to match Orpheus' unending lament. THOMAS points out that 465-6 is "A sonorous and studied couplet...with t, s and l sounds predominating in the first line, t, d and c in the second."¹⁹

CRABBE²⁰ has commented upon the similarity between Orpheus' lament and Ariadne's address to Theseus (Cat. 64.132), namely the parallel situation - solitary lament by water - and the expression - te solo in litore secum and deserto liquisti in litore (Cat. 64.133). CRABBE argues further that Virgil presents a "striking contrast" with Catullus by having his hero weep for a lost

¹⁹ THOMAS, ad loc.. See also R.D. WILLIAMS' comment upon the lines. Note too, the repeated long "e" sounds and, the mournful iteration in -ente (466) discussed above.

²⁰ CRABBE, p.343.

wife rather than a heroine for her lost lover. If CRABBE is correct and Virgil is consciously recalling Catullus, then the pathos accompanying Ariadne's desertion by Theseus heightens the sympathy we feel for Orpheus. Indeed, the touches which Virgil adds to suggest the closer relationship between Orpheus and Eurydice (e.g. dulcis coniunx) serve to make the loss which Orpheus has suffered even more tragic.

In addition, there is, I believe, an instance of self-reference, which, as THOMAS has argued,²¹ Virgil uses to great effect elsewhere. It seems to me that there is an obvious connection between Orpheus' lament and Aristaeus' address to Cyrene at the beginning of the epyllion. The parallel situations - both Orpheus and Aristaeus come alone to the bank of a river to mourn a loss - invite comparison and contrast. Furthermore, as noted above, both speeches seem to include a reference to Catullus' Ariadne and so there is a further link between the two. Orpheus' loss when set against Aristaeus' is clearly much more profound and when comparison is made between the situations of the two characters, Orpheus is by far the more tragic. This interplay between Orpheus' lament at 464ff. and Aristaeus' speech at 321ff. heightens the effect of the former.

To conclude the discussion of this section, I would reiterate that Virgil chooses not to describe Eurydice's death in great detail. Instead he focuses

²¹ THOMAS (1986), pp.182ff.

upon the reaction to her death. The description is noteworthy for its length (seven full lines out of seventy-five) and one must suppose that Virgil emphasizes the mourners for some reason. It seems to me that structurally the lament provides a means of returning the focus to Orpheus after Eurydice's death. Secondly, by choosing to highlight the sorrow which follows Eurydice's death, Virgil can exploit the subjective, emotional aspects of the story as befits the style and substance of an epyllion.

SECTION 7: 453-527PART D: 467-470

Virgil now turns to Orpheus' descent into the Underworld. Up to this point in the Orpheus and Eurydice story, I feel that a strong argument can be made that Virgil has introduced a number of innovations (e.g. the fact that Proteus narrates the story, the connection between Aristaeus and Orpheus and Aristaeus' responsibility for Eurydice's death).¹

Orpheus' descent to bring back Eurydice from the Underworld, however, is a central feature of the mythology surrounding Orpheus and is also a crucial point in Virgil's treatment of the story. None of the earlier extant accounts can be demonstrated to be Virgil's model² and so we are left to examine how Virgil designs his narrative and what he chooses to stress. It seems to me that Virgil selects details to heighten the pathetic elements of the story (continuing the tone set from the beginning with miserabilis in 454 and the stress given to the sorrow felt at Eurydice's death) as well as the horrific.

The description begins impressively: Taenarias etiam fauces. The adjective Taenarius appears here for the first time in extant Latin literature.³ Its

¹ See above Chapter 1.

² For other possible sources (i.e. other catabaseis) see below.

³ There are Greek precedents. See e.g. Ap. Rhod. 1.101-2: Θησέα δ', ὃς περὶ πάντας Ἐρεχθεΐδας ἐκέκαστο, / Ταιναρῆν ἀίδηλος ὑπὸ χθόνα δεσμὸς ἔρυκε and Euph. 9.11 (Coll. Alex. p.81). It is tempting to postulate that the occurrence

rarity and position in the line lend particular stress to the adjective and so Virgil seems to be highlighting the shift in setting from Thrace to southern Laconia. Moreover, the adjective, because it suggests the Underworld, strikes an ominous note and introduces a sense of foreboding at the beginning of the line.

The phrase Taenarias ... fauces is a periphrasis of the type employed with solemn effect elsewhere by Virgil⁴ and impressively introduces the descent motif. Fauces is first used in connection with the Underworld by Lucretius - Tartarus horriferos eructans faucibus aestus (3.1012).⁵ I suspect that Virgil is consciously recalling Lucretius by employing fauces here and the literal meaning of the word ("throat"), exploited so effectively by Lucretius, makes Virgil's phrase all the more graphic.

Finally, etiam which I take to be emphatic - "even"⁶ - contributes to the impression of the enormity of Orpheus' chosen course of action.

occurrence of the adjective in Alexandrian poets suggests that Virgil uses it intentionally as an Alexandrianism. For the earliest known instance of the word in Arion see BERGK, PLG 3, p.80. For Taenarus being one of the entrances to the Underworld (and for examples of Taenarius after Virgil) see BÖMER, on Ov. Fasti 4.612.

⁴ E.g. Aen. 6.395, Tartareum ... custodem (=Cerberus). AUSTIN, on Aen. 6.395, comments: "the periphrasis is in high Epic manner". AUSTIN goes on to point out that adjectives formed from proper nouns are often used for metrical convenience. See also the remarks of NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 1.34.11 Atlanteus ... finis: "the grandiloquent phrase is modelled on Greek poetry."

⁵ TLL vi,1.397.59ff. cites only the Lucretian passage in this sense prior to Virgil's use here (cp. Aen. 6.201). In addition TLL vi,1.400.27f. gives this as the only instance of Taenarias with fauces.

⁶ See COLEMAN's note on Ecl. 10.13-14.

The line also concludes effectively. The phrase alta ostia Ditis is in apposition to Taenarias ... fauces and the adjective alta, juxtaposed with fauces but syntactically modifying ostia, suggests at once the imposing height of the cave-entrance of Dis' "palace" and the depth of his realm beneath the earth. The name of the god⁷ is placed emphatically at line end. Virgil constructs the line, then, so that it begins and ends with words referring to the Underworld (i.e. the location of its entrance and its ruler). By ringing the line in this way Virgil simultaneously highlights the ominous sense of death and creates an atmosphere of horror befitting the place to which Orpheus has come.

In a single line Virgil has shifted the action from the river bank in Thrace where Eurydice met her death to the tip of the Laconian peninsula. He makes no reference to Orpheus' journey but brings us immediately to the entrance to Hades. This skimming of detail allows Virgil to focus particularly upon the mysterious and threatening elements in his narrative and so heightens the drama.

The reference to the jaws of Hades and its shadowy king is terrifying and 468 reinforces the tone. The impressive spondaic rhythm creates a sense

⁷ On Dis, BAILEY (1969), p.250, comments: "In Virgil Dis is for the most part a pallid figure, a mere synonym, almost geographical, for the lower world". He adds, however (p.251), "the most completely personal reference to Dis is in the story of Orpheus in the fourth book of the Georgics." BAILEY, pp.250-1 (and notes), discusses other references to Dis in Virgil - e.g. the phrase alta ostia Ditis is repeated at Aen. 8.667.

of foreboding. This mood is complemented by the solemnity of the diction - caligantem and formidine - and the rarity of caligantem⁸ fits well with an atmosphere of mystery, as does the unusual combination nigra formidine.⁹ The setting, too, contributes to the overall effect. As PAGE comments, "Groves were always regarded by early peoples with awe as the abodes of spirits; hence Virgil makes frequent mention of them in connection with Hades and its approaches; cf. Aen. 6.131, 154."¹⁰ The precise location of this grove has received comment from scholars. CONINGTON feels that the grove is the "abode of the spirits" and so presumably in the Underworld.¹¹ MYNORS, on the other hand, argues that the grove is part of the landscape surrounding the entrance to the Underworld.¹² It seems to me that Virgil's imprecision may be

⁸ HUXLEY, on 468, commenting on caligantem, states: "a rugged boulder of a word." The rarity of the verb is confirmed by TLL iii.156.72ff. which gives Cic. Arat. 205 as the only occurrence prior to Virgil.

⁹ The phrase nigra formidine is remarkable for a number of reasons. First, the words taken together are impressionistic, i.e. intended to capture the atmosphere of the grove rather than present a concrete image. Secondly, the primary sense of nigra, "black" or "dark", picks up caligantem but niger is also associated with death (see MURGATROYD, on Tib. 1.3.4) and so is particularly apt for the context. Moreover, niger has connotations of "ill-omen" and "evil" (OLD s.v.8,9) which contribute to the effectiveness of the phrase. Finally there may be a contrast here with the formido felt by Cyrene at 4.357.

¹⁰ PAGE, on 468.

¹¹ CONINGTON, on 468.

¹² MYNORS, on 467-70. Cf. Od. 10.509f.

intentional and that the vagueness and uncertainty only add to the unsettling mystery of the place.

The sense of the line, which one can only approximate in translation ("and a grove murky with black dread"), the chiasmic arrangement of the words and the fact that the line is itself the third and longest member of a tricolon increase its impact.

In 469 there is again a preponderance of spondees. Ingressus, in enjambement, has been postponed, then emphasized by its position. The postponement allows Virgil to build up the description of the entrance to the Underworld and to increase suspense.

A second tricolon begins at Manisque and the line ends with the impressive and chilling tremendum. The word is rare¹³ and is further emphasized by its position at line end and by the homoeoteleuton with lucum in 468. Again Virgil selects for emphasis a detail which reflects the horror of Orpheus' surroundings.

The third part of the tricolon (470) is the longest and so again receives the greatest emphasis. The thought - the implacability of Hades - is traditional and appears as early as Homer Il. 9.158: 'Αΐδης τοι ἀμείλιχος ἦδ' ἀδάμαστος.¹⁴ The fact that Virgil chooses to give special emphasis to the

¹³ See BÖMER, on Ov. Met. 3.577.

¹⁴ For further parallels see NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 2.14.6.

hard-heartedness of the spirits of the Underworld clearly suits the cold, unfeeling atmosphere of the place and emphasizes the difficulty of his task but may also have been included to foreshadow Orpheus' ultimate failure to win back Eurydice.

Be that as it may, I should like to suggest that Virgil may be engaging in a sophisticated word play in 469-70. R.D. WILLIAMS asserts that corda at the end of 470 refers to Dis only and is, therefore, a poetic plural.¹⁵ It seems to me, however, that corda may be a true plural and so refer not only to Dis but also to the other nether powers and to the Manes. This interpretation leads to the irony that the "kindly ones" (Manes)¹⁶ do not know how to be kind (nescia ... mansuescere). In order to drive home the irony Virgil offers a triple verbal play: MANISque ... huMANIS ... MANSuescere. Equally pertinent to this suggestion is the fact that mansuescere is apparently used here for the first time in the sense "to become gentle".¹⁷ The unusual sense draws attention to the word and hence highlights the irony.

Finally, I should like to point out that Virgil is at pains to specify that the spirits of the Underworld are unmoved by human prayers (humanis

¹⁵ R.D. WILLIAMS, on 470.

¹⁶ For the derivation OLD s.v. manes. The Manes may be unsympathetic, as NISBET and HUBBARD note on Hor. Odes 1.14.16.

¹⁷ TLL viii.327.55 glosses proprie ... feritatem deponere. At 327.80ff. TLL gives this passage as the first occurrence of the sense tractabilem fieri etc.

precibus). It seems to me that the stress must have some point. First, the Manes themselves are the souls of deceased human beings and so there is a certain harshness in their "not knowing how to be softened by human prayers". In addition, Virgil may be drawing attention to the fact that Orpheus, as a mortal (who will use humanis precibus to try to win Eurydice back), is out of place in the hostile and terrifying environment of the Underworld. Finally, there is suspense (and perhaps further foreshadowing of Orpheus' ultimate failure) as we wonder how Orpheus will persuade the regem tremendum to release Eurydice.

SECTION 7: 453-527PART E: 471-484

OTIS remarks that at, beginning 471, "sets Orpheus' song against the whole weight of the four preceeding lines".¹ If I understand his comment correctly, OTIS appears to be suggesting that Orpheus has only his song to combat and to persuade the dark, gloomy and terrifying features and powers of the Underworld, powers which are untouched by human prayers. This analysis is credible. However, I think that the phrase at cantu commotae, following as it does the reference to the pitilessness of the Underworld deities, implies that Virgil is going to relate how Orpheus' song "moved" even these "unmovable" spirits. Instead, Virgil describes the nameless spirits in their countless throng physically moving, drawn by Orpheus' music.² This unexpected twist, I would argue, heightens the impact of the description of the shades and adds suspense as we await the (postponed) verdict of Dis.

Before undertaking a detailed examination of 471ff., I feel that Virgil's narrative technique requires general comment. Remarkably, the only indication that Orpheus actually enters the Underworld occurs at 469, adiit regemque tremendum. Virgil makes no mention of Orpheus' descent (in this section), only

¹ OTIS, p.201.

² This, of course, does not preclude the possibility that the sense "mentally or emotionally moved" is also to be felt. OLD s.v.10 provides several examples of commoveo used with this meaning.

his song. We are left to assume that he has descended and that his cantus is his appeal to the deities of the Underworld. Furthermore, there is no reference made to the conventional figures who guard the approaches of the Underworld, Charon and Cerberus (Virgil, with great effect, delays mentioning both). These omissions speed up the pace of the narrative and allow Virgil to focus upon the spirits of the Underworld whom he represents first as eerie, ghostly figures. The brevity, it may be argued, is dictated by the epyllion form - clearly an account of the Underworld as detailed as (e.g.) Aen. 6 would be out of place. Yet Virgil exploits the requirements of the poetic form to great effect - the lack of conventional detail at this point invites his audience to imagine for themselves the horrors of Orpheus' journey. When he does mention conventional characters and details later in the narrative, he is highly selective, choosing carefully for maximum impact. In addition, I would note THOMAS' view that 471ff. recall Od. 11.34-43³ (for other possible poetic models see below). Certainly 475ff. match, with variation, Od. 11.38ff. and Virgil does represent the spirits of the Underworld flocking to Orpheus just as in Homer they stream forth in large numbers to Odysseus. THOMAS argues further that Virgil has removed the grotesqueness present in Homer by having the spirits attracted not by the blood of a sacrificial victim but by Orpheus' song. However that may be, it is clear that Virgil again turns to Homer in fashioning his narrative.

³ THOMAS, on 471-80.

The emphasis at the beginning of 471 falls upon Orpheus' song. The slow, spondaic rhythm heightens the ominous sense of doom and the alliteration of cantu commotae complements the rhythm. The word cantu clearly refers to Orpheus' song, but it is possible that the sense "charm" or "spell" (OLD s.v.) is also felt. The magical power of Orpheus' music then would be set against the power of the Underworld deities. Erebi may be a conscious echo of Homer's Ἐρέβου (Od. 11.37) to add to the solemnity of the line and imis, emphatically placed at the end of the line, suggests at once the depth beneath the earth of the abodes of the spirits and the all-pervasiveness of Orpheus' music which reaches even the lowest regions of Hades.

In 472, by the build up of ghostly words - umbrae, tenues, simulacra, and by the juxtaposition of tenues and simulacra, Virgil stresses the insubstantial nature of the spirits, to create an eerie atmosphere. The rhythm of the line heightens the effect: the ominous spondaic opening (umbrae ibant) dissolves into dactyls, perhaps suggesting the light, insubstantial umbrae or at least capturing the sense of their movement. The phrase simulacraque luce carentum is Lucretian (= "the dead", Lucr. 4.35) and so elevates the tone. While Virgil uses the phrase in its Lucretian sense, there is also present a pathetic literalness which, as HUXLEY notes⁴, is heightened by the proximity of Erebi (literally, "place of nether darkness"). Finally, the imperfect ibant vividly

⁴ HUXLEY, on 471.

represents the shades moving in a continuous stream from the depths of the Underworld.⁵

If THOMAS' view is correct and Virgil is, in fact, consciously recalling Od. 11.34ff., there is apparently one omission: the sound made by the souls of the dead (cp. Od. 11.42f., οἱ πολλοὶ περὶ βόθρον ἔφοιτων ἄλλοθεν ἄλλος/ θεσπεσίη ἰαχῆ). There is no overt reference in Virgil to the noise made by the spirits. However, I would tentatively propose that Virgil does subtly allude to the sound made by the ghosts particularly by repeating long "e" and long "i" sounds in the lines: Erebi de sedibus imis/ umbrae ibant.

The comparison between the shades and birds at 473-4 is echoed and expanded (to include both birds and leaves) at Aen. 6.309ff.⁶ Since the two passages are clearly connected - an example of "self-reference" - it would be logical to suppose that Virgil's poetic model, if, in fact, he had a specific model is the same for both and so it is necessary to examine possible sources.⁷

⁵ OTIS, p.202, states that the imperfect has an inchoative force ("began to move"). R.D. WILLIAMS, on 472, however, translates: "were moving towards him" - better capturing the sense that many ghosts flock toward the music in a continuous stream.

⁶ For further correspondences between Aen. 6 and G. 4 see RICHTER, on G. 4.473. RICHTER offers a convenient list of parallel passages eg. G. 4.473-4 and Aen. 6.311-12; G. 475-77 and Aen. 6.301-3, etc.

⁷ NORDEN, on Aen. 6.309-12, notes that Bacchylides 5.63ff. compares the dead to leaves and that Sophocles O.T. 175ff. compares the dead to birds. On the basis of this evidence, he draws the tenuous conclusion that the two similes

The primary point of the comparison is, as THANIEL states, number and as MYNORS comments,⁸

anyone who has been in woodland as twilight comes on will remember the effect of birds coming in to roost in steadily-increasing numbers...though he can hardly see any [the dead are also too difficult to see cf. se condunt] hundreds it seems and thousands of birds.

The main point, then, is number and the large number suggests the universality of death and so effectively creates pathos. Apart from this, birds provide a particularly apt comparison with the souls of the dead because of the qualities which they share (twittering, fluttering - see note 7 above).

Although the large number is the main point of contact between the simile and the narrative, Virgil, it seems to me, adds further touches. He may

may have appeared together in a lost Catabasis of Heracles and that Bacchylides borrowed one, Sophocles the other simile from this work. Virgil, following the original source, the Catabasis of Heracles kept both. In addition, NORDEN appears to suggest that the author of the Catabasis drew both similes from Homer (Il. 6.141ff. and Il. 3.2). NORDEN's thesis is developed by CLARK (1970), passim, who considers the additional evidence of P. Oxy. 2622 (attributed to Pindar by LLOYD-JONES (1967), p.217) and Ap. Rhod. 4.238-40 and 4.214-19. THANIEL, passim, correctly in my view, is sceptical of these arguments and concludes that without the text of the Catabasis of Heracles, we cannot base any arguments upon NORDEN's hypothesis. We can only say that Virgil in the Georgics may be using a literary tradition that associated birds with souls and that the comparison may ultimately stem from similarities between birds and souls - both flutter and twitter. For ghosts fluttering and twittering see e.g. Il. 23.101, Od. 24.5, Aen. 6.329, 492f., Ov. Am. 1.6.13. Souls appeared as winged and as birds on gravestones (CLARK, p.249 n.14, THANIEL, p.241 n.20). None of the relevant extant similes, however, can be convincingly demonstrated to be Virgil's primary model.

⁸ MYNORS, on 471-4.

be hinting, by the language he uses, at the darkness and coldness of death: Vesper suggests darkness, hibernus cold. These two qualities, though they appear in the simile, are equally applicable to the environment of the narrative. Also present in the comparison is the notion that the birds are seeking shelter and so there is perhaps a hint that the shades are drawn, like birds to shelter, to Orpheus' music. The comparison, therefore, is apt because of the qualities shared by birds and ghosts but there are, in my view, further resonances which influence our emotional response to the shades. There is an eerie, ghostly quality in the lines but, at the same time, an undercurrent of pathos.

One final point which I have not seen elsewhere merits consideration. I would tentatively suggest that Virgil may be recalling the simile earlier in the narrative at 433ff. The same words, Vesper ubi, occur in the same position in their respective lines; yet the contrast in tone and situation is evident. In the earlier instance, evening becomes rather sinister, a time for seeking shelter from the hostile elements. The contrast effectively emphasizes the negative qualities of the Underworld environment.

Following the comparison, Virgil moves from the general (the nameless souls of 471ff.) to the specific. The earlier lines, as noted, have an eerie, mysterious quality. There is pathos but this is not the primary effect of the description. In 475ff., the figures are no longer ghostly shades but matres atque viri etc. The lines clearly recall Od. 11.38-41 where Homer identifies the

souls flocking to the surface:

νόμφαι τ' ἠΐθεοί τε πολύτλητοί τε γέροντες
 παρθενικαί τ' ἀταλαί νεοπενθέα θυμόν ἔχουσαι·
 πολλοὶ δ' οὐτάμενοι χαλκήρεσιν ἐγγείησιν,
 ἄνδρες ἀρηϊφάτοι βεβροτωμένα τεύχε' ἔχοντες

Homer identifies the souls as brides, youths, old men, maidens and, finally, receiving greatest emphasis (last in the list and given two full lines), warriors who have been killed in battle. Virgil captures from Homer the sense of the universality of death and the pathos but he incorporates variations, designed, it would seem, to improve upon his model.

Structurally, Virgil's three lines are arranged in two tricola (the second a true tricolon crescendo), each one and one half lines long. The first tricolon begins emphatically with a block spondee, matres, and the rare use (in Virgil) of atque without elision.⁹ AUSTIN states that matres is used metri gratia for feminae.¹⁰ However, it seems more likely that Virgil has deliberately chosen matres, a more emotive word than femina (because it suggests that children are left behind), as a variation on Homer's almost equally emotive νόμφαι (which, however, lacks the implication of orphans).

Similarly, Virgil varies Homer's πολύτλητοί τε γέροντες with the single word virī. There is no suggestion that the "men" in Virgil are old men,

⁹ AUSTIN, on Aen. 1.30: "Virgil is sparing in his use of spondaic disyllable in the first foot, which tends to slow down the rhythm of the line. For atque without elision see AUSTIN, on Aen. 6.127.

¹⁰ AUSTIN, on Aen. 6.306.

that they have lived long lives and so the pathetic hint that some, at least, may have died prematurely is present. In addition, the presence of matres at the beginning of the line allows a second sense of virj, "husbands", to be felt (OLD s.v.2) - a subtle touch including the possibility of wives and children separated by death from a beloved parent and mate.

The first tricolon concludes with heroes. Like Homer, Virgil singles out heroes for special emphasis. In Virgil, the description of the souls of the dead heroes is the final and longest element in the first triad. If matres and virj are ordinary individuals, heroes, in contrast, are extraordinary. Death, however, has claimed them too. Death is universal and one's status in life is irrelevant. The idea of the inevitability of death and the linking of heroes in death to ordinary individuals heighten the pathos. Virgil further emphasizes the pathetic end of the heroes by his choice of diction and careful positioning of words. First, the periphrasis defunctaque corpora vita/ magnanimum heroum requires comment. The phrase defuncta ... vita is new in Latin¹¹ and the novelty adds stress. Even heroes are conquered by death. I would add that Virgil may be intentionally varying the traditional epic phrase delecta ... corpora¹² applied to heroes. If so, the alteration of delecta to defuncta lends the phrase an added note of pathos. In addition, corpora ... heroum vividly suggests the physical

¹¹ TLL v,1.378.28ff. cites this passage as the first instance of the phrase. Cp. NORDEN, on Aen. 6.306-8: "ist defunctus vita vor Vergil nicht nachweisbar".

¹² See AUSTIN, on Aen. 2.18, who offers parallels - e.g. Enn. sc. 250, Cat. 64.4, etc.

stature and strength of the heroes in life¹³ and contrasts with their insubstantial, shadowy presence in the Underworld (simulacra, etc. 472). The adjective magnanimus receives added emphasis from its position in the line and because its form is an archaism¹⁴ matches the notion that the heroes were men of status in an age now long past. The epic note is, for all that, in vain. With heroum comes the climax of the first triad. It is the last word in its clause and postponed for maximum effect and impact. The epic flavour of the diction clashes with the circumstances of the heroes in death. Homer at least highlights the noble death of the warriors - their death by "bronze-tipped spears", their bloody armour. On these details, Virgil is silent. The manner of their death, honourable or not, is, it seems, irrelevant.

The second tricolon is even more pathetic than the first, focusing upon those who have died prematurely. The first two elements in the triad have a counterpart in Homer's list. To match, with variation, Homer's ἠΐθεοι (= "unmarried youths") Virgil has pueri, chosen to suggest even younger victims of death. Similarly, innuptae puella seems to amplify the pathos of Homer's

¹³ AUSTIN, on Aen. 2.18.

¹⁴ For similar genitives in Virgil see R.D. WILLIAMS, on Aen. 3.5,21,704. As THOMAS, on G. 4.476, (among others) notes magnanimus is the only second declension adjective in Virgil with a genitive plural in -um. NORDEN, on Aen. 6.306-8, notes the Ennian parallel caelicolum (Ann. 491 = SKUTSCH 445) and Catullus' use of the same form at 68.138. AUSTIN, on Aen. 1.260, points out that the word = the Homeric μέγαθυμος and cites other occurrences in Virgil and earlier authors.

παρθενικαί τ' ἀταλαί with its poignant stress upon the fact that the girls are unmarried.¹⁵ Up to this point, then, Virgil has followed, with variations, Homer's list - matres/ νύμφαι, virī/ γέροντες, magnanimi heroes/ ἄνδρες ἀρηϊφάτοι, pueri/ ἠΐθεοι and innuptae puellae/ παρθενικαί τ' ἀταλαί. Moreover, the variations which Virgil introduces strongly suggest that he is attempting to magnify the pathos present in Homer. The final element in the second tricolon, I believe, proves that this is his intention. There is no parallel in Homer for impositique rogis iuvenes ante ora parentum. This fact alone imparts especial emphasis to the line. Moreover, the length (a full line) and the sense of climax in the tricolon crescendo serve to stress the line even further. The thought of the line reflects the Roman attitude that there was something particularly tragic in a child predeceasing his parents¹⁶ and so Virgil concludes the list with the most pitiable souls of all.

Having given more specific detail about the shades, Virgil proceeds to a vivid and horrific description of the Underworld rivers which confine and imprison them (478-80). The predominantly spondaic rhythm of 478 is at once

¹⁵ NORDEN, on Aen. 6.306-8, comments: "Mit innuptae puellae lässt er ein Motiv leise anklingen, das in dem griechischen Tragödien ... und griechisch-lateinischen Elegien und Epigrammen immer ergreifend wirkt ...". See also AUSTIN, on Aen. 2.238, who notes the infrequency of the word puella in epic (and its frequent use in lyric and elegy). Perhaps here as in Aen. 2.238 there is, to use AUSTIN's phrase, a touch of "tender realism".

¹⁶ HUXLEY, on 4.475-7: "Especially poignant to the Roman mind was the reversal of natural order, which ruled that a child should close his parents' eyes in death". See also CONINGTON's note on 4.477.

mournful and suggestive of the sinister, slow movement of water and the stagnant marshes of the dwelling places of the dead. Equally effective is the accumulation of detail in this line and also in the succeeding two lines. The build-up of adjectives effectively captures the sense of the ugliness and unpleasantness of the region: niger, which not only means "black" and "dark" but has connotations of death, ill-omen, filth and sorrow (OLD s.v.); deformis; tarda, which suggests sinister, slow-moving waters and so the stench of stagnant pools; inamabilis, which is a rare and hence emphatic word probably containing a word play - inamabilis = odiosa = Στῶξ.¹⁷ The nouns limus ("mire", "ooze") and palus ("marsh") also contribute to the depressing picture. Again, line 479 begins with spondees, and the assonance of "a", especially long "a", imparts a mournful sound to the line. With Cocytus, emphatically placed, Virgil at last includes one of the conventional features of the Underworld landscape. The literal sense of the word is perhaps to be felt.¹⁸ At 480 Virgil impressively completes the picture. The verbs alligat and coercet ring the line to stress the sense of imprisonment from which there is no escape.¹⁹ Nine times (novies) around the Styx flows. Nine is associated with magic²⁰ and so

¹⁷ For the word-play see HUXLEY, on 479-80.

¹⁸ See e.g. PAGE, on 479. Cocytus = the river of lamentation.

¹⁹ See NORDEN's comments on Aen. 6.438f. for the verbs alligare and coercere.

²⁰ AUSTIN, on Aen. 6.439 and Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics vol.9, pp.409ff.

is a very powerful number reinforcing the sense of confinement. Finally interfusa is not recorded before Virgil and the rarity underlines the all-pervasiveness of the Styx.²¹ Thus, Virgil's description of the environment of the Underworld adds to the sympathy we feel for the shades who are compelled to dwell in this place with all of its ugliness and unpleasantness, and, what is more, we get a dramatic sense of what Orpheus has to face.

The change in subject at 481ff. gives a sense of climax to what immediately precedes. The long description of the shades and the abodes of the shades ends powerfully with the verb coercet. The last mention in the narrative of the effects of Orpheus' song upon the inhabitants of the Underworld occurred in 471. After the interruption, lasting nine lines, Virgil reminds us of the song's power (481ff.) and he does so in an unexpected and striking manner. He begins not with the deities of the Underworld as we might expect but with the pathetic fallacy, stupuere domus... The use of the device here is unusual and surprising enough - even the halls of Hades are "amazed". To complement the effect, Virgil employs a twist upon a Lucretian phrase: intima Leti/ Tartara (cp. Lucr. 3.42, Tartara Leti). Virgil's is, in R.D. WILLIAMS' words, "a strange phrase".²² Tartara alone refers to the deepest pit of Hell. The

²¹ Cf. TLL vii,1.2196.80f.

²² R.D. WILLIAMS, on 481-2. It is noteworthy, too, that Virgil gives added emphasis to the phrase by the emphatic placement both of Leti and of Tartara.

addition of intima, therefore, perhaps implies the power and pervasiveness of Orpheus' song reaching the depths of the Underworld. Moreover, the Lucretian echo elevates the tone and stylistic level of the lines.

At 482-3, Virgil selects the Eumenides and Cerberus out of the monstrous and terrifying inhabitants of the Underworld who are similarly affected by Orpheus' song. The horrific description of the Eumenides and their snaky locks²³ is particularly vivid, thanks to the juxtaposition of crinibus anguis, the Greek construction (implexae I take to be an imitation of the Greek middle²⁴), the sigmatism suggesting the hissing sound made by the snakes and the dramatic postponement of their name to the next line, where it is emphatically placed. Equally effective is the description of the reaction of Cerberus. Virgil selects the traditional detail that Cerberus had three heads and, using the mot juste inhians, captures the sense that all three stand agape in mid-bark. There may be added point to Cerberus' stupor if, as NISBET and HUBBARD suggest, Cerberus was able to cause stupor in others.²⁵

Virgil is equally selective in singling out for emphasis Ixion from among the numerous sinners in the Underworld. So far as I have been able to

²³ On the Eumenides and their snaky locks see MURGATROYD, on Tib. 1.3.69.

²⁴ As, for example, does HUXLEY, on 482-3.

²⁵ NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 2.13.33.

ascertain, it has gone unnoticed that Ixion, like Aristaeus, attempted rape.²⁶ Since we are to imagine that Proteus is narrating the story of Orpheus to Aristaeus, it seems to me that there is added point to his choice of Ixion. It is, in fact, particularly apt. Noteworthy too is the much discussed expression of the line.²⁷ The syntax is strange, and appropriately so, to match the content of the line: the wheel of Ixion, spinning unceasingly actually stops under the influence of Orpheus' song (note especially the juxtaposition of rota constitit). Whatever the exact interpretation of the syntax, the picture is particularly striking and effectively denotes the power of Orpheus' song.

²⁶ For Ixion as a rapist see e.g. Schol. Ap. Rhod. 3.62 and Schol. Pind. Pyth. 2.40.

²⁷ E.g. MYNORS, CONINGTON, et al. Rota orbis has caused the most difficulty. HUXLEY, on 484, judges the phrase to be an "intolerable tautology". CONINGTON deals succinctly with the question of interpretation: "we should rather have expected "orbis rotae." We may either make 'orbis' a genitive of quality, as we might say in prose 'a wheel of circular form,' or taking 'orbis' for the wheel, suppose after Heyne that 'rota' is put for the rotation - a sense of course not inherent in the word". The ablative vento is also problematic. It is most likely a type of causal or instrumental ablative and the sense seems to be: Ixion's wheel stopped because the wind (which was driving the wheel) stopped (under the influence of Orpheus' song). Cf. CONINGTON, on Ecl. 2.26.

SECTION 7: 453-527PART F: 485-491

Orpheus and Eurydice are returning to the world above. In fact, they have nearly completed their journey. As OTIS remarks, the dactylic rhythm of 485-6 suggests their "triumphal advance toward the world of life".¹ There is, then, a sense of victory, a feeling that Orpheus has successfully overcome the powers of the Underworld. In addition, the rhythm of the lines reflects the eager haste of the pair and may also be intended to suggest their exultation and excitement as they approach the end of their ordeal. Contributing to the effect is the assonance of short "e" sounds (implying haste) in the phrase iamque pedem referens which begins the description (485).

The compression of detail, however, is remarkable and requires comment. There is no reference to the content of Orpheus' plea to the Underworld deities for Eurydice's return (contrast e.g. Ov. Met. 10.17ff.). There is no reference to the meeting between Orpheus and Eurydice in the Underworld. This compression could be said to be standard epyllion technique. Virgil selects and highlights only certain details to stress a particular point. Here everything implies Orpheus' success. There is no need to give Orpheus' song. Its power to sway the inhabitants of the Underworld has been vividly represented in the preceding lines and so can be left to the imagination.

¹ OTIS, p.203.

Moreover, there is no need to refer specifically to Orpheus' success. Even if success were not part of the tradition,² it could easily be inferred from the narrative.

The expression and details of 485-6 also hint at success and are emphasized by the subtle interweaving of references to words and phrases earlier in the narrative: pedem referens = "returning"; the pluperfect evaserat implies that Orpheus has successfully avoided all perils, that his trials are behind him and the rare transitive use of the verb³ stresses the point; reddita = "restored" is in an emphatic position and the phrase redditaque Eurydice perhaps is intended to recall and so effectively to contrast with moritura puella (458); superas ... ad auras suggests that Orpheus and Eurydice are approaching their goal and again there is a possible contrast with Erebi ... sedibus imis (471) and intima Leti/ Tartara (481-2) to reinforce the idea; finally, Eurydice is named for the first time and so as she draws near to the world above and to life, identity is given to her.

Virgil's narrative technique (highlighting success) and his effective use of rhythm, expression and detail in a full two lines all contribute to the

² For the tradition see above Chapter 1, Part C.ii. I would briefly restate my view that, apart from Plato's account (which is quite different in tone from Virgil's), all earlier accounts arguably imply that Orpheus was successful in his attempt to win back Eurydice.

³ AUSTIN, on Aen. 6.425, notes that the only example of the transitive use of evado prior to Virgil occurs in Lucilius 313.

sense of exultation, excitement and triumph. There is, however, a second impression created by the compression of detail and by the rhythm of the lines - speed. By offering a swift-paced representation of the events, Virgil adds to the feeling that matters are moving quickly to their successful conclusion and so he proceeds rapidly to a significant moment in the narrative. He skillfully portrays events to set up the surprise and indeed to heighten the magnitude and drama of the reversal of fortune which occurs when Orpheus turns around.

At 487, the first jarring note in this section is introduced. Virgil, again elliptically, refers to conditions set by Proserpina.⁴ The word pone is emphatically placed at the beginning of the line and so gives prominence to Proserpina's main injunction that Eurydice must follow behind. The archaism⁵ adds solemnity and may be meant as a quotation of Proserpina's original words. If so, there is an immediacy to Virgil's expression. The elliptical reference to conditions contrasts with the mood of optimism and sense of triumph created in the lines immediately preceding. The new information that Eurydice must follow behind invites us to consider that Proserpina set further

⁴ Again, see above Chapter 1, Part C.ii for an assessment of Virgil's innovation in adding the idea that Proserpina or Dis set conditions for Eurydice's return. It seems probable that Virgil was responsible for the addition. If, as noted above (n.2), earlier accounts made Orpheus successful, the condition(s) set by the Underworld gods would have had minor significance, if any.

⁵ AUSTIN, on Aen. 2.725, comments upon pone: "The word belongs to early Latin (Ennius, Ann. 231...)." As AUSTIN notes further, Quintilian (8.3.25) specifically classes the word as a Virgilian archaism.

conditions, as yet unmentioned. The possibility also exists that the condition(s) will not be met. Accordingly, Virgil seems subtly to be hinting that there is still the risk of failure even though Orpheus and Eurydice are so near to their goal, and so skilfully he creates a feeling of unease, a sense that matters may not turn out well after all.

Virgil continues to build suspense in 488. R.D. WILLIAMS⁶ comments upon the effectiveness of the line, particularly the emphasis given by the inverted cum clause which highlights the dramatic moment of Orpheus' weakness. Noteworthy too and equally effective are the juxtaposition of subita and incautum and the emphatic position of amantem.⁷ The former stresses the unexpected onset of Orpheus' dementia, the latter explains the reason for his tragic error. By making it clear that Orpheus' actions are the result of love, the mad desire to see his beloved wife, Virgil heightens the tragedy of the second death of Eurydice which is about to be described. There is a certain irony in the fact that Orpheus was willing to face the awful landscape and the inhabitants of the Underworld because of his love for Eurydice. It was his love for her that gave her the chance for a second life, but also it was his love for her that ultimately caused her second death.

⁶ R.D. WILLIAMS, on 488.

⁷ It may be, as some suggest (e.g. THOMAS, on 494-5), that the emphasis upon the behaviour resulting from amor provides one of the connecting links between the epyllion and the rest of the Georgics. Cp. especially G. 3.242ff.

The echo of 470 in 489 is surely conscious. This echo and the repetition of ignoscenda ... ignoscere stress the unforgiving nature of the Manes.⁸ There is, too, profound pathos in the line reinforced by the heavy spondaic rhythm and the repeated "s" and "sc" sounds accentuate the poignancy of the words.⁹ Above all, the striking vividness of the personal intervention of the narrator (Proteus/Virgil) at this point (apparently because so moved and so outraged) underlines the notion that Orpheus' actions are understandable and so forgivable in the eyes of all save the most heartless. The emphatic position of ignoscenda and the addition of quidem (lending further stress) serve to affirm that Orpheus' error could be overlooked. In addition to the pathos of the line, Virgil creates a feeling of foreboding by suggesting that Orpheus' actions (yet to be described) will, in fact, not be forgiven by the Underworld powers.

The suspense builds to its climax in 490-1, "a climactic sentence with the two crucial actions beginning and ending the sentence [i.e. restitit ... respexit] ... The effect is stressed by the rare pause after respexit at the fifth-foot trochee."¹⁰ The first verb, restitit, receives further stress from its position and if, as the Oxford text of MYNORS suggests, we are to imagine a pause

⁸ BAILEY (1969), pp.260ff., has a useful discussion, including commentary upon this passage and G. 4.470, of how Virgil employs Manes (=Di Manes) in the sense "powers of the lower world".

⁹ Cf. OTIS, p.203.

¹⁰ THOMAS, on 490-1. Also note that in 485-6 REferens and REddita refer to returning life, whereas in 490-1 REstitit and REspexit lead to the loss of life.

after the verb there may be the added subtlety that the pause in the Latin reflects the actual pause of Orpheus. The postponement of the all-important verb respexit¹¹ heightens the suspense and the intervening succession of words describing Orpheus' mental lapse - immemor ... victusque animi adds to the sense of climax when the verb finally comes.

There is much too in Virgil's expression to create sympathy for Orpheus and to heighten the sense of tragedy. The pathetic irony of suam (490), which is not yet true but hints at what might have been, and the poignancy of iam luce sub ipsa, with its suggestion that success was in his grasp and so near, contribute to the effect. The dactylic rhythm of 490 is perhaps intended to convey the notion of the suddenness of Orpheus' action and to suggest the rapidity of the reversal of fortune. Finally, again in 491, Proteus/Virgil interjects a subjective comment (heu)¹² which intimates his and deepens our involvement in the tragedy. In six lines Virgil has taken us from triumphal elation to the moment when all is lost.

¹¹ The injunction against looking back has not been specifically mentioned but I do not believe that it is necessary to assume (e.g. as does R.D. WILLIAMS, on 487) that Virgil's audience knew from earlier accounts that this was a condition. As noted above, there is no evidence that this was part of a "tradition". Rather, as HUXLEY, on 491, notes: "the veto against looking back is often invoked where magic is involved" and may therefore be easily understood from 487. HUXLEY compares Ecl. 8.102 (see COLEMAN's note ad loc.).

¹² I would add that the phrase immemor heu may be a conscious reminiscence of Cat. 64.135, immemor a. If so, the literary reference to the abandoned Ariadne would deepen the pathos even further.

SECTION 7: 453-527PART G: 491-506

After respexit there is a pause which, like the pause following restitit in the preceding line, is striking. Here, the effect is to produce a brief, ominous lull after Orpheus looks back. As PAGE remarks¹, the rhythm effectively suggests the sudden reversal of fortune resulting from Orpheus' action. At the very least there is a hint that Orpheus' glance back will produce some fateful devastating consequence. The rare elision ibi omnis² and, as R.D. WILLIAMS notes,³ the clash of ictus and accent in the phrase effusus labor beginning 492 seem to be designed to amplify the effect.

In addition, 491-3 vividly suggest the result of Orpheus' action and, in effect, represent the climactic moment of the inset story. Beginning with ibi omnis the phrases are arranged to form a tricolon crescendo. The first member of the triad is remarkably brief considering its momentous importance: ibi omnis/ effusus labor. The brevity heightens its impact. Orpheus' efforts have been in vain.⁴ The second element refers again to the motif of the

¹ PAGE, on 491.

² Cf. AUSTIN, on Aen. 1.99, for the unusual elision.

³ R.D. WILLIAMS, on 492.

⁴ THOMAS, on 491-2, suggests that the words ibi omnis/ effusus labor provide one of the main links between the epyllion and the rest of the Georgics. Amor renders Orpheus' labor useless (for this theme THOMAS compares the effects of

cruelty of the Underworld gods (immitis; cp. 470, 489)⁵ and elliptically confirms that Proserpina had set the condition that Orpheus was forbidden to look back. The main effect of the tricolon crescendo, however, seems to be to stress the final member: terque fragor stagnis auditus Avernis. Fragor is unsettling and aptly mysterious. Virgil does not specify who or what causes it. Does it denote divine anger or is it a terrible omen or something else? The source of the sound, too, is only vaguely suggested by stagnis ... Avernis. Moreover, what precisely does fragor mean? Are we to imagine the rumbling of thunder⁶ or a loud ominous crash or a noise caused by voice(s) (e.g. a howl of rage)?⁷ Whatever the word's exact sense may be, the repeated "f" and "r" sounds and the long "i"s in the phrase stagnis auditus Avernis vividly reproduce the terrible and frightening sound, and the fact that it is heard three times (emphasized by the powerful terque beginning the final triad) reinforces the overwhelming sense of awe and terror. In addition, there may be an intentional reminiscence of the

amor in Georgics 3). Clearly one of the difficulties of the epyllion is its relationship with the rest of the poem. THOMAS himself states, vol.2 p.202, that the question is "perhaps the most difficult exegetical problem in Roman poetry". None of the many attempts to solve the difficulty has met with universal acceptance and, in fact, the question may be unanswerable.

⁵ The notion of cruelty may be reinforced by tyranni if, as MYNORS suggests (on 490-3), the word here, as usually in Virgil, has a negative sense.

⁶ Parallels for subterranean thunder are given by MYNORS in his note on 490-3 - e.g. Eur. Hipp. 1201-2.

⁷ OLD fragor s.v.2.

favourable triple omen received by Cyrene on Aristaeus' behalf just before he sets out to face Proteus (384). For Orpheus, in contrast, the triple "omen" comes at the end of his trial and punctuates his failure.

With this mysterious and terrifying description of the immediate consequences of Orpheus' glance back Virgil juxtaposes the most tragic result of his action and the moment of greatest pathos - the second death of Eurydice at the very instant when success was within reach. The pathos is increased by the immediacy of direct speech. Here, for the first and only time in the inset story, a character speaks, and Eurydice's words create greater emotional involvement and impact than simple narrative.

Again Virgil mirrors a scene from the outer story in the inner narrative since Eurydice's speech seems designed to recall Aristaeus' opening speech to Cyrene (321ff.). The situations are certainly similar. In each, a character enunciates his/her reaction to a loss involving death. Both speeches begin with questions. However, the tone of Eurydice's speech is quite different from Aristaeus'. Her words contain only the slightest hint of reproach (if at all) and lack the sarcasm and bitterness of Aristaeus' address to Cyrene, not to mention Aristaeus' self-centred overreaction to his crisis. Absent too is the humour in Virgil's treatment of Aristaeus which undermines the seriousness of his loss. The most obvious point of contrast is that Eurydice is reacting to her

own death and so her speech is sorrowful in tone and its overwhelming effect is to create pathos, an effect heightened by the contrast with the earlier speech.

Virgil reinforces the tone by his use of language, rhythm, sound and placement of words. In 494 the separation of illa and Orpheu (which frame the line) and of me and te seems pathetically to suggest the separation of Orpheus and Eurydice caused by her second death. There is great poignancy in the fact that Eurydice addresses Orpheus by name (in emphatic position) since he, by looking back, has been the immediate cause of her second death. The string of monosyllables (quis et me ... et te) and the elisions in the line produce a halting effect, perhaps intended to suggest that she is sobbing, and the mournful alliteration me ... miseram complements the stumbling rhythm. The verb perdidit is particularly apt since it carries the meaning "destroy" (OLD s.v.1) and also, in amatory contexts, "to make to die for love".⁸ Finally, the actual content of her words, especially et te, reveals her touching concern at this very moment not just for herself but for her husband. Her words foreshadow Orpheus' miserable life after her death and perhaps even his own death.

Eurydice's disbelief and sorrow are reflected in the repetition of quis (494, 495) while furor, emphasized by the heavy pause which immediately

⁸ For this sense see NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 1.8.3. The verb seems to be used by lovers exaggerating the pain/ecstasy of love. If Virgil is thinking of this sense, there is a terrible and striking literalness present.

follows,⁹ recalls dementia (488), to reinforce the tragic notion that Orpheus' action resulted from an unforeseen moment of weakness, a lapse over which he had no control. The painful reminder in iterum that Eurydice is dying a second time is stressed by retro in emphatic position to highlight the fact that Eurydice is returning whence she came. All of Orpheus' efforts have been futile. The pitilessness of the Underworld's powers is again given prominence as crudelia in 495 echoes 470 and 489, to recall that Orpheus' lapse could have been forgiven. It may be, therefore, that the noun fata to which the epithet is attached is intended to come as something of a surprise at the beginning of 496 (perhaps we are led to expect numina vel sim.). The phrase crudelia ... fata would seem naturally to mean "cruel fates" but the sense equally could be "piteous/painful death". With typical subtlety, Virgil creates a phrase at once powerful, variously suggestive and designed to heighten emotional impact.¹⁰

The prominent positions of fata and somnus in 496 stress that Eurydice's death is now very near. The phrase natantia lumina is perhaps a conscious echo of Lucretius 3.80 where the phrase nant oculi is applied to drunkenness. The words spoken by Eurydice are given a new sense which

⁹ HUXLEY, I find, also points out the effectiveness of the pause at this point in the line.

¹⁰ For crudelis = "piteous/painful" see OLD s.v.3 and for fatum = "death" OLD s.v.6.

vividly suggests the fainting sensation of death.¹¹ Furthermore, she associates death and somnus, and the rhythm of the line, it has been suggested, is designed to match the content: "The absence of strong caesura in the third and fourth feet gives a lulling soporific effect".¹² Finally, the verb condit is particularly fitting because of its association with the ritual act of closing the eyes in death.¹³

The passive verb feror in 497 poignantly implies that Eurydice has no control over what is happening to her but is being swept along by the course of events.¹⁴ Nocte which comes dramatically at the end of the line picks up somnus from 496 and contrasts with luce sub ipsa (490), the light of life, and so again Virgil offers a pathetic reminder that the pair were so close to success. In addition ingenti suggests that the "night" encompassing Eurydice is not ordinary darkness but the more profound darkness of death.

¹¹ At Aen. 5.856 (see R.D. WILLIAMS' comments) Virgil uses the phrase natantia lumina solvit of somnus in its literal sense "sleep". Here Eurydice's "sleep" is the longus somnus of death (cp. Hor. Odes 3.11.38). The swoon of death is similarly described by Catullus (64.188): mihi languescit lumina morte.

¹² R.D. WILLIAMS, on 496. THOMAS, I would add, commenting on the line, notes the coincidence of ictus and accent in the line and proposes that this may reflect the "harmony" of sleep.

¹³ See THOMAS, on 496 and TLL 4.151.69ff.

¹⁴ Cf. AUSTIN, on Aen. 4.110: "Feror is often used of movement, either physical or mental, over which one has no control."

The climax of her speech and the greatest pathos come in Eurydice's final words to Orpheus (498). Invalidas receives particular emphasis from its position at the beginning of the line and with palmas effectively frames the line. It may be that two senses of the adjective are to be felt - "weak" (appropriate for one near death) and "dim" (suggesting that Eurydice is now beginning to fade from view).¹⁵ The alliteration tibi tendens ... tua focuses attention upon Eurydice's final gesture - stretching out her hands to Orpheus. Again there is great pathos as her gesture may signal an attempted final embrace or the desperate hope that she may hold on to Orpheus to avoid disappearing back into the Underworld. Virgil's vivid expression makes the picture readily imaginable. Finally, the appositional phrase heu non tua interrupts the flow of the line and so receives particular emphasis. The point of the stress seems clear - to recall, with pathetic irony, suam in 490.

Immediately after speaking Eurydice disappears: dixit et ex oculis subito. The dactylic rhythm of 499 matches the speed with which she vanishes from sight. In a brief simile, which recalls Homer Il. 23.100, Virgil strikingly expresses her disappearance. Eurydice is as insubstantial as smoke and, like smoke which is dispersed by the breezes, she vanishes completely and forever. The comparison is suitable in other respects as well. Just as a wisp of smoke gradually loses its shape and then vanishes in a way inexplicable for most

¹⁵ See OLD s.v.1,2b.

ancient and many modern readers, so Eurydice's ghostly figure (recall e.g. invalidas... palmas) mysteriously is gone. By comparing the unknown to the known, Virgil creates a picture that is at once mysterious and more easily imagined.

Although, as noted, ceu fumus... recalls the comparison between the ghost of Patroclus and smoke (ἠΐστε καπνός) at Il. 23.100, Virgil adds details and variations which seem designed to improve upon Homer and to heighten the pathos. The first obvious variation is that Orpheus is actually losing his wife whom he almost succeeded in bringing back from death and whose second death he is witnessing. In contrast, Achilles sees the ghost of his beloved friend in a dream. Secondly, Virgil expands the simile, briefly but to great effect, by adding the phrase in auras commixtus tenuis which has no counterpart in the Homeric simile. The phrase is perhaps intended to recall superas ... ad auras (486) to remind us how close Orpheus was to success. In addition, tenuis recalls umbrae ... tenues (472) = "the dead" - a poignant reminder of Eurydice's fate. There is a further variation. At Il. 23.95ff. Achilles addresses the ghost of Patroclus. This detail Virgil alters: multa volentem dicere. Orpheus wishes to say many things to his wife, but they must be left unsaid and what is more there is nothing to say - speech would be futile. Thus by slightly altering his Homeric model, Virgil actually heightens the pathos of the situation. Perhaps too there is a further subtlety, unrelated to Homer:

Orpheus, whose song has charmed even the dread powers of the Underworld, can say nothing here.

Like Achilles (Il. 23.99), Orpheus tries in vain to grasp the fleeing shade. It may be that Virgil is adding complexity and increasing the impact of his account by referring to a second passage in Homer, Od. 11.204ff., where Odysseus' vain attempt to embrace the ghost of his mother is given greater emphasis than is Achilles' attempt in the Iliad passage. Certainly Virgil also highlights the uselessness of Orpheus' action. As R.D. WILLIAMS notes, the assonance of 501 (prensantem ... volentem) "concentrates the attention upon Orpheus' futile actions"¹⁶, and, I would add, Virgil reinforces the point by the juxtaposition of prensantem nequiquam. Virgil's purpose in focusing upon this aspect of the scene would seem to be to engage our sympathy for Orpheus and the dreary heaviness of the largely spondaic line (501) serves to heighten this impression. Moreover, in both passages in Homer, though the embrace is futile, the ghost is arguably still visible when the attempt is made. In Virgil, the implication is that Eurydice has already disappeared and so there is even greater futility in Orpheus' reaching out to her.¹⁷

¹⁶ R.D. WILLIAMS, on 501.

¹⁷ The validity of this suggestion hinges upon the exact sense of umbras. MYNORS, on 500-1, argues that it is a poetic plural and refers to Eurydice's shade. Aen. 5.81 provides a parallel for umbrae used of a single shade. I would argue, with THOMAS, on 500-2 and CONINGTON, on 501, for the sense "shadows" since 499 implies that Eurydice's ghost has already disappeared (which

At 502 Virgil shifts suddenly and elliptically to Charon's refusal to let Orpheus cross into the Underworld a second time.¹⁸ The fact that Orpheus was willing to face the terrifying ordeal again signals his great love for Eurydice and so the tragedy of the loss.¹⁹ We are left to imagine Orpheus' pleas to the hostile boatman (and perhaps to recall that Aristaeus was more fortunate with a similarly hostile individual - Proteus) and his frustrated attempt to return to the Underworld to entreat again for Eurydice's life. Virgil stresses only the impassable barrier (objectam ... paludem) and most importantly Charon's refusal to let him cross. It is now clear that Orpheus will not receive another opportunity to win Eurydice back. She is lost forever.

The sudden switch to deliberative questions (504-5) focuses attention on and vividly captures Orpheus' confusion and frantic thoughts. Again there is pathos as the answers become clear - there is nothing he can do; there is nowhere for him to go; no tears, no words can persuade the Manes

makes for a still sadder situation).

¹⁸ Virgil makes no reference to Charon when Orpheus crosses into the Underworld the first time and the reason now becomes clear: he was going to block Orpheus' second attempt to cross. Both the delay in this appearance and the phrase Virgil uses to refer to him have great impact (portitor Orci seems to be new in Latin: cf. BÖMER, on Ov. Met. 10.73).

¹⁹ The depth of Orpheus' love for Eurydice is one of the most moving aspects of the inset story but it is interesting to note that Virgil only once specifically refers to that love (amantem, 485). Ironically, the love which drives him to win back Eurydice from death is a contributing factor in his losing her.

and numina. Orpheus' tragedy is pointedly summarized in the phrase rapta bis coniuge (504; cp. 456) which emphasizes that Eurydice has been lost a second (and final) time.

The section concludes with a final unexpected shift in point of view as we are given a last glimpse of Eurydice - one final powerful reference to her fate (506). The line contains a number of remarkable features. The assonance of "a" and short "i" sounds seems to convey a sense of the rapidity of events. The imperfect verb nabat is strikingly vivid. While Orpheus stands at a loss, Eurydice is already crossing the river Styx.

SECTION 7: 453-527PART H: 507-520

Now, at 507, Virgil turns to Orpheus' reaction to the tragedy which has befallen him. Following the brief description of Eurydice's first death, Virgil employed the pathetic fallacy to indicate the scope and depth of grief caused by her loss. After her second death, Virgil avoids monotonously repeating the same pattern. Employing an interesting variation, he focuses upon Orpheus alone and the geographical features of Thrace now provide the cold and desolate setting for his solitary lament.

It is the duration of Orpheus' lament that Virgil first stresses. In 507 septem and mensis frame the line, each word receiving added emphasis from its position. Both totos ("full", cp. Aen. 1.272) and ex ordine (giving the sense of long months passing, spent in unceasing lamentation) add to the emphasis upon duration. Moreover, the slow spondaic rhythm of the line complements the effect. Finally, the verb perhibent may not be simply an Alexandrian affectation.¹ The choice of expression seems to imply the recognition of the need to appeal to tradition to vouch for the truth of an incredible statement since the length of Orpheus' lamentation is remarkable. Perhibent also

¹ For the use of similar expressions see above on 318 (ut fama). Cf. also NORDEN, on Aen. 6.14 and NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 1.3.7, where a select bibliography of scholarship on such phrases is provided. FORDYCE, on Cat. 64.1, notes "the Alexandrian scholar poet stresses his dependence on tradition."

suggests that Orpheus' sorrow was so extreme that it became famous and is still much discussed. There is also a possible reminiscence of Orpheus' first lament since the idea of length and repetition is also present in 466: te veniente die, te decedente canebat. It is surely not accidental that the earlier length is outdone following Eurydice's second death and hence reflects her more tragic second death.

The description continues (508-9) and contains further reminiscences and parallels with the first lamentation: loneliness (deserti ad Strymonis undam; cp. 465 solo in litore secum), proximity to water (ad ... undam; cp. 465 in litore) and weeping (flesse sibi; cp. 461 flerunt²). These similarities between 508-9 and the earlier description of the reaction to Eurydice's first death seem to be designed to increase sympathy for Orpheus. By recalling his earlier sorrow, Virgil heightens the tragedy of the situation by emphasizing that Eurydice has experienced death twice and that Orpheus has experienced loss twice.

However, there are also differences between the two passages and it is by contrast that Virgil increases the pathos even further. Orpheus' lonely isolation and especially the coldness of his surroundings are given greater prominence than in the earlier passage. The river Strymon is specifically named evoking the cold remote landscape of Thrace, and the cumulative effect

² In the earlier passage, it is the "heights of Rhodope" which weep so there is variation. The text is uncertain - flesse sibi or flevisse - but the parallelism is present with either reading.

of the adjectives in 508-9 (aëria, deserti and gelidis) is to capture Orpheus' loneliness in that icy wasteland. Given the juxtaposition of aëria and deserti, RICHTER's view,³ that the adjective aëria implies inaccessible height ("unnahbare Höhe), is attractive in that his interpretation contributes to the picture that Orpheus, who weeps rupe sub aëria, is alone, cut off from human company by impassible rocks, a tiny figure in a frozen landscape. The last of the three adjectives, gelidis, completes the picture of a cold wasteland.

The emphasis which Virgil gives to the description of Orpheus' surroundings requires comment. One major consideration has already been discussed: the contrast between the frigid setting of Orpheus' lament and the warmth of Aristaeus' environment (at 376ff. and 425ff.) provides a link between the inner and outer stories.⁴ Clearly, too, Orpheus' isolation reflects the depth of his grief and effectively engages our sympathy and heightens involvement in his story. There may, however, be a further subtlety. The cold, desolate landscape may be intended to match Orpheus' cold rejection of love and emotional isolation. Furthermore, if, as I think is likely, gelidis is meant to recall frigida in 506 and hence the chill of death, there may be the implication that Orpheus is experiencing a living death.

The diction and expression, therefore, contribute to the picture of a cold and isolated landscape. In addition, the verb evolvisse (509), used in the

³ RICHTER, on 508.

⁴ See e.g. Chapter 4 above.

sense "unfold", "narrate" belongs to the diction of epic and so adds solemnity to the line, implying the gravity of the misfortune which has befallen Orpheus.⁵

Both 508 and 509 are remarkable, too, for sound and rhythm. The harsh "r" and the "s" sounds of 508 coupled with the sigmatism of 509 complement the sense of the lines and the preponderance of dactyls in the two lines may be intended to convey Orpheus' restless wanderings.

Despite the fact that Virgil sets the description of Orpheus' mourning in the unknown and exotic regions of Thrace, there are certain points which seem realistic and so make the picture convincing. The reference to a specific length of time for Orpheus' lamentation adds credibility to Virgil's account. The landscape itself is vividly and realistically presented: rocky cliffs and the cold, with the inclusion of the name of the river Strymon.

At 510, there occurs the first specific reference to Orpheus' traditional power to charm animals, rocks and trees with his song.⁶ Again, both the sound and the rhythm of the line effectively match the content. The repeated "m" and "n" sounds create a melodic effect and the rhyme mulcentem ... agentem adds to the (aural) appeal of the line. The spondaic opening slows the pace and, following two primarily dactylic lines, is particularly forceful. It is noteworthy too, that Virgil chooses tigers (fierce, wild creatures: cf. 407) to

⁵ See SKUTSCH, on Enn. Ann. 164.

⁶ For the tradition see e.g. NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 1.12.7 and above Chapter 1, Part C.i.

represent animals and the oak, the strongest of trees.⁷ There is, then, a pathetic irony in the fact that Orpheus' song no longer moves the spirits of the Underworld nor comforts him in his grief but its magic power over nature is still potent.

The simile of the nightingale at 511ff. is, as numerous commentators have noted, a conflation of two Homeric similes: Od. 16.216-18 and Od. 19.518-23. The first of these similes appears in the recognition scene between Telemachus and Odysseus and compares their weeping to the cry of vultures whose young have been destroyed by rustics. The main similarities between Homer and Virgil in this instance are the comparison between weeping and the cry of birds, the Homeric phrase πάρος πετεηνᾶ γενέσθαι and Virgil's implumis and the ἄγρόται /arator responsible for the destruction of the young birds.

In the second Homeric simile, Penelope, addressing the (as yet) unrecognized Odysseus, tells of her sorrows during her husband's long absence and compares her nightly lamentations to the song of the nightingale mourning the death of her child.⁸ Again, there are a number of similarities with Homer which suggest conscious borrowing by Virgil: in both the nightingale,

⁷ NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 1.12.12.

⁸ RUSSO et al., on Od. 19.518-24, note: "Allusions to the nightingale's lament for her son are a common topos in Greek poetry (A. Ag. 1144; S. EI. 148; Ar. Av. 228, [sic] E. fr.773N, 22-5)." For further references see MYNORS' note on G. 4.511-15.

perched amid the leaves of a tree, is mourning by night for her lost young, and both poets refer to the frequency/duration of the bird's lament.

By blending the two Homeric similes, Virgil seems consciously to be striving to improve on his model, to provide a fuller picture with greater emphasis upon sorrow and mourning in a single simile. By making the bird who has lost her young a nightingale rather than vultures,⁹ while keeping the Homeric detail that the young have been destroyed willfully, Virgil highlights the senseless cruelty of the action. With the epithet γαμψώνυχες in Od. 16.217, Homer reminds us that vultures may be a threat and the act of the ἀγρόται can be justified. In Virgil's simile, there is no such justification for the arator. By his skilful selection of a detail from each Homeric passage, Virgil heightens the pathos of the simile.

Equally effective are the variations and additions which Virgil introduces into his text. In the first Homeric simile, the poet has only ἀγρόται. Virgil, to describe the arator in his simile, adds the epithet durus which lays stress upon the cruelty of the destruction of the nightingale's young. Virgil matches the pathos of Homer's phrase πάρος πετεηνᾶ γενέσθαι with the single word implumis. Not only is the word rare,¹⁰ and so emphatic, but also Virgil's economy of expression highlights the helplessness and tender age of the young

⁹ See HEUBECK and HOEKSTRA, on Od. 16.217, for the identification of the birds as vultures.

¹⁰ First here according to TLL vii,1.648.22ff.

birds. In the simile at Od. 19, Homer describes the nightingale sitting δενδρέων ἐν πετάλοισι a detail which Virgil alters to populea ... umbra. The reason for the change is not readily explicable: why a poplar tree? At G. 2.66 and at Ecl. 7.61, Virgil specifically associates the poplar tree with Heracles. NISBET and HUBBARD¹¹ suggest also that the poplar was particularly associated with Heracles, noting that according to Schol. Theoc. 2.121, Heracles when he descended into the Underworld found the poplar growing παρὰ τῷ Ἀχέροντι. Perhaps Virgil chose to specify the poplar tree because of its association with death, the Underworld and Heracles' catabasis. Certainly umbra has appeared at 472 and 501 in the context of death and the Underworld. If my suggestion is correct, the epithet would add intellectual complexity and provide a link with the descent motif, prominent in both the Aristaeus and Orpheus sections of the narrative, while the associations with death are appropriate for the simile.

Another important variation occurs in the description of the nightingale's song. In Homer, the nightingale's song is "sweet" - καλὸν ἀείδησιν (Od. 19.519), and her voice "rich" - πολυηχέα φωνήν (Od. 19.521). Virgil, in contrast, describes her song as "pathetic" - miserabile carmen. The emphasis upon sadness in the simile is well suited to Orpheus' plaintive lament and more in keeping with the deeply moving aspects of the narrative. In addition, the adjective miserabile may be intended to recall miserabilis, which describes Orpheus at 454.

¹¹ NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 1.7.23.

Virgil further stresses the pathetic element in that he makes the nightingale lose her whole brood (amissos ... fetus) while in Homer's simile the nightingale has lost only one child.¹² The greater loss creates greater pathos.

Finally, in both passages in Homer, the similes occur in a context where good news had been received (in the first Telemachus learns that Odysseus is alive) or, in the second case, is about to be received. Orpheus, on the other hand, will receive no word to relieve his agony.

Besides these echoes and subtle variations, Virgil's own additions are designed to heighten the tone of sadness. Although Homer has words for sorrow and lamentation in his similes, Virgil includes many more expressions of loss and grief: maerens (511), amissos (512), queritur (512), flet (514), miserabile (514), maestis (515), questibus (515). The effect is magnified by verbal plays: queritur ... questibus and maerens ... maestis.

The effectiveness of the simile is increased by Virgil's use of sound, rhythm and word placement. The first three lines of the simile contain harsh "r", "s" and "a" sounds to match their content and dissolve into soft "m" and "l" sounds as the plaintive song of the nightingale is described. Both 512 and 514 have heavy, spondaic openings and 513 is almost completely spondaic. The ominous, mournful rhythm again complements the description. Finally, the

¹² In Homer, the nightingale is the cause of her child's death - $\delta\iota' \alpha\phi\rho\alpha\delta\iota\alpha\varsigma$ - which RUSSO *et al.*, on *Od.* 19.518-24, interpret as "in her senseless folly". This may be a relevant parallel to Orpheus' *furor*. In any case, the nightingale in Virgil is blameless, hence the pathos is greater.

emphatic placement of the words amissos, flet and integrat (the latter indicating duration/repetition) builds atmosphere and the juxtaposition of implumis detraxit coupled with the unusual pause after detraxit¹³ stresses the brutality of the verb.

In demonstrating Virgil's skilful adaptation of Homeric material, I have neglected one important consideration - the care with which Virgil inserts this material into his narrative. There are, in fact, a number of points of contact between the simile and the narrative. The nightingale, renowned for the sweetness of its plaintive song matches Orpheus, the poet and singer. Like Orpheus, she grieves deeply, helplessly and continuously, filling the regions around with her melancholy song. Like Orpheus, she has lost beloved kin through the destructiveness and cruelty of another (durus arator recalls and parallels immitis ... tyranni in 492). Her chicks, on the other hand, represent Eurydice. Both are young, delicate, and vulnerable. This aspect of the simile ought not to be overlooked.

Structurally, the simile effectively breaks up the description of Orpheus' mourning into two distinct parts and at 516 Virgil adds the reference to Orpheus' rejection of love/passion which introduces the reason for his death and also movingly defines his devotion to Eurydice. His unwillingness to seek out the company of women reminds us of his emotional isolation and loneliness. Again at 517-19 Orpheus' solitude (note solus in emphatic position) and the

¹³ R.D. WILLIAMS, on 513.

cold barren landscape of the north (his wanderings now take him even further north than Thrace) are stressed. It is particularly striking that every word in 517 denotes either loneliness or cold. Equally expressive is the phrase numquam viduata pruinis (518), since viduata is connected literally with bereavement and death.¹⁴ Again, the geographical references are erudite but they also make the description more specific and convincing, and seem to suggest the scope of Orpheus' lonely wanderings. For added effect, Virgil arranges the two lines to form a tricolon with the verb lustrabat postponed and stressed by its position in the line. Finally, the dactylic rhythm of 517 may be intended to convey the speed with which Orpheus, never resting, traverses the barren landscape. All of these details create a vivid picture of Orpheus' pitiable situation, which is punctuated by the reference to Eurydice, her fate, and the pathetically ironic dona beginning 520.¹⁵

¹⁴ NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 2.9.8.

¹⁵ It may be that the phrase dona querens is intended to recall multa querens (320). If so Virgil invites comparison/ contrast between the loss suffered by Aristaeus and Orpheus' much more serious loss.

SECTION 7: 453-527PART I: 520 (spretae Ciconum...)-527

The almost eight lines which conclude Proteus' story provide a forceful, effective and powerful ending. Juxtaposed with Orpheus' sorrow is the brief but horrific description of the circumstances of his death and so, once again, Virgil manipulates the emotional impact of the narrative by blending pity and terror.

In fact, only three of the lines which form the conclusion deal with Orpheus' death, and of these only one (522) specifically describes his death itself. The brevity with which Virgil treats this climactic moment in the story effectively conveys the chilling suddenness with which the end comes and sets up the dramatic five-line conclusion, the image of Orpheus' head calling to Eurydice, even in death - at once highlighting Orpheus' touching devotion to his wife and providing a fitting climax to the horror and sadness which pervade the inset story.

In the three lines which pertain to the circumstances of Orpheus' death, Virgil skims over many minor details (e.g. how did the women of Thrace come upon Orpheus?) and so the narrative pace quickens to the dramatic detail of his being torn apart. However, Virgil deftly provides all of the information required to make the events intelligible and virtually every word contributes to the unfolding of the dreadful scene. In 520 he identifies those responsible for

killing Orpheus - the women of Thrace. The harsh sounds¹ of spretae Ciconum quo and the alliteration munere matres underline the dramatic effect of the revelation. The phrase Ciconum ... matres suggests the traditional myth that Orpheus was murdered by women; however, there may be an intentional subtlety in Virgil's choice of the word matres,² involving a contrast between Aristaeus' devoted and helpful Cyrene mater (321) and the murderous Thracian matres. Neoteric doctrina may be behind the selection of Ciconum to represent "Thracians", since a number of ancient sources identify Orpheus as one of the Cicones.³ The horrific deed is made even more horrific by the knowledge that Orpheus' murderers are not only women but his own countrywomen.

The women's motive is presented with equal brevity: spretae ... quo munere.⁴ There is, it seems, no extant parallel for jealousy/rejection being

¹ In 520-22 the hard "c" and "r" sounds are repeated. Perhaps this sound effect is also intended to represent the clash and noise of Bacchic celebrations. Cp. AUSTIN's comments on Aen. 4.303. Orpheus' death at the hands of maenads/women is part of the traditional myth (see above Chapter 1, Part C.iii).

² The word matres need not mean more than "women" (cf. HUXLEY, on 520). It is particularly applied to women devoted to Dionysus - see TLL viii.439.3, and compare the use of matrona (TLL viii.484.35f. cites Acc. trag. 236 - vagant matronae percitatae insania).

³ E.g. Diod. 5.77.3, Orph.Arg. 78, etc. See also PAULY-WISSOWA, vol.11, pp.381-2 on Kikones.

⁴ The precise sense of these words is not without controversy. MYNORS, on 520 discusses the difficulties in some detail. Servius ad loc. glosses munere with nuptiali scilicet which would require that spretae mean "deprived of" but the more natural sense is "feeling scorned by this gift/duty" i.e. Orpheus' devotion to

offered as their motive⁵ and it is tempting to suppose that Virgil himself is responsible for introducing this detail into the story. It certainly seems to be designed specifically for the situation as presented by Virgil. THOMAS, however, finds fault: "the detail [i.e. the reason for Orpheus' death] is rather ill-motivated, but necessary as a means of transition to the climax at 523-7".⁶ I disagree that the introduction of the Thracian women is "ill-motivated". Once again Virgil takes a traditional element - that Orpheus was torn apart by women/maenads - and by adding a perhaps novel (and so arresting) twist incorporates the tradition in a way well-suited to his narrative. After all, the main point of spretae, I would argue, is to imply that the women's reaction to Orpheus' moving devotion to Eurydice is horribly selfish and cruel.

Next Virgil describes the setting of Orpheus' death in a single line (521). Given the drama of the situation, Virgil offers surprisingly little detail: how did the women come upon Orpheus? Orpheus' wanderings (described at 517ff.) took him to regions far north of Thrace. How did he get back? These and other questions remain unanswered. This skimming of detail suits the suddenness and drama of the situation. Arguably too, a lengthy description here would detract from the impact of what follows: the circumstances of

Eurydice.

⁵ See above Chapter 1, Part C.iii.

⁶ THOMAS, on 520-2.

Orpheus' death are secondary to his devotion to Eurydice, even in death. Furthermore, the lack of detail contributes to the mysterious and terrifying atmosphere: the shadowy rites of Bacchus and the nocturnal setting are specified - the rest is left to the imagination. Again, Virgil's expression complements the effect: sacra is ambiguous (= "sacred implements", OLD s.v.1, or "rites", OLD s.v.3) and hence mysterious.⁷ The epithet nocturni is apt since Bacchic rites were normally held at night, yet the nocturnal setting is in keeping with the mysterious tone and, one should add, the association of night with death is certainly in keeping with the mood.⁸

Finally, Virgil describes the manner of Orpheus' death, again restricting the description to a single line but a line of great impact and horror: the violent word discerptum comes abruptly and is emphatically placed at the beginning of 522; the harsh sounds of the word are effectively echoed in sparsere; the heavy, spondaic rhythm of the line draws out the dramatic moment; the gruesome implication in the adjective latus is that Orpheus is torn apart and his limbs are scattered over a wide area; the poignant reference to Orpheus as iuvenem stresses that he (like Eurydice) dies prematurely as well as horribly.

⁷ NISBET and HUBBARD in their introductory notes to Hor. Odes 1.18 (p.229) state: "The Hellenistic poets (following Euripides) and the Romans after them showed a morbid interest in the orgiastic cult of Bacchus...". See also AUSTIN, on Aen. 4.301-3 and FORDYCE, on Cat. 64.250-64.

⁸ For examples of night as an image of death see NISBET and HUBBARD, on Hor. Odes 1.4.16.

The action of the Thracian women is terrible enough but Virgil adds to the horror by revealing that their attack upon Orpheus occurs inter sacra deum and so it becomes a repulsive perversion of religion. It may be argued that Pentheus in the Bacchae suffers the same fate as Orpheus. However, the murder of Pentheus by maenads results from his rejection of Dionysus and so, in a sense, is justified. There is no suggestion by Virgil that Orpheus has offended Dionysus/Bacchus and therefore his death cannot be excused on religious grounds. I would argue further that the action of Virgil's women seems horribly premeditated. Again, if one compares Virgil's treatment with Euripides', it is clear that Agave and her companions act in a state of frenzy and do not recognize their victim as Pentheus. The pathetic revelation of the truth comes at Bacc. 1168ff. In Virgil's presentation of the events, the women are jealous (spretae) and there is no suggestion that they are unaware of their actions, quite the opposite, in fact: their motive has nothing to do with sacra deum. Surely, this is intended to add to the horror of their deed.

At 523, tum quoque..., it begins to become clear that Orpheus' death is almost secondary, as it is Orpheus' devotion to Eurydice (even in death) to which Virgil returns in the concluding lines of the inset story. Again, he takes a detail for which literary (and artistic) parallels exist - Orpheus' head speaking (especially oracles) after death⁹ - and he apparently adapts it to suit his own

⁹ See above Chapter 1, Part C.iii and e.g. GUTHRIE, pp.35ff., for Orpheus' severed head pronouncing oracles.

narrative. Orpheus' head does not pronounce oracles but calls out Eurydice's name. This is a striking picture and so has great impact.¹⁰ Orpheus' last words hauntingly echo and re-echo and this is the final impression with which Virgil leaves us.

In addition to the singular content of 523-27, Virgil exploits expression, sound and rhythm to highlight the climactic moment of the story. The possible Ennian reference in 523, caput a cervice revulsum¹¹ adds solemnity to the description and the emphatic placement of revulsum again focuses attention upon the violence of Orpheus' death. Marmorea pathetically suggests Orpheus' youthful beauty (picking up iuvenem from 522) but may also imply cold lifelessness.¹² There is grim irony in the fact that the river Hebrus, named as one of Eurydice's mourners in 463, now carries the severed head of Orpheus with its stream. The addition of the epithet Oeagrius pathetically recalls that Oeagrus, king of Thrace, is named as the father of Orpheus¹³ and so Orpheus' paternal river becomes a participant in his gruesome death.

¹⁰ RICHTER, on 525ff., believes the lines to be "weich und empfindsam" and HUXLEY, on 527, says that this view "will find sympathizers". This criticism reflects more modern tastes and does not necessarily reflect Virgil's intention. Some reading the passage today might find black humour in the grotesque image of a "talking head". Again, this surely would not help to understand the reaction for which Virgil is striving.

¹¹ Cf. Enn. Ann. 483 (SKUTSCH): Oscitat in campis caput a cervice revolsum.

¹² Servius ad loc. glosses pulchra. The adjective marmoreus is also applied in a literal sense (OLD s.v.1a) and this sense may be felt here.

¹³ KERN, p.8 (test.23).

Eurydicen occurs three times in three successive lines (the last instance emphatically beginning 527) and the repetition matches 465f. where te is similarly repeated to suggest Orpheus' continual lament after Eurydice's first death. Certainly the repetition here effectively anticipates the thought of 527 - Orpheus' final cries echoing along the length of the river. The pitiful exclamation a is emphasized by its position, beginning 526, and is echoed mournfully in the "a" sounds which precede and follow frigida lingua/ a ... anima ... vocabat. The phrase frigida lingua is particularly vivid and suggests the coldness of death (cp. frigida cumba, 508). Equally striking is anima fugiente, capturing Orpheus' desperation in calling out as his life-breath passes from him - a desperation reflected in the dactylic rhythm. Together these two details provide extraordinary proof of Orpheus' great love for Eurydice. Finally, the imperfect tense is used in 526-7 (vocabat, referebant) to complete the image of Orpheus' repeated cries endlessly re-echoed. The conclusion, then, is a masterful blend of the horrific and the pathetic. Orpheus' final moments are fittingly presented in a description both vivid and powerful and in the end we are left with Orpheus' futile cries resounding along the banks of the Hebrus.

SECTION 8: 528-547

Proteus departs immediately and abruptly at 528. The transition Haec Proteus, a mere two words, with the omission of the verb dixit vel sim., matches his sudden disappearance. The abruptness of his departure is startling and arresting. With Orpheus' cries still fresh in our minds, we are suddenly brought back to the world of the outer story and with that Proteus disappears immediately. We are not told how Proteus escaped and he vanishes from the scene leaving Aristaëus with questions unanswered.¹

Proteus' actual departure is stated in less than one line, se iactu ... altum (528). Technically, 529 seems to add nothing to the development of the narrative; the line is simply an example of colourful description not untypical of epyllia.² The descriptive detail is very effective nonetheless: after Proteus' dive, the swirling water is the only evidence that he has been present - a picturesque image of his dramatic final exit from the scene. Moreover, the likely reminiscence of Od. 4.570, ὡς εἰπὼν ὑπὸ πόντον ἔδύσσετο κυμαίνοντα,

¹ The fact that Virgil's Proteus neglects to reveal to Aristaëus how to atone for his magna commissa and leaves questions unanswered (e.g. to whom is Aristaëus to appeal?) is, as I have argued above (see Chapter 5, Part C), a) a clever variation upon Homer's Proteus who is much more forthcoming in providing information to Menelaus, b) in keeping with Proteus' character as drawn by Virgil (i.e. impatient, irascible, tricky), and c) necessary to accommodate Cyrene's expanded role (compared with the role of Eidothea in Homer).

² See e.g. FORDYCE (1966), p.272.

not only adds intellectual interest but also re-establishes the "Homeric" tone associated with the story of Aristaeus.³

Equally abrupt and startling is the reintroduction of Cyrene, reminding us that she has been present, though unseen, throughout Aristaeus' encounter with Proteus. Again, there is an ellipse, at non Cyrene (se dedit, etc. vel sim.); and the spondaic rhythm at once slows the tempo (and so heightens the drama of her reappearance) and may also suggest her calm steadfastness. Again there is skimming of detail. However, by careful selection of detail and expression, Virgil sets the scene. Aristaeus is not named but the single word timentem⁴, placed emphatically at the end of 530, effectively reveals his reaction to what he has heard and implies his uncertainty about how he should proceed. Similarly, the single word ultra discloses Cyrene's character: she is in control of the situation and takes the initiative without waiting for Aristaeus to speak. She is, as she has been from the moment of her first meeting with her son, a loving mother, concerned with her child's well-being.

The swift transitions back to the setting of the Aristaeus/Cyrene story and the omission of detailed description (e.g. Virgil could have lingered over

³ THOMAS, on 528-9, compares spumantem ... torsit with Cat. 64.13 tortaque remigio spumis incanuit unda. If Virgil is consciously recalling the Catullan passage, there is added complexity. Equally picturesque is the description of Glaucus' departure at Ap.Rhod. 1.1326ff.

⁴ Cf. THOMAS, on 530, who compares Od. 4.572, πολλά δέ μοι κραδίη πόρφυρε κιδόντι (of Menelaus after his meeting and conversation with Proteus).

Aristaeus' reaction) briefly quicken the pace of the narrative. The three lines of exposition (528-30) prepare for Cyrene's speech, beginning at 531, where the pace slows once again as Virgil begins to wind down the emotional pitch and conclude the epyllion.

Structurally, Cyrene's speech balances her earlier address to Aristaeus at 387ff. and the content, giving comfort and advice to Aristaeus, is also similar. Her speech here divides into two unequal parts (531-6 and 537-47). In the first section, she begins by reassuring Aristaeus: nate, licet tristis animo deponere curas. Next, she reveals the identity of those responsible for destroying his bees - the Nymphs. The mainly spondaic rhythm of 532 imparts a solemn, authoritative tone to her pronouncement and the important word Nymphae is postponed until the end of the line to highlight the climactic and surprising revelation at last of the identity of the numen of 453. A second unexpected revelation comes in 533 where Cyrene implies a motive for the Nymphs' anger: Eurydice was a companion in their woodland dances. The rhythm changes. The spondees of 532 give way to dactyls, appropriate to the light, delicate steps of the Nymphs in their dance. It is not too fanciful to suppose that we are to recall Eurydice's Dryad companions of 460. How does this effect our understanding of Orpheus' role in Aristaeus' punishment? There is nothing inherently contradictory, it seems to me, between the revelation of 532-3 and 454ff., has ... Orpheus ... poenas ... suscitāt. Rather, the solution to

the mystery of Aristaeus' loss now seems complete: the Nymphs, themselves angry at the death of Eurydice, became Orpheus' agents, responding to his desire for vengeance.

It is through Cyrene that Virgil brings together the threads of this solution. He has carefully constructed the narrative so that Cyrene's presence at the end is not only justified but required. With her divine wisdom she is able to see the significance of the story which Proteus tells and to reveal to Aristaeus the method of atonement. There is no one else to fulfil this role; certainly not Aristaeus who is timentem and whose character, we have seen, does not suggest competence. Proteus could have done so. However, to have Proteus declare all would have pre-empted the numerous variations upon Homer which engage our interest. Virgil, then, constructs his narrative to achieve maximum suspense and curiosity and now, as the story draws near to its conclusion, he uses Cyrene to fill in the pieces of the puzzle.

At 534-6, Cyrene reassures Aristaeus that the Nymphs will forgive. The forceful alliterations petens pacem and veniam votis lend weight and authority to her words. The tension and emotional build up of the inset story begin to be relaxed by Cyrene's confident and comforting words, which prepare the way for the happy ending. The phrase irasque remittent (536) recalls exercent ... irae (453) and so there is a sense that events are coming full circle:

with the completion of the prescribed offerings (munera ... tende), Aristaeus' position will be restored.

In the midst of Cyrene's reassuring words, Virgil inserts a final surprise: the avenging Nymphs are more closely identified as Napaeas (535). With virtual unanimity, commentators duly note that the word appears first here in extant Greek and Latin literature.⁵ As always, it may be that Virgil is recalling an occurrence of the word in a work now lost, but without the work such speculation is not particularly helpful. It may be too, as THOMAS implies,⁶ that Virgil does not intend a distinction between Napaeas and Dryadum of 460. However, another possibility suggest itself: it is more surprising if the deities responsible for Aristaeus' loss have not appeared previously in the story.

In the second part of her speech (538-47), Cyrene offers her prescription for the sacrifices to be made to the Nymphs and concludes with the offerings owed to Orpheus and Eurydice. The detailed description is justifiable firstly because the alleged purpose of the epyllion is to present the action for *bugonia* and also because of Cyrene's injunction that the modus orandi be

⁵ See e.g. MYNORS, on 535-6, for a representative statement.

⁶ THOMAS, on 535. Latin poets were notoriously vague over proper names generally. See FORDYCE, on Cat. 64.35, who discusses geographical inaccuracies, and also CAMPS, on Prop. 1.20.12 and 1.20.32 for the disregard of strict usage in the naming of nymphs specifically.

carried out in due order (ordine, 537). Moreover, the rather dry and factual passage, which offers little to involve our emotions, contributes to the overall *diminuendo* effect of the conclusion.

A major difficulty of interpretation, however, arises from the fact that the propitiatory sacrifices described by Cyrene appear to be at variance with the *bugonia* as it is presented at 295ff. The major differences include the number of animals involved (8 in the original, 1 in the Egyptian practice), the fact that *Aristaeus* does not, as the Egyptians do, build a special structure to house the dead animal(s), and finally that *Aristaeus* sheds the blood of the cattle, something which the description of the Egyptian *bugonia* expressly forbids. These differences need not, however, be taken as evidence for hasty or careless composition. In the *epyllion*, Virgil is describing propitiatory sacrifices (hence there is a religious element), the corollary of which is the birth of new bees for *Aristaeus*. The *bugonia* as practised in Egypt lacks this religious aspect as its primary purpose. This difference, it seems to me, would seem to account for the fact that *Aristaeus* sheds the blood of the sacrificial victims.⁷ Moreover, from a practical point of view, the developed version is less expensive, requiring fewer cattle and this too should not be too surprising.⁸

⁷ See BURKERT, pp.1ff.

⁸ In addition, as SHECHTER, p.383, points out, the single vitulus of the developed *bugonia* "is presumably a reminder of the calf that *Aristaeus* was enjoined to offer up to *Eurydice*."

Despite the discrepancies, it is worth noting that the two descriptions of the procedure are basically similar: dead cattle are left in a warm and enclosed spot so that putrefaction occurs and bees are produced and Virgil ties the two accounts together by repeating the anaphora quattuor ... quattuor (538, 541; cf. 297-8).⁹ Arguably, then, Virgil is simply providing an explanation of the distant origins of the practice, which need only approximate in outline the developed bugonia.¹⁰

A further difficulty involves the mention of Mt. Lycaeus (539). The fact that Aristaeus must go to Arcadia to select the animals to be sacrificed (and, it seems, perform the sacrifice) does not conform with the Thessalian setting of the story. Most commonly, scholars point out that Lycae is appropriate for the identification of Aristaeus as Arcadii magistri (283) and so, in effect, is part of a ring structure linking the epyllion/aetion to the main text.¹¹ This explanation is quite plausible. I would, however, like to point out other possible subtleties suggested by Lycae. Firstly, there may be an intentional

⁹ THOMAS, on 297-8, notes that quattuor is "used twice at the end of the book (538, 541) ... perhaps to provide a frame."

¹⁰ As SHECHTER, p.382, argues: "The Bugonia at 295-314 - the actuality - must have evolved from, and therefore be traceable to, the precepts of Cyrene at 538-47...". He discusses in some detail the differences between the two accounts of bugonia in the Georgics and argues that a parallel for the contrast between "past action and current practice" occurs at Ap. Rhod. 2.498-527 - the aetion for Etesian winds. However, I am not certain that I agree that there such a strong contrast here.

¹¹ E.g. THOMAS, on 539.

play on Od. 4.472ff. where Proteus instructs Menelaus that he must return to Egypt to offer the sacrifices which he has overlooked. At Od. 4.481ff., Menelaus specifically comments upon the length of the journey he must undertake to fulfill this task. Similarly Aristaeus, if he is to go to Arcadia, must make a long journey to perform a sacrifice. Secondly, the association between Zeus and Mt. Lycaeus may be relevant. The most famous shrine of Zeus Lycaeus was in Arcadia but there was also a shrine to the god in Cyrene¹² and so Virgil may be introducing a play involving Cyrene, the country, and Cyrene, the nymph. Such subtle erudition would not be untypical of Virgil (or his Alexandrian predecessors). Perhaps, too, one should consider the association of Aristaeus with Zeus in Arcadia.¹³ I have suggested that there may be a subtle allusion to Aristaeus' future immortality at 415f. when Cyrene anoints Aristaeus with ambrosia and so it may not be too fanciful to see in the reference to Arcadia implicit in Lycaei a further intimation of Aristaeus' eventual immortality. Finally, to return to the motif of a long journey, I would point out that another, more immediate parallel suggests itself: Orpheus' descent into the Underworld and his endless wanderings following Eurydice's second death.

Be that as it may, the manner in which Virgil enlivens, through expression and sound, what might become a rather dry list of instructions

¹² COOK, pp.89ff.

¹³ See above Chapter 1, Part A.

deserves comment. The description begins with a chiasmus: eximios praestanti corpore tauros which allows for the juxtaposition of eximios and praestanti, emphasizing the excellence of the animals to be offered. The repetition of quattuor (538 and 541) in the same position, beginning a line, highlights the number while the specificity implies that there is no room for error. There is variation in the expression of the commands: the first two, delige and constitue begin their respective lines (540 and 542), the next two imperatives, demitte and desere, are the second last words in a line (542 and 543) and finally, there is a further variation with the shift to the future indicative with imperative force at 545ff. (mittes, mactabis, revises, venerabere). The alliteration at 541, aras alta ad delubra dearum, and 547, vitula venerabere, the striking assonance and alliteration of "o" sounds in 543f. and the rhyme at line end (545-6, mittes ... revises) all alleviate the dryness of the list. Finally, a reference to Roman funeral customs in the poetic periphrasis for "after nine days" (544) would be apt and would interest and appeal to a Roman audience.¹⁴

The passage concludes with a description of the offerings to be made to appease the shade of Orpheus (2 lines) and a concluding single line stating that a young heifer is to be sacrificed to Eurydice. Structurally, therefore, the whole passage on offerings (538-547) forms a tricolon

¹⁴ See HUXLEY, on 544 and CONINGTON, ad loc..

diminuendo. To Orpheus Aristaeus is to offer poppies and a black sheep. The poppies, as the epithet Lethaea implies, are to lull to rest the anger of Orpheus' shade and induce forgetfulness, but they are associated elsewhere with death and appear as an offering to the dead.¹⁵ Similarly, the black sheep is a standard offering to the dead and black animals generally are sacrificed to the powers of darkness¹⁶ and so the sacrifices to Orpheus are apt. The offering to Eurydice is more problematic. This is not to say that the sacrifice of a vitula is inappropriate and, in fact, the single vitula seems to be connected to the single vitulus of the developed bugonia (299). Rather, the difficulty of interpretation arises because, some argue, the reference to a sacrifice to Eurydice seems to be added as an afterthought, awkwardly appended without a connective particle. In addition, neither Eurydice nor vitula occurs in 548ff. where Aristaeus scrupulously carries out the other instructions given by Cyrene. Some editors, therefore, place 547 before 546.¹⁷ However, this seems

¹⁵ Poppies are commonly said to bring sleep - for examples see BÖMER, on Ov. Fast. 4.151. THOMAS, on G. 1.212, suggests that Ceres used the poppy to assuage her grief at the loss of Proserpina (for further details of the association of the poppy with Demeter and the Eleusinian Mysteries see BURKERT, p.281 and KERENYI, p.24). For the connection of poppies with death, as an offering to the dead, see AUSTIN, on Aen. 6.883, and TLL vii,2.1398.47ff.

¹⁶ For a black sheep as an offering to the dead see ROHDE, vol.1, p.169, p.200, n.105 and p.201, n.107. THOMAS, on 545-6, notes that "black victims are traditional offerings to the shades"; cf. MURGATROYD, on Tib. 1.2.61-2.

¹⁷ E.g. SAINT-DENIS, HEYNE following BENTLEY.

unnecessary. I would agree with those¹⁸ who argue that the vitula is to be a thank-offering to Eurydice after the bugonia since the tense of the participle placatam most obviously implies that Eurydice's shade will have been appeased by Aristaeus' offerings to the Nymphs and to Orpheus. This interpretation helps to alleviate the abruptness of the asyndeton between 546 and 547. The lack of parallelism (i.e. no reference to vitula caesa in 548ff.) is best explained by

THOMAS¹⁹:

It might seem rather curious that this sacrifice is the only item not repeated in 549-58..., but it would belong logically after 558, and V. clearly wished to end the section with the appearance of the bees.

¹⁸ E.g. CONINGTON, on 547.

¹⁹ THOMAS, on 547.

SECTION 9: 548-558

In the concluding section of the epyllion, Virgil stresses first the speed with which Aristaeus acts to fulfil his mother's instructions. The expression of 548 vividly conveys this sense of eager haste: haud mora, continuo [note juxtaposition] ... facessit.¹ Again, there is skimming of detail. How, for instance, has Aristaeus travelled to Arcadia? Again, the effect is to quicken the pace and to suggest speed. Now, without questioning or hesitating, he prepares to undertake the prescribed sacrifices with exactness and precision. His diligence is effectively suggested in 549-53 by the repetition not only of individual words but also of entire lines (e.g. 550 = 538). Although Virgil includes minor changes in expression (532 = 544 except that the verb is changed from ostenderit in the latter to induxerat) and certain details are omitted - no mention is made of the leafy grove of 543 - these, for the most part, seem designed simply to avoid the monotony of unvaried repetition.² The overwhelming impression, however, remains that Aristaeus conscientiously performs all that he must in due order.

The primary function of 549-53, then, is to show that Aristaeus fulfils precisely the precepts set by Cyrene. It should be added, however, that

¹ As AUSTIN notes on Aen. 4.295, "facessere is used of eager, quick action".

² The one notable exception to this statement is the omission of a reference to the vitula to be sacrificed to Eurydice, as discussed above.

the style - the virtual repetition of an earlier passage - is Homeric and so in keeping with the general tone of the outer story.³ At the same time, the more objective Homeric style does not involve our emotions and so contributes to the overall diminuendo effect of the conclusion.

Even so, Virgil's insistence upon unquestioning haste (548) and upon precision reflected by the repetitive style of 549ff. is so striking that it demands further comment. The emphasis is surely not unintentional. It seems to me that here, once again, Virgil is inviting us to contrast Orpheus and Aristaeus: Orpheus, in a moment of furor, forgets to follow divine instructions, with disastrous results; Aristaeus, on the other hand, assiduously follows divine instructions and, as we are about to learn, achieves a favourable outcome. This contrast is central to what I believe to be an overall theme of the epyllion: the need to follow divine commands.

At 554ff., the prototype bugonia occurs. There are a number of verbal echoes between the description of the first bugonia and the process as it is presented at 308ff.: dictu mirabile monstrum (554) and visenda modis ... miris (309); the compounds liquefacta (555) and tepefactus (308); stridere apes

³ R.D. WILLIAMS, on 550-51, comments: "The Homeric type of repetition (from 538 and 540) - followed in the next two lines by the repetition of phrases from 544-6 - conveys a sense of speed and fulfilment appropriate for the ending of the story". Homeric repetitions of the type used by Virgil here are too numerous to catalogue; however, see RUSSO *et al.*, on *Od.* 24.128-46, for a brief discussion of the technique relating specifically to the threefold account of Penelope's ruse.

(556) and stridentia pennis (310); immensasque trahi nubes (557) and effusus nubibus imber (312); and the metaphor in uvam which concludes the description (558) recalls the simile of Parthian arrows which concludes the earlier passage (313-14). This ring-structure not only gives a sense that events have come full circle but also ties the first bugonia with the Egyptian practice and hence provides a structural link between the epyllion and the rest of Georgics 4.

The ending itself is aptly mysterious for the strange process of bugonia and for the whole epyllion which, it must be admitted, is an extraordinary tale. Virgil offers no explanation specifically outlining how, why or by whom Aristaeus' bees are restored. We are told only that what occurs is dictu mirabile monstrum. Apt, too, is this final example of picturesque and bizarre description. Virgil uses graphic expression (liquefacta ... viscera, ruptis effervere costis) and sound, particularly the repeated "r" and "s" sounds, to create a vivid picture of the bees swarming and buzzing around the carcasses of the putrefying animals. The metaphor in 558, comparing the bees to a cluster of grapes (uvam) is expressive of large numbers (cf. immensasque ... nubes, 557) and also concludes the epyllion with a final Homeric reminiscence.⁴

The concluding lines of the Aristaeus epyllion seem to resolve the various conflicts in the narrative: Aristaeus pacifies the angry Nymphs and the

⁴ Servius, on 557, compares Virgil's use of uvam to the Greek βοτρυδόν which Homer applies to bees at Il. 2.89. Cf. THOMAS, on 558.

shades of Orpheus and Eurydice and is rewarded for his diligent adherence to divine commands by the restoration of his bees. The high emotional pitch of the Orpheus/Eurydice story is gradually relaxed and all seems to end successfully. However, there is something unsettling and ambivalent about the conclusion of the epyllion. Just as Aeneas' success at the end of the Aeneid is coloured by the fate of Turnus, so here the steady droning of Aristaeus' restored bees does not completely drown out Orpheus' repeated cries to the lost Eurydice.

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